

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 342

BY REPRESENTATIVE BAYHAM

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

ELECTIONS/CANDIDATES: Provides relative to qualifying fees and nominating petitions for certain candidates

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:410.5(A), 464(B)(1), and 465(C)(1), relative to qualifying for
3 elections; to increase qualifying fees of certain candidates; to provide for nominating
4 petitions; to provide for the number of required signatures for nominating petitions
5 of certain state candidates; to provide for who can sign a nominating petition; to
6 provide for effectiveness; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 18:410.5(A), 464(B)(1), and 465(C)(1) are hereby amended and
9 reenacted to read as follows:

10 §410.5. Nominating petitions

11 A. A person may be nominated as a candidate in a party primary election
12 only by persons who are affiliated with the same recognized political party and
13 persons not affiliated with a political party, who are qualified to vote on the office
14 he seeks, and who sign a nominating petition for him no more than one hundred
15 twenty days before the qualifying period opens for candidates in the party primary
16 election. The registrar of voters shall reject any signature on a nominating petition
17 not in compliance with this Section.

18 * * *

1 §464. Qualifying fees; additional fees imposed by political party committees;
2 financial statements

3 * * *

4 B. Amount of qualifying fees. The qualifying fees for candidates in primary
5 elections are:

6 (1) For state candidates -- ~~seven hundred fifty dollars for governor, five~~
7 thousand dollars for governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney
8 general, treasurer, commissioner of agriculture, and commissioner of insurance;
9 three thousand five hundred dollars for United States senator and representative in
10 congress; four hundred fifty dollars for justice of the supreme court, judge of a court
11 of appeal, and member of the public service commission, and six hundred dollars for
12 all other state candidates.

13 * * *

14 §465. Nominating petitions

15 * * *

16 C. Number of signatures required. The number of qualified voters who must
17 timely sign a nominating petition is:

18 (1) For a candidate for an office voted on throughout the state--~~five thousand~~
19 two thousand five hundred, not less than ~~five hundred~~ two hundred fifty of which
20 shall be from each of the congressional districts into which the state is divided.

21 * * *

22 Section 2. R.S. 18:410.5 as amended and reenacted in this Act shall supersede R.S.
23 18:410.5 as enacted in Act No. 1 of the 2024 First Extraordinary Session of the Legislature
24 of Louisiana.

25 Section 3.(A) Sections 1 and 2 of this Act shall become effective when Act. No. 1
26 of the 2024 First Extraordinary Session of the Legislature of Louisiana becomes effective.

27 (B) This Section shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
28 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
29 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If

- 1 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
2 effective on the day following such approval.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 342 Engrossed

2025 Regular Session

Bayham

Abstract: Increases qualifying fees for certain candidates, provides for the number of required signatures for nominating petitions of candidates running for U.S. senate and representative in congress, and provides for who can sign a nominating petition.

Present law (Act No. 1 of the 2024 First Extraordinary Session of the Legislature of Louisiana) establishes closed party primary voting for certain offices, beginning Jan. 1, 2026. Provides the requirements for who can sign a nominating petition. Further provides that a candidate in a party primary election may only be nominated by a person who is affiliated with the same recognized political party, who is qualified to vote on the office he seeks, and who signs a nominating petition for him no more than 120 days before the qualifying period opens for candidates in the party primary election.

Proposed law adds that a person who is not affiliated with a political party may sign the nominating petition. Proposed law otherwise retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:464(B)) provides for the amount of qualifying fees for candidates in primary elections. Provides for the following fees for state candidates:

- (1) For governor: \$750.
- (2) For justice of the supreme court, judge of a court of appeal, and member of the public service commission: \$450.
- (3) For all other state candidates: \$600.

Proposed law provides for the following qualifying fees:

- (1) Increases the fee for governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, treasurer, commissioner of agriculture, and commissioner of insurance to \$5,000.
- (2) Increases the fee for U.S. senator and representative in congress to \$3,500.

Proposed law otherwise retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:465(C)) provides for the number of signatures required for a nominating petition. Provides that the number of qualified voters who must timely sign a nominating petition for a candidate for an office voted on throughout the state is 5,000. Further provides that no less than 500 of the signatures shall be from each congressional district into which the state is divided.

Proposed law decreases the number of signatures required for a nominating petition for a candidate for an office voted on throughout the state from 5,000 to 2,500. Further decreases the number of signatures required from each congressional district from 500 to 250.

Effective in part when Act No. 1 of the 2024 First Extraordinary Session of the Legislature of Louisiana becomes effective.

Effective in part upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 410.5(A) and 464(B)(1) and 465(C)(1))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs to the original bill:

1. Make technical changes.
2. Change the qualifying fee for U.S. senator and representative in congress from \$2,500 to \$3,500.