

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 842

BY REPRESENTATIVE BEAULLIEU

ELECTION CODE: Makes revisions to the Louisiana Election Code

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:53(B)(2)(b), 55(D), 59(F), 62, 108(A), 110(B)(3),

3 154(C)(1)(h) and (D)(1) and (3), 192(B)(1)(a), 193(A), 196(B) and (C)(2)(a), 197,

4 402(A)(1), 433(B)(1), 465(B) and (D), 469(A), 491(B), 493, 495(B), 501(C), 532(F),

5 532.1(C)(1) and (4), 562(B)(2), 564(B)(5)(b), 565(B) and (C), 571(A)(8), 573(E),

6 574(A)(2) and (3), 602(E)(2)(d), 604(B)(2)(c), 621(B), 1254(C),

7 1259(B)(2)(introductory paragraph), 1300.3(A)(1)(b), 1303(K) and (L), 1309(D)(2),

8 (K), and (N)(5), 1309.3(B)(4)(b), 1313(C)(1) and (H)(3) and (5), 1313.1(C)(2) and

9 (I)(2), 1314(B)(2) and (C)(2)(a) and (3), 1315(A)(1) and (2)(introductory paragraph),

10 (B), and (D)(2), 1317, 1333(B) and (G)(1) and (7), 1371(A)(1) and (2)(introductory

11 paragraph), 1401(G), 1402(B)(1)(a), 1405, 1413, and 1922.2 and to enact R.S.

12 18:106.2, 107(H), 110(B)(1)(c), 192(C), 465(E)(3), 1310(A)(3), 1316(D), and

13 1401(H), relative to the Louisiana Election Code; to make revisions to the Louisiana

14 Election Code; to provide for duties of the secretary of state and registrars of voters;

15 to provide for the raising of allegations against a registrar of voters; to provide for

16 the payment of the parish portion of the salary of a registrar of voters, chief deputy

17 registrar, and confidential assistant; to provide for political activities of unclassified

18 registrars, deputy registrars, and other employees; to provide for the cancellation of

19 prior voter registration; to provide for change of registration address; to provide for

20 the cancellation of registration; to provide for the registration of unaffiliated

1 registrants; to provide for the registration information of a person who is seventeen
2 years of age; to provide for voters incapable of making a mark; to provide for the
3 confidentiality of registration information of law enforcement officers; to provide for
4 the annual canvass in certain years; to provide for use of an address confirmation
5 form; to provide for the calculation of dates and computation of time; to provide for
6 meetings of a parish board of election supervisors; to provide for the information
7 required on a nominating petition; to provide for the certification of signatures on a
8 nominating petition; to provide for procedures related to changing precincts and
9 boundaries; to provide for the completion of voter assistance forms; to provide for
10 the statement of election returns; to provide for notification of a special election to
11 fill a vacancy; to provide for the contents of a nominating petition for presidential
12 elector; to provide for the arrangement of the ballot; to provide for certifying
13 employment for purposes of early voting; to provide for early voting commissioner
14 qualifications; to provide for filing the list of early voting watchers; to provide for
15 casting a vote on an absentee by mail ballot; to provide for the timing to challenge
16 a person applying to vote during early voting; to provide for grounds to challenge an
17 absentee by mail ballot; to authorize the secretary of state to promulgate rules related
18 to distinguishing marks; to provide for the duration of the nursing home early voting
19 program; to provide for procurement methods for the delivery of voting machines
20 and equipment; to provide for election contests; to provide for objections to
21 candidacy; to provide for a cause of action, the proper parties, and the preemptive
22 period for objecting to the placement of a constitutional amendment on a ballot; to
23 provide for the time for the commencement of objections to candidacy and election
24 contests; to provide for the designation of statewide elections for the purpose of the
25 consideration of constitutional amendments; to correct terminology; to provide for
26 effectiveness; and to provide for related matters.

27 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

28 Section 1. R.S. 18:53(B)(2)(b), 55(D), 59(F), 62, 108(A), 110(B)(3), 154(D)(1) and
29 (3), 192(B)(1)(a), 193(A), 196(B) and (C)(2)(a), 197, 402(A)(1), 433(B)(1), 465(B) and (D),

1 469(A), 491(B), 493, 495(B), 501(C), 532(F), 532.1(C)(1) and (4), 562(B)(2), 564(B)(5)(b),
 2 565(B) and (C), 571(A)(8), 573(E), 574(A)(2) and (3), 602(E)(2)(d), 604(B)(2)(c), 621(B),
 3 1254(C), 1259(B)(2)(introductory paragraph), 1300.3(A)(1)(b), 1303(K) and (L),
 4 1309(D)(2), (K), and (N)(5), 1309.3(B)(4)(b), 1313(C)(1) and (H)(3) and (5), 1313.1(C)(2)
 5 and (I)(2), 1314(B)(2) and (C)(2)(a) and (3), 1315(A)(1) and (2)(introductory paragraph),
 6 (B), and (D)(2), 1317, 1333(B) and (G)(1) and (7), 1371(A)(1) and (2)(introductory
 7 paragraph), 1401(G), 1402(B)(1)(a), 1405, 1413, and 1922.2 are hereby amended and
 8 reenacted and R.S. 18:106.2, 110(B)(1)(c), 192(C), 465(E)(3), 1310(A)(3), 1316(D), and
 9 1401(H) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §53. Removal from office; may not be own immediate successor

11 * * *

12 B.

13 * * *

14 (2)

15 * * *

16 (b) If the commissioner of elections raises allegations that the parish registrar
 17 has engaged in any conduct set forth in Paragraphs (A)(1) through (7) of this Section,
 18 the board shall schedule a hearing on the allegations brought by the commissioner
 19 of elections within thirty days of the receipt of the ~~accusations~~ allegations. If the
 20 commissioner of elections serves as a regular member of the board, he shall not serve
 21 for the purposes of such hearings, and the secretary of state shall designate a member
 22 of the Registrars of Voters Association to serve in the commissioner's place and shall
 23 notify the board in writing of any such designation as provided in R.S. 18:23.

24 * * *

25 §55. Compensation of registrar of voters; amount and manner of payment; reduction
 26 during tenure prohibited; prohibited increase

27 * * *

28 D. The state portion of each salary shall be paid biweekly by the state
 29 through the secretary of state, and the parish portion of each salary shall be paid

1 to the registrar ~~from the United States Postal Service or its licensee~~ which indicates
2 the voter has moved to another address within the parish.

3 * * *

4 §196. Inactive list of voters; procedure for voting

5 * * *

6 B. A registrant whose name is on the inactive list of voters may vote:

7 (1) If the registrant has not changed residence, at the polling place of the
8 registrant's last address upon affirming in writing by completing an address
9 confirmation ~~notice~~ form affirming that the registrant still resides at the address on
10 file at the office of the registrar of voters.

11 (2) If the registrant has moved to an address within the parish in the same
12 precinct, at the polling place of the registrant's last address on file at the office of the
13 registrar of voters upon affirming in writing that the registrant resides in the precinct
14 by completing an address confirmation ~~notice~~ form affirming the new address within
15 the precinct.

16 (3) If the registrant has moved to an address within the parish in a different
17 precinct, at the polling place of the registrant's last address on file at the office of the
18 registrar of voters for that election only upon affirming in writing that the registrant
19 still resides in the parish by completing an address confirmation ~~notice~~ form
20 affirming the new address within the parish.

21 (4) If the registrant has moved to an address outside of the parish, at the
22 polling place of the registrant's last address on file at the office of the registrar of
23 voters for that election only upon affirming in writing that the registrant has moved
24 within the last three months and no longer resides in the parish by completing an
25 address confirmation ~~notice~~ form affirming the new address outside of the parish and
26 that the length of time since the move has not exceeded three months. If the
27 registrant does not affirm that he has moved within the last three months, the
28 registrant shall not be permitted to vote.

1 C.

2 * * *

3 (2)(a) If a registrant whose name is on the inactive list of voters applies to
4 vote absentee by mail or votes absentee by mail or during early voting, the registrar
5 shall transfer the registrant's name to the official list of voters and make any
6 necessary corrections in the registrant's registration records if the information on the
7 address confirmation ~~notice~~ form, as required by R.S. 18:1309, or the residence
8 address provided in an application to vote by mail so indicates. The registrar shall
9 change the registrant's registration address to the residence address provided on the
10 address confirmation form or application to vote by mail.

11 * * *

12 §197. Registration; cancellation

13 No registrar of voters shall cancel the registration of any voter in his parish
14 between any open primary election and the subsequent general election occurring in
15 that parish as a result of any of the processes authorized by this Part, except in the
16 case of a person whose registration is cancelled pursuant to R.S. 18:193(G) or who
17 ~~has been fraudulently placed upon the registration records or in the case of a person~~
18 ~~whose registration is canceled~~ pursuant to the annual canvass conducted by the
19 registrar.

20 * * *

21 §402. Dates of primary and general elections; prohibited election days

22 A. Prohibited election days. (1) No election of any kind shall be held in this
23 state on any of the days of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret,
24 Simchat Torah, the first two days and the last two days of Passover, Shavuot, Tish'a
25 B'Av, the two days preceding Labor Day, the three days preceding Easter, or the
26 three days following Thanksgiving Day. If the date of any fall election falls on any
27 of the above-named days, the election shall be held on the same ~~weekday~~ day of the

1 preceding week. If the date of any spring election falls on any of the above-named
2 days, the election shall be held on the same day of the following week.

3 * * *

4 §433. Commissioners-in-charge; course of instruction; selection; commission;
5 disqualification; replacement

6 * * *

7 B. Selection. (1)(a) The parish board of election supervisors shall meet at
8 ~~10:00 a.m. by~~ on or before the second Friday in January of each year to select a
9 commissioner-in-charge to serve at each precinct in the parish. The meeting shall
10 be open to the public. The board shall have previously posted a notice on the front
11 door of the courthouse stating the location within the courthouse where the meeting
12 is to be held. The selection of commissioners-in-charge shall be made from the
13 certified list furnished by the clerk as required by Paragraph (A)(5) of this Section
14 and in the manner provided for in this Subsection.

15 (b) If the course of instruction for commissioners-in-charge is delayed due
16 to a gubernatorially declared state of emergency as provided by Paragraph (A)(1) of
17 this Section, the parish board of election supervisors shall meet ~~at 10:00 a.m.~~ on or
18 before the fifth day after completion of the course of instruction.

19 * * *

20 §465. Nominating petitions

21 * * *

22 B. Method of nominating candidates. A person may only be nominated as
23 a candidate in a primary election by persons who are registered to vote on the office
24 he seeks who sign a nominating petition for him no more than one hundred twenty
25 days before the qualifying period opens for candidates in the primary election. In
26 addition to his signature, each voter who signs a nominating petition shall provide
27 the information required by R.S. 18:3 ~~date his signature and shall provide the ward~~
28 ~~and precinct in which he is registered to vote, his residence address, including the~~
29 ~~municipal number, the apartment number, if any, the rural route and box number, or~~

1 §469. Reopening of qualifying period; effect

2 A. When a person who qualified as a candidate and has opposition in a
3 primary election for a public office dies after the close of the qualifying period and
4 before the time for closing the polls on the day of the primary election, the qualifying
5 period for candidates in the primary election for that office shall reopen for
6 candidates on the day after the secretary of state receives actual notice of the death
7 and shall close at 4:30 p.m. on the third day after notice of the death or, if that day
8 is a legal holiday, at 4:30 p.m. on the next day which is not a legal holiday. The
9 name of the deceased candidate shall not be printed on the primary election ballot.
10 If the primary election ballot was printed with the deceased candidate's name on it,
11 any votes received by the deceased candidate shall be void and shall not be counted
12 for any purpose whatsoever.

13 * * *

14 §491. Standing to object to candidacy

15 * * *

16 B. A registered voter may present evidence that a candidate has illegally
17 qualified for elective office. The evidence may be presented to the respective parish
18 district attorney, who may determine whether or not the evidence presented
19 establishes grounds for objecting to such candidacy and if the district attorney makes
20 such a determination he may file an action objecting to candidacy within the time
21 limitation provided in R.S. ~~18:493~~ 18:1405(A).

22 * * *

23 ~~§493. Time for objecting to candidacy~~ Subpoena and testimony; Department of
24 Revenue

25 A. ~~An action objecting to candidacy shall be commenced in a court of~~
26 ~~competent jurisdiction within seven days after the close of qualifications for~~
27 ~~candidates in the primary election. However, if the time interval ends on a Saturday,~~
28 ~~Sunday, or other legal holiday, then noon of the next day which is not a Saturday,~~
29 ~~Sunday, or legal holiday shall be deemed to be the end of the time interval. After the~~

1 ~~expiration of the time period set forth in this Section, no action shall be commenced~~
2 ~~objecting to candidacy based on the grounds for objections to candidacy contained~~
3 ~~in R.S. 18:492.~~

4 ~~B.(1)~~ Neither the secretary of the Department of Revenue nor any employee
5 engaged in the administration or charged with the custody of any records or files of
6 the Department of Revenue shall be subject to subpoena or otherwise required to
7 appear in court for any matter filed pursuant to this Section.

8 (2) B. In lieu of live testimony, a properly executed affidavit issued by the
9 secretary of the Department of Revenue or his designee shall serve as sufficient
10 confirmation as to the accuracy of the records and files of the secretary of the
11 Department of Revenue for such purposes.

12 * * *

13 §495. Initiation of action by district attorney; attorney general; court costs and
14 attorney fees

15 * * *

16 B. The district attorney shall have standing to bring such an action pursuant
17 to this Subpart. In addition, if requested in accordance with Subsection A of this
18 Section, the attorney general shall have standing to bring such an action pursuant to
19 this Subpart. The time limitation to commence an action objecting to candidacy
20 prescribed by R.S. ~~18:493~~ 18:1405(A) shall apply to such actions brought by the
21 district attorney or the attorney general.

22 * * *

23 §501. Procedure for withdrawal

24 * * *

25 C. Notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections A and B of this Section,
26 if the number of candidates remaining in a primary election, second party primary
27 election, or general election for a public office is one more than the number of
28 persons to be elected to the office, the secretary of state shall accept a notice of
29 withdrawal that is filed prior to 4:30 p.m. on the second business day prior to the first

1 day of early voting. The candidate or candidates remaining after the withdrawal
2 shall be declared elected by the people.

3 * * *

4 §532. Establishment of precincts

5 * * *

6 F. Prior to the adoption of an ordinance to establish the boundaries of
7 precincts pursuant to this Section, the parish governing authority shall submit the
8 proposed precincts and boundaries to the clerk of court and registrar of voters for
9 their review to confirm in writing the ability to conduct an election utilizing the
10 proposed boundaries. The parish governing authority shall submit to the secretary
11 of state in accordance with timetables in this Section, the written confirmation
12 received by the parish governing authority.

13 §532.1. Changing boundaries

14 * * *

15 C.(1) The parish governing authority shall comply with the provisions of
16 R.S. 18:532(A), (B), (C), ~~and (E), and (F)~~ when changing any precinct boundary.

17 * * *

18 (4) In addition to the requirements of Paragraph (2) of this Subsection, when
19 the proposed precinct change involves dividing a precinct, prior to the adoption of
20 the ordinance, the parish governing authority shall submit proposed changes to the
21 clerk of court and registrar of voters to confirm in writing the ability to conduct an
22 election utilizing the proposed boundaries. The parish governing authority shall
23 submit to the secretary of state in accordance with timetables in this Section, the
24 written confirmation received by the parish governing authority.

25 * * *

26 §562. Prerequisites to voting

27 * * *

28 B. Review of precinct register. The commissioners shall then determine:

29 * * *

1 zipper bag and returned to the clerk of court on election night. A duplicate record of
2 the challenge shall be given to the voter being challenged.

3 C. Disposition of the challenge. The commissioners present shall determine
4 the validity of the challenge. If they determine by majority vote that the challenge
5 is valid, the applicant shall not be permitted to vote. However, if the valid challenge
6 has determined that the applicant has moved within the parish or has moved outside
7 of the parish within the last three months, the voter shall be allowed to vote upon
8 completing an address confirmation ~~notice~~ form. If a majority of the commissioners
9 determine that the challenge is invalid, the applicant shall be permitted to vote.

10 * * *

11 §571. Procedures for commissioners after termination of voting

12 A. At the termination of voting in a primary or general election, the
13 commissioners shall announce that voting is terminated. The commissioners in the
14 presence of the watchers shall immediately:

15 * * *

16 (8) Place one copy of the official election results reports, one copy of the
17 machine certificates, one of the duplicate poll lists, all original executed challenges
18 of voters, all precinct register corrections, all voter identification affidavits, all voter
19 assistance forms, any physicians' certificates, any copies of disability documentation,
20 a copy of each completed notation of irregularities form, and any address
21 confirmation ~~notices~~ forms in the envelope marked "Registrar of Voters", seal it and
22 attach it to the precinct register after the termination of voting, and place a new
23 protective seal on the precinct register.

24 * * *

25 §573. Evidence of election results

26 * * *

27 E. Transmission and disposition of original challenges, duplicate voters'
28 affidavits, and address confirmation ~~notices~~ forms. (1) At the opening of the voting
29 machines, the sealed precinct registers shall be immediately returned to the registrar

1 of voters. Upon receipt of the sealed precinct registers, the registrar shall remove
2 any attached original record of challenges of voters made during the election, any
3 precinct register correction affidavits, any voter identification affidavits made
4 pursuant to R.S. 18:562, any address confirmation ~~notices~~ forms, any voter
5 assistance forms, any certificates, any copies of disability documentation, and any
6 completed voter registration applications.

7 (2) The registrar shall utilize the procedures set forth in Part V of Chapter
8 4 of this Code to determine the validity of the registration of each challenged voter
9 who did not submit an address confirmation ~~notice~~ form. In any instance where an
10 address confirmation ~~notice~~ form was received that stated an address different from
11 the address on file in the registrar's office for a registrant, the registrar shall change
12 the registrant's address to the address on the address confirmation ~~notice~~ form if the
13 change of address is in the parish; transfer the registrant's registration to another
14 parish if the address on the address confirmation ~~notice~~ form is in another parish; or
15 cancel the registration if the address on the address confirmation ~~notice~~ form is in
16 another state. If an address confirmation ~~notice~~ form was received that affirmed the
17 address on file in the registrar's office, the registrar shall reinstate the registrant to
18 the official list of voters if the registrant appears on the inactive list of voters. If the
19 address confirmation ~~notice~~ form was a result of a valid challenge, the registrar shall
20 so inform the district attorney and shall transmit to him the address confirmation
21 ~~notice~~ form of that person.

22 (3) The registrar also shall proceed to determine if each voter submitting a
23 voter identification affidavit made pursuant to R.S. 18:562 attesting that he is a
24 qualified registered voter is in fact a registered voter qualified to vote in the election
25 by comparing the information provided by the voter with the information on file in
26 the registrar's office and by reasonably comparing the signature on the affidavit with
27 any signature on file for the voter in the registrar's office. If the registrar determines
28 that any person who has voted in the election by virtue of his submission of such an
29 affidavit was not a registered voter qualified to vote in the election, the registrar shall

1 so inform the elections compliance unit and shall transmit to it the affidavit of that
2 person.

3 (4) The registrar shall scan the address confirmation ~~notice form~~, voter
4 identification affidavit, voter assistance form, or voter registration application and
5 add it to the voter's record in the state voter registration computer system after
6 processing.

7 §574. Compilation and promulgation of returns

8 A.

9 * * *

10 (2) Immediately after the completion of the verification by the clerk of court
11 and the counting and tabulation of provisional ballots for federal office, if applicable,
12 the board shall publicly prepare ~~two~~ a compiled statements statement of the election
13 returns as shown by the record of the votes made by the clerk of court. The compiled
14 ~~statements~~ statement shall separately show the machine votes for each candidate and
15 for and against each proposition in each precinct, the total absentee by mail and early
16 voting votes for each candidate and for and against each proposition in the parish,
17 the total provisional votes for each candidate for federal office, and the total of all
18 votes for each candidate and for and against each proposition in the parish.

19 (3) The board shall complete the compilation of the election returns and file
20 ~~one copy~~ of the compiled statement with the clerk of court no later than 4:00 p.m. on
21 the fifth day after the election. ~~One copy of the compiled statement shall be~~
22 ~~postmarked~~ The clerk of court shall transmit an electronic copy of the compiled
23 statement to the secretary of state no later than noon on the sixth day after the
24 election and mailed to the secretary of state. ~~The clerk of court shall transmit the~~
25 ~~election returns as shown by the compiled statement from the parish board of~~
26 ~~election supervisors to the secretary of state no later than noon on the sixth day after~~
27 ~~the election.~~ In a parish containing a municipality with a population of three hundred
28 thousand or more, the parish board of election supervisors shall transmit the election
29 returns as shown by their compiled statement to the secretary of state no later than

1 noon on the sixth day after the election. Failure to comply with these time limits
2 shall not void the election.

3 * * *

4 §602. Vacancies in certain local and municipal offices; exceptions

5 * * *

6 E.

7 * * *

8 (2)

9 * * *

10 (d) ~~Within twenty-four hours~~ Immediately after he receives the copy, the
11 secretary of state shall notify all election officials having any duty to perform in
12 connection with a special election to fill such vacancy, including the parish boards
13 of election supervisors for the parish or parishes in which the vacancy occurred.

14 * * *

15 §604. Marshal of city or municipal court; temporary absence; vacancy

16 * * *

17 B.

18 * * *

19 (2)

20 * * *

21 (c) A copy of the proclamation shall also be mailed to the secretary of state
22 who shall ~~within twenty-four hours~~ immediately after receipt of the information
23 notify all election officials having any duty to perform in connection with a special
24 election to fill such vacancy, including the parish board of election supervisors.
25 When a special election is required, the appointee shall serve only until the successor
26 is elected and takes office.

27 §621. Vacancy in office of judge

28 * * *

1 the office for that district, or the designation "At large" in the case of the two offices
2 to be filled at large. Each nominating petition shall be accompanied by the notice
3 of candidacy and notarized affidavit of each candidate for elector signifying that the
4 certificate constitutes his acceptance of the nomination.

5 * * *

6 §1259. Arrangement of ballot; designation of party candidates

7 * * *

8 B.

9 * * *

10 (2) ~~Directly to the left of~~ In addition to the names of the presidential and vice
11 presidential candidates, the following shall appear:

12 * * *

13 §1300.3. Certification of registrar of voters; addition or withdrawal of signatures;
14 designation as a public record; form of names

15 A.(1)

16 * * *

17 (b) The registrar of voters for each parish in the voting area may request and
18 accept the assistance of employees of the Department of State and registrars and
19 deputy registrars of voters from other parishes to complete the certification of the
20 recall petition. ~~Each person offering such assistance shall be considered a deputy~~
21 ~~registrar of the requesting parish registrar for that purpose only.~~

22 * * *

23 §1303. Persons entitled to vote in compliance with this Chapter

24 * * *

25 K. Secretary of state and employees. The secretary of state or an employee
26 of the ~~secretary of state~~ Department of State who is a qualified voter and who
27 submits to the registrar of voters of the parish where he is registered to vote a letter
28 from his supervisor on Department of State letterhead confirming his employment,

1 voter registration database, the voter shall attest on the voter assistance form that the
2 voter has a physical disability or is unable to read and requires assistance in voting.

3 * * *

4 §1310. Execution of certificate; marking of ballot; casting vote; assistance

5 A.

6 * * *

7 (3) In order to cast a vote on an absentee by mail ballot, a voter shall make
8 a selection for a candidate or for or against a proposition by completely filling in the
9 oval to the right of a selection and returning the ballot to the registrar of voters as
10 provided in this Section within the applicable deadline set forth by law. If a voter
11 makes selections for more than the number of candidates to be elected for an office
12 or makes selections for and against the same proposition, the selections for that
13 office or proposition shall be void.

14 * * *

15 §1313. Tabulation and counting of absentee by mail and early voting ballots

16 * * *

17 C.(1) Absentee by mail and early voting ballots shall be counted at a public
18 facility within the parish designated by the registrar of voters at a time fixed by the
19 parish board of election supervisors, which time shall be on election day no later than
20 8:00 p.m. If the time selected by the parish board of election supervisors to count
21 absentee by mail and early voting ballots is after 4:00 p.m. on election day, the start
22 time shall be submitted to the commissioner of elections for approval no later than
23 the fourth day prior to election day.

24 * * *

25 H. The procedure for counting early voting machine ballots and paper ballots
26 voted during early voting shall be as follows:

27 * * *

1 (3) The board shall post the results from each early voting machine results
2 report for the early voting ballots, unless an early voting machine ballot has been
3 challenged pursuant to R.S. 18:1309(E)(6) ~~or 1315~~.

4 * * *

5 (5) The board shall determine the validity of challenges to early voters who
6 cast a paper ballot made in accordance with R.S. 18:1315.

7 * * *

8 §1313.1. Preparation, verification, tabulation, and counting of absentee by mail and
9 early voting ballots

10 * * *

11 C.

12 * * *

13 (2) Absentee by mail and early voting ballots shall be counted at a public
14 facility within the parish designated by the registrar of voters at a time fixed by the
15 parish board of election supervisors, which time shall be on election day no later than
16 8:00 p.m. If the time selected by the parish board of election supervisors to count
17 absentee by mail and early voting ballots is after 4:00 p.m. on election day, the start
18 time shall be submitted to the commissioner of elections for approval no later than
19 the fourth day prior to election day.

20 * * *

21 I. The procedure for counting early voting machine ballots on election day
22 shall be as follows:

23 * * *

24 (2) The board shall post the results from each early voting machine results
25 report for the early voting ballots, unless an early voting ballot has been challenged
26 pursuant to R.S. 18:1309(E)(6) ~~or 1315~~.

27 * * *

28 §1314. Parish board commissioners

29 * * *

1 B. Selection for primary election.

2 * * *

3 (2) The parish board of election supervisors shall meet ~~at 10:00 a.m.~~ on the
4 fifth day before a primary election and shall select the parish board commissioners
5 and alternate parish board commissioners for the parish in the manner provided by
6 law for the selection of commissioners and alternate commissioners. If there are not
7 enough certified commissioners to select the appropriate number of parish board
8 commissioners and alternate parish board commissioners, the board of election
9 supervisors may select a qualified elector of the parish to serve; however, no such
10 elector shall serve as a parish board commissioner if a certified commissioner has
11 been selected as an alternate parish board commissioner.

12 * * *

13 C. Selection for general election.

14 * * *

15 (2)(a) If the parish board determines that the number of parish board
16 commissioners can be reduced, it shall notify each person who served as a parish
17 board commissioner or alternate parish board commissioner in the primary election
18 of its decision to reduce the number of parish board commissioners and of the date
19 and time of the meeting to select the parish board commissioners for the general
20 election. The parish board shall meet ~~at 10:00 a.m.~~ on the fifth day before a general
21 election and shall select the parish board commissioners and alternate parish board
22 commissioners to serve in the general election for the parish.

23 * * *

24 (3) If the parish board and the secretary of state or his designee determine
25 that the number of parish board commissioners should be increased, the parish board
26 shall meet ~~at 10:00 a.m.~~ on the fifth day before a general election and shall select the
27 additional parish board commissioners and alternate parish board commissioners to
28 serve in the general election for that parish from the list of certified commissioners
29 who have not been chosen to serve in the general election as a

1 commissioner-in-charge, commissioner, or, if applicable, parish board commissioner
 2 in the manner provided by law for the selection of commissioners and alternate
 3 commissioners. If there are not enough certified commissioners to select the
 4 appropriate number of parish board commissioners and alternate parish board
 5 commissioners, the board of election supervisors may select a qualified elector of the
 6 parish to serve; however, no such elector shall serve as a parish board commissioner
 7 if a certified commissioner has been selected as an alternate parish board
 8 commissioner.

9 * * *

10 §1315. Challenge of absentee by mail or early voting ballot

11 A.(1)(a) A candidate or his representative, a member of the board, or a
 12 qualified elector may challenge an absentee by mail ~~or early voting~~ ballot for the
 13 grounds specified in R.S. 18:565(A), by personally filing his written challenge with
 14 the registrar no later than the fourth day before the election for which the ballot is
 15 challenged. ~~Such challenge shall be on a form provided by the secretary of state.~~

16 (b) A candidate or his representative, a member of the board, an early voting
 17 watcher, or a qualified elector may challenge a person applying to early vote on the
 18 grounds specified in R.S. 18:565(A), prior to the person casting an early voting
 19 ballot. The challenged early voter shall not cast his ballot on an early voting
 20 machine, but shall be provided a paper ballot in accordance with R.S.
 21 18:1309(E)(5)(b).

22 (2) A challenge made pursuant to this Subsection shall be on a form provided
 23 by the secretary of state which ~~The form~~ shall include:

24 * * *

25 B. During the preparation and verification process for the counting of
 26 absentee by mail and early voting ballots before the election, as applicable, or the
 27 counting of absentee by mail and early voting ballots on election day, any candidate
 28 or his representative, member of the board, or qualified elector may challenge an
 29 absentee by mail or early voting paper ballot for cause, other than those grounds

1 specified in R.S. 18:565(A). Failure to include a witness's printed name or mailing
2 address on an absentee ballot certificate shall not be grounds to challenge an
3 absentee by mail ballot.

4 * * *
5 D.

6 * * *

7 (2) If a challenge in accordance with the provisions of Subsection A of this
8 Section is sustained, the vote shall not be counted; the ballot or early voting
9 confirmation sheet shall be placed in the special, secure absentee by mail and early
10 voting ballot container; and the board shall notify the voter in writing of the
11 challenge and the cause therefor. This notification shall be on a form provided by
12 the secretary of state and shall be signed by at least a majority of the members of the
13 board. The notice of the challenge and the cause therefor shall be given within four
14 business days by mail, addressed to the voter at his place of residence. The board
15 shall retain a copy of the notification. However, if the challenge is based upon a
16 change of residence within the parish or is based upon a change of residence outside
17 of the parish that has occurred within the last three months, the ballot shall be
18 counted, provided that the voter confirmed his current address as shown by the
19 affidavit of the absentee by mail ballot certificate or early voting confirmation sheet
20 or, if the voter is on the inactive list of voters, as shown by the information provided
21 on an address confirmation ~~notice~~ form.

22 * * *

23 §1316. Rejection of ballot having distinguishing marks

24 * * *

25 D. The secretary of state may promulgate rules in accordance with the
26 Administrative Procedure Act necessary to effectuate the provisions and purposes
27 of this Section.

1 §1317. Curing absentee by mail ballot deficiencies; rejection of deficient ballots

2 A.(1) The secretary of state shall promulgate ~~and adopt~~ rules in accordance
3 with the Administrative Procedure Act as necessary to effectuate uniform and
4 standardized processes for the review and curing or rejection of deficient absentee
5 by mail ballots by the parish board of election supervisors;

6 (2) The failure of a witness to provide his printed name or address on the
7 absentee by mail certificate shall not be deemed a deficiency requiring cure.

8 B. The secretary of state shall maintain records of all ballots rejected
9 pursuant to the provisions of R.S. 18:1315(D)(3)(a); and shall include information
10 detailing the total number of ballots rejected per parish and the reasons for their
11 rejection in the post-election statistical data published to the website of the secretary
12 of state.

13 * * *

14 §1333. Nursing home early voting program; voting by persons residing in a nursing
15 home

16 * * *

17 B. A qualified voter who resides in a nursing home within the parish in
18 which the voter is entitled to vote may vote early as provided in this Section during
19 the period extending at least two weeks prior to the beginning day for early voting
20 through four days before election day ~~the last day for early voting established by R.S.~~
21 ~~18:1309.~~

22 * * *

23 G. The voting by each voter shall be accomplished in the following manner:

24 (1) The voter shall present to the registrar the letter the voter received from
25 the registrar that bears the reply number assigned as provided in Subsection E of this
26 Section. The registrar shall compare the number on the letter with the number on the
27 absentee by mail ballot envelope in his possession and, if they are identical, the
28 registrar shall hand the envelope containing the absentee by mail ballot to the voter.
29 However, if the voter is on the inactive list of voters, the voter shall complete an

1 address confirmation ~~notice~~ form prior to receiving the envelope containing the
2 absentee by mail ballot.

3 * * *

4 (7) Upon receipt of an address confirmation ~~notice~~ form, the registrar shall
5 reinstate the voter to the official list of voters.

6 * * *

7 §1371. Delivery and return of machines and supplies; contract; time of delivery

8 A.(1)(a) The secretary of state shall contract for the delivery to the voting
9 precincts of the election day machines and other election equipment and supplies for
10 which he is responsible and for their return to the storage warehouses. The
11 specifications for the contract shall be prepared by the secretary of state after
12 consultation with and approval by the parish custodian of the parish in which the
13 contract is to be performed. The contract shall be ~~advertised and let~~ procured in
14 accordance with the Louisiana Procurement Code. The governing authority of the
15 parish or municipality in which the voting machines are to be used may submit bids
16 and be awarded contracts for the drayage of the voting machines.

17 (b) The secretary of state may contract for delivery the week prior to the
18 beginning of early voting until no later than 11:59 p.m. on the day before early
19 voting begins for an election, in the parishes that have three or more early voting
20 locations, of the voting machines and other election equipment and supplies for
21 which he is responsible and for their return to the offices of the registrars of voters
22 or the location designated by the registrar of voters within twenty-four hours of the
23 end of early voting. The specifications for the contract shall be prepared by the
24 secretary of state after consultation with and approval by the registrar of voters of the
25 parish in which the contract is to be performed. The contract shall be ~~advertised and~~
26 ~~let~~ procured in accordance with the Louisiana Procurement Code. The governing
27 authority of the parish or municipality in which the voting machines are to be used
28 may submit bids and be awarded contracts for the drayage of the early voting
29 machines.

1 Section, no further action shall be commenced objecting to candidacy based on the
2 grounds for objections to candidacy contained in R.S. 18:492.

3 B. An action contesting any election involving election to office shall be
4 instituted no earlier than the day after the date of the election and no ~~not~~ later than
5 4:30 p.m. of the ninth day after the date of the election, and no such contest shall be
6 declared moot because of the performance or nonperformance of a ministerial
7 function including but not limited to matters relating to the printing of ballots for the
8 general election.

9 C.(1) An action contesting an election on a proposed constitutional
10 amendment shall be instituted no earlier than the day after the election and ~~not~~ no
11 later than 4:30 p.m. of the tenth day after promulgation of the results of the election
12 by the secretary of state.

13 (2) An action objecting to the placement of a constitutional amendment on
14 a ballot shall be instituted no earlier than the date of the final passage of the joint
15 resolution calling the election and no later than 4:30 p.m. of the thirtieth day after
16 final passage of the legislative instrument calling the election.

17 D. An action contesting an election submitting a proposition to the voters,
18 except a constitutional amendment or a proposition covered by Subsection (C)(2) or
19 E of this Section, shall be instituted no earlier than the day after the date of the
20 election and no ~~not~~ later than 4:30 p.m. of the thirtieth day after the official
21 promulgation of the results of the election.

22 E. An action contesting an election on a proposition submitted to the voters
23 relating to the issuance of bonds, refunding bonds, assuming an indebtedness, or
24 levying a tax shall be instituted no earlier than the day after the date of the election
25 and no ~~not~~ later than 4:30 p.m. of the sixtieth day after official promulgation of the
26 results. If the legality of the election, the bond issue provided for, the tax authorized,
27 or the assumption of indebtedness is not contested within the sixty days herein
28 prescribed, the authority to incur the debt, levy the tax, or issue the bonds, the
29 legality thereof, and the taxes and other revenues necessary to pay the same shall be

1 conclusively presumed to be valid and no court thereafter shall have authority to
2 inquire into such matters.

3 F. An action contesting the certification of a recall petition shall be instituted
4 after the certification of the recall petition as provided in R.S. 18:1300.3 and not later
5 than 4:30 p.m. of the fifteenth day after the governor has issued the proclamation
6 ordering the recall election or not later than 4:30 p.m. of the fifteenth day after the
7 last day for the governor to call the election if no recall election is called.

8 G. Except as provided in Paragraph (C)(1) of this Section, an ~~An~~ action
9 objecting to the calling of a special election shall be instituted no earlier than the day
10 after the date the election is called and no ~~not~~ later than 4:30 p.m. of the fourteenth
11 day after the ~~calling of the election~~ date the election is called.

12 H. An action contesting any election involving the recall of a public officer
13 shall be instituted no earlier than the day after the date of the election and no ~~not~~
14 than 4:30 p.m. of the ninth day after the date of the election.

15 * * *

16 §1413. Computation of time

17 Computation of all time intervals in this Chapter shall include Sundays and
18 other legal holidays. However, if the time interval ends on a Sunday or other legal
19 holiday, then ~~noon~~ 4:30 p.m. of the next legal day shall be deemed to be the end of
20 the time interval.

21 * * *

22 §1922.2. Approval of reapportionment plan by local election officials

23 A. Prior to the adoption of any local redistricting or reapportionment plan,
24 a local governing body shall submit the proposed plan to the parish registrar of voters
25 and clerk of court for review. If the local governing body utilizes a demographer to
26 produce the proposed plan, the demographer shall be available to the registrar of
27 voters and clerk of court to conduct their review. If the local governing body utilizes
28 a geographic information system to develop its redistricting plan, it shall submit the
29 proposed plan to the registrar of voters and clerk of court electronically in a

1 geospatial shape file or an ASCII, comma delimited block equivalency import file
2 which indicates the census block assignments in accordance with its redistricting
3 plan.

4 B.(1) The registrar of voters shall review and confirm that each district of the
5 proposed plan assigns all of the geography of the affected area without omission or
6 duplication. If the proposed plan utilizes precincts, the registrar shall confirm the
7 proposed plan utilizes the most current precincts established by the parish governing
8 authority pursuant to R.S. 18:532 and 532.1.

9 (2) The registrar of voters and clerk of court shall review and confirm in
10 writing the ability to conduct an election utilizing the proposed plan.

11 (3) The local governing body shall submit to the secretary of state in
12 accordance with timetables in this Section, the written report received by the local
13 governing body.

14 Section 2. R.S. 18:107(H) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

15 §107. Party affiliation for registration; change in party affiliation

16 * * *

17 H. A person who is registered as or who applies for registration as
18 "unaffiliated" shall have his party affiliation changed to "no party".

19 Section 3. R.S. 18:154(C)(1)(h) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

20 §154. Records open to inspection; copying; exceptions

21 * * *

22 C.(1) Notwithstanding any provision of this Section to the contrary, the
23 registrar, the clerk of court, the Department of State, the office of motor vehicles of
24 the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and any entity that contracts with
25 the office, each voter registration agency and any entity that contracts with a voter
26 registration agency, and any person who handles the voter registration application
27 form of another person shall be prohibited from circulating on a commercial list or
28 otherwise disclosing the following:

29 * * *

CODING: Words in ~~struck through~~ type are deletions from existing law; words underscored are additions.

1 (h) The voter registration application and any information contained on the
 2 voter registration application of any person who is sixteen or seventeen years of age,
 3 except that the voter registration information of a person who is seventeen years of
 4 age may appear in a precinct register when that person will be eighteen years of age
 5 within seven days before an election day.

6 * * *

7 Section 4. R.S. 18:402(G)(1) as amended and reenacted by Act No. 640 of the 2024
 8 Regular Session of the Legislature shall supercede R.S. 18:402(G)(1) as amended and
 9 reenacted by Act No. 386 of the 2025 Regular Session of the Legislature.

10 Section 5. (A) Section 1 of this Act shall become effective August 1, 2026.

11 (B) Section 2 of this Act shall become effective September 1, 2026.

12 (C) Section 3 of this Act shall become effective February 1, 2027.

13 (D) Section 4 and this Section of this Act shall become effective upon signature by
 14 the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to
 15 become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the
 16 Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the
 17 legislature, Section 4 and this Section of this Act shall become effective on the day following
 18 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 842 Engrossed 2026 Regular Session Beaulieu

Abstract: Makes revisions to the La. Election Code.

Registrars of voters

Present law (R.S. 18:53) provides grounds for removal of a registrar of voters. Provides that if the commissioner of elections raises allegations that the parish registrar has engaged in conduct for which a registrar may be removed, the State Board of Election Supervisors shall schedule a hearing on the allegations brought by the commissioner of elections within 30 days of the receipt thereof. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:55 and 59) provides that the parish portion of the salary for each registrar of voters, chief deputy registrar, and confidential assistant shall be paid monthly by the parish governing authority.

Proposed law retains present law and further provides that the parish portion of the salary may also be paid biweekly or semimonthly.

Present law (R.S. 18:62) provides that no registrar of voters, deputy registrar, or other employee of a registrar who is in the unclassified *state* service shall participate or engage in certain political activity.

Proposed law retains present law and further extends the prohibition to registrars of voters, deputy registrars, and other employees of a registrar who are in the unclassified civil service of *any* civil service system.

Present law further provides that all deputy registrars and other employees of a registrar who are in the classified *state* service shall be subject to the constitution and laws, and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto, affecting political activities by persons in the classified state service.

Proposed law retains present law and further provides that deputy registrars and other employees of a registrar who are in the classified civil service of *any* civil service system shall be subject to the constitution and laws, and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto, affecting political activities by persons in the classified civil service.

Voter registration

Present law (R.S. 18:108) provides that if a registrant's application for registration indicates that the applicant previously registered as a voter in any other parish, and if the previous notice of registration is available, then before making a new registration the registrar shall require the applicant to surrender his previous notice for cancellation and the registrar shall promptly notify the registrar of the parish in which the applicant has registered previously of the present registration.

Proposed law removes the requirement that the applicant surrender his previous notice for cancellation.

Present law provides that in such instances, the other registrar shall verify the cancellation of the voter's registration in the other parish. Proposed law removes the requirement that the other registrar verify the cancellation and instead requires the registrar to cancel the prior registration in the other parish.

Present law (R.S. 18:110) provides that a change of registration based upon a change of residence within a parish received after the closing of registration for a primary election shall become effective the day after the general election or special general election when a special primary election is held in conjunction with a general election. Present law provides exceptions for when registration is cancelled or changed under certain specific circumstances.

Proposed law retains present law and further provides that a change of registration based upon a change of residence within a parish received after the closing of registration for a closed party primary election shall become effective the day after the second party primary election.

Present law provides that in a regularly scheduled general election where the only candidate's election appearing on any ballot in the parish is a special primary election, a change in registration shall become effective prior to the special primary election.

Proposed law further provides that such a change shall become effective for the special primary election if made prior to the close of registration for the general election.

Present law provides that in a regularly scheduled or special general election, where the change of registration does not change any issues or candidate offices upon which the voter

was entitled to vote prior to the change, the change shall become effective prior to the regularly scheduled or special general election.

Proposed law further provides that such a change shall become effective for the general election if made prior to the close of registration for the general election.

Proposed law (R.S. 18:106.1) provides that if a registered voter, subsequent to his registration, is no longer capable of signing his name or making a mark due to a physical disability, he shall file with the registrar of voters an alternative signature attestation to authorize another person to sign documents required by the Election Code on his behalf. Requires the voter to include a letter signed by a physician stating that the voter is unable to provide his signature or mark due to a physical disability and that the voter is capable of providing consent for another person to sign on his behalf.

Proposed law imposes requirements on the individual assisting the applicant and provides for information that shall be included on the form.

Proposed law provides that the individual authorized to assist the voter shall be an elector of the state and shall not be a candidate, the voter's employer or employer's agent, or the voter's union agent. Provides that the individual authorized to assist the applicant shall also sign and print his own name and residential address on any document for which the individual assists the applicant.

Proposed law further provides that if a registered voter who is no longer capable of signing his name or making a mark due to a physical disability appears in person to vote on election day or during early voting, he shall verbally or otherwise convey his consent for the commissioner or deputy registrar to sign the precinct register, early voting register, and any other forms required by the Election Code and the commissioner or deputy registrar shall sign on behalf of the voter in the presence of at least one witness.

Present law (R.S. 18:154) provides, generally, that the records of each registrar are public records and at all times during office hours shall be open to inspection, except the early voting confirmation sheets of voters. Further provides that the name and address of a law enforcement officer shall not be subject to disclosure if the registrar has received certification from the law enforcement agency employing the officer that the officer is engaging in hazardous activities and it is necessary for his name and address to be kept confidential. Provides that any agency employing a law enforcement officer whose records are made confidential shall also issue a decertification notice to the registrar of voters when the officer is no longer engaging in hazardous activities.

Proposed law retains present law and further provides that the law enforcement officer may submit written notice to the registrar of voters that it is no longer necessary for his name and address to be kept confidential.

Proposed law provides that upon receipt of a notification from either the employing agency or the law enforcement officer, the registrar shall remove the indication of certification for the affected law enforcement officer from the state voter registration computer system.

Present law (R.S. 18:192), requires the Dept. of State to conduct two separate annual canvasses of registered voters, one occurring no later than July 31st, and another occurring no later than June 30th. Proposed law provides that the department is not required to conduct either canvass in a calendar year when there is less than sixty days between the spring general election date and opening of qualifying for the fall election cycle.

When conducting the annual canvass, present law requires the Dept. of State to use address data obtained pursuant to a written agreement from another state or federal governmental agency or private vendor that provides voter registration eligibility or address data to verify the names and addresses of the registrants in all precincts in the state. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law requires the Dept. of State to use information available in the state voter registration computer system to conduct the annual canvass and identify registrants whose name does not appear with a corrected address provided by the United States Postal Service (USPS) or its licensee.

Proposed law provides that the Dept. of State shall use information provided pursuant to the written agreement provided for in present law, instead of information provided by the USPS or its licensee.

Present law (R.S. 18:193) provides for the placement of registrants on the inactive list of voters when the registrar has reason to believe that the registrant is no longer qualified to be registered, or that a registrant has changed his residence. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that the registrant shall not be placed on the inactive list of voters if there is address information available to the registrar from the USPS or its licensee. Proposed law instead provides the registrant shall not be placed on the inactive list of voters if there is address information available to the registrar.

Present law provides for the use of an address confirmation notice to confirm the address of a registered voter. Present law (R.S. 18:191.1) provides that the address confirmation notice shall include a postage prepaid and preaddressed return notice sent by forwardable mail and shall inform the registrant about his voting rights under the address confirmation process.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law requires registered voters who appear at a polling location on election day to confirm their address using an address confirmation notice. Proposed law (R.S. 18:196(B), 562(B), 565(B), 571, 573, 1315(D)(2), and 1333) instead requires such voters to confirm their address using an address confirmation *form*.

Present law provides that if a registrant whose name is on the inactive list of voters votes absentee by mail or during early voting, the registrar shall transfer the registrant's name to the official list of voters and make any necessary corrections in the registrant's registration records if the information on the address confirmation notice or the residence address provided in an application to vote by mail so indicates.

Proposed law requires the same if a registrant whose name is on the inactive list of voters applies to vote absentee by mail. Further requires the registrar to change the registrant's registration address to the residence address provided on the address confirmation form or application to vote by mail.

Present law (R.S. 18:197) provides that no registrar shall cancel the registration of any voter in his parish between any primary election and the subsequent general election occurring in that parish, except for those fraudulently placed upon the registration records or canceled pursuant to the annual canvass conducted by the registrar.

Proposed law instead places a limitation on cancellations between any *open* primary and subsequent general election, except for if the registration was illegally or fraudulently placed upon the registration records, the registrant is no longer qualified to be registered for a reason other than a change of residence or address, or the registrant has deliberately given an incorrect address.

Present law (R.S. 18:107) provides that an applicant for registration who declares party affiliation as "Independent" or with the "Independent Party" shall have his party affiliation entered as "No Party".

Proposed law retains present law and further provides that on and after Sept. 1, 2026, that a person who is registered as or who applies for registration as "unaffiliated" shall have his party affiliation changed to "no party".

Present law (R.S. 18:154) prohibits circulating on a commercial list or otherwise disclosing the voter registration application and any information contained on the voter registration application of any person who is 16 or 17 years of age.

Proposed law retains present law except to provide that the voter registration information of a person who is 17 years of age may appear in a precinct register when that person will be 18 years of age within seven days before an election day.

Present law (R.S. 18:1303.3) provides procedures for the certification of signatures on a recall petition. Present law provides that the registrar of voters for each parish in the voting area may request and accept the assistance of employees of the Dept. of State and registrars and deputy registrars of voters from other parishes to complete the certification of the recall petition. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that each person offering such assistance shall be considered a deputy registrar of the requesting parish registrar for that purpose only. Proposed law repeals present law.

Election administration, generally

Present law (R.S. 18:402) provides for prohibited election days. Provides that if the date of any fall election falls on any prohibited day, the election shall be held on the same *weekday* of the preceding week. Proposed law instead provides that the election shall be held on the same *day* of the preceding week.

Present law (R.S. 18:402(G)(1)) as amended and reenacted by Act No. 640 of the 2024 R.S. of the Legislature of La. provides that the fall gubernatorial and congressional election dates shall be the regularly scheduled statewide elections for purposes of voting on constitutional amendments. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:433) provides that the parish board of election supervisors shall meet at 10:00 a.m. on the 2nd Friday in January of each year to select commissioners-in-charge, or if the course of instruction for commissioners-in-charge is delayed, at 10:00 a.m. on or before the 5th day after completion of the course.

Proposed law instead requires that the parish board meet on or before the 2nd Friday in Jan. and removes the requirement that the parish board meet at 10:00 a.m in either circumstance.

Present law (R.S. 18:1314) provides that the parish board of election supervisors shall meet at 10:00 a.m. on the 5th day before a primary election and at 10:00 a.m. on the 5th day before a general election to select parish board commissioners necessary to count absentee and early voting ballots. Proposed law removes the requirement that the parish board meet at 10:00 a.m in either circumstance and allows the board to meet on or before the 5th day for each circumstance.

Present law (R.S. 18:564 and 1309.3) provides that a voter needing assistance on election day or early voting, along with the person assisting the voter, shall complete a voter assistance form and provide the name, address, and relationship to the voter of the person, including a commissioner, assisting the voter and attest whether the person, other than a commissioner, assisting the voter was paid to provide assistance.

Proposed law provides that only the person assisting the voter, and not the voter, shall complete the voter assistance form.

Present law (R.S. 18:574) requires the parish board of election supervisors, immediately after the completion of the verification by the clerk of court and the counting and tabulation of provisional ballots for federal office, to publicly prepare two compiled statements of the election returns as shown by the record of the votes made by the clerk of court. Requires that the parish board mail one copy of the compiled statement to the secretary of state and that the clerk transmit the other copy to the secretary of state.

Proposed law instead requires the parish board to prepare one compiled statement and requires the clerk to transmit an electronic copy to the secretary of state.

Present law (R.S. 18:602, 604, 621) requires the secretary of state, within 24 hours of receiving a proclamation ordering a special election to fill a vacancy, to notify all election officials having any duty in connection with a special election to fill such vacancy, including the parish boards of election supervisors for the parish or parishes in which the vacancy occurred.

Proposed law instead requires the secretary of state to provide the notice immediately.

Present law (R.S. 18:532, 532.1, and 1922.2) provides for the establishment of precincts and changing of boundaries and other reapportionment plans. Requires the parish governing authority or local governing body, prior to adoption, to submit proposed precincts or boundaries to the clerk and registrar to confirm the ability to conduct an election on the proposed plan.

Proposed law requires the clerk and registrar to submit their confirmation in writing and requires the parish governing authority or local governing body to submit the confirmation to the secretary.

Present law (R.S. 18:1259) prescribes the arrangement of the ballot. Provides that certain information shall appear directly to the left of the names of the presidential and vice presidential candidates. Proposed law requires that the information instead appear in addition to the names of the candidates.

Present law (R.S. 18:1309) provides for early voting commissioners. Provides that a person may serve as an early voting commissioner only if he has received a certificate of instruction and attended a course of instruction for early voting commissioners.

Proposed law also requires that a person serving as early voting commissioner to be a qualified voter who is able to perform the essential duties of a commissioner.

Present law further provides specific criteria for which a person is disqualified from serving as an early voting commissioner.

Proposed law instead provides that an early voting commissioner shall meet the same qualifications as an election day commissioner.

Present law provides that a list of early voting watchers shall be filed with the registrar of voters before 4:30 p.m. on the 14th business day before the first day of early voting. Proposed law instead requires the list to be filed before 4:30 p.m. on the 10th business day before the first day of early voting.

Present law (R.S. 18:1371) provides for the secretary of state to contract for the delivery of voting machines and equipment through the method of advertising and letting according to the La. Procurement Code.

Proposed law instead authorizes the secretary of state to contract for such services in accordance with the La. Procurement Code, without regard to a specific method of procurement.

Present law requires the secretary of state to provide notice of invitations to be in a specific manner not otherwise provided for in the La. Procurement Code when seeking to award a contract by competitive sealed bid. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:1413) provides that if a time interval provided in the Election Code ends on a Sunday or other legal holiday, then noon of the next legal day shall be deemed to be the end of the time interval.

Proposed law changes the end of the time interval to 4:30 p.m. of the next legal day.

Candidate qualifying and withdrawal

Present law (R.S. 18:465) provides that each voter who signs a nominating petition shall date his signature and shall provide the ward and precinct in which he is registered to vote, his residence address, including the municipal number, the apartment number, if any, the rural route and box number, or any other physical description that will identify his actual place of residence. Additionally requires that the name of each voter who signed the nominating petition to be typed or legibly written on the petition, and each signature on the nominating petition to be dated and witnessed by the candidate or the person who obtained the signature on his behalf.

Proposed law instead requires each voter who signs the petition to provide the information generally required for petitions submitted to the registrar, which includes the voter's signature or mark, the date that the voter signed the petition, his year of birth, the address at which he is registered to vote, his name either typed or legibly written, the printed name of the person who witnessed and who obtained the signature either typed or legibly written, and the month, day, and year on which the person witnessed and obtained the signature.

Proposed law authorizes the registrar for each parish that is required to certify a nominating petition to request and accept the assistance of employees of the Dept. of State and registrars and deputy registrars of voters from other parishes to complete the certification of the nominating petition.

Present law (R.S. 18:469) provides that when a candidate that has opposition in a primary election for a public office dies after the close of the qualifying period and before the time for closing the polls on the day of the primary election, the qualifying period for candidates in the primary election for that office shall reopen for candidates on the day after the death and shall close on the third day after notice of the death.

Proposed law provides that the qualifying period shall reopen on the day after the secretary of state receives actual notice of the death.

Present law (R.S. 18:1405 and 1413) provides that an action objecting to candidacy shall be instituted not later than 4:30 p.m. of the 7th day after the close of qualifications for candidates in the primary election. After the expiration of the time period, no further action shall be commenced objecting to candidacy based on the grounds for objections to candidacy. Provides that computation of time intervals shall include Sundays and other legal holidays. However, if the time interval ends on a Sunday or other legal holiday, then noon of the next legal day shall be deemed to be the end of the time interval. Present law (R.S. 18:493) reiterates the same provisions.

Proposed law retains present law as it appears in R.S. 18:1405 and 1413, and repeals the reiteration of present law contained in R.S. 18:493.

Present law (R.S. 18:501) provides that if the number of candidates remaining in a primary election, second party primary election, or general election for a public office is one more than the number of persons to be elected to the office, the secretary of state shall accept a notice of withdrawal that is filed prior to 4:30 p.m. on the second day prior to the first day of early voting.

Proposed law provides that the secretary of state shall accept a notice received on the second *business* day prior to the first day of early voting.

Present law (R.S. 18:1254) provides for nominating petitions for the office of presidential elector. Requires that petitions shall be in the form prescribed for nominating petitions generally, which requires that each sheet of the petition include the candidate's name and domiciliary address. Further requires that the petition for presidential elector include the

names of the candidate for president and the candidate for vice president whom the candidates for elector support.

Proposed law removes the requirement that each sheet include the candidate's name and domiciliary address and instead provides that each sheet of the petition include the names of the candidate for president and the candidate for vice president whom the candidates for elector support.

Absentee by mail and early voting

Present law (R.S. 18:1303) authorizes certain persons to vote absentee by mail. Provides that qualified voters who are employees of the secretary of state or a registrar of voters for a parish other than the parish where the person is registered to vote may vote absentee by mail if he submits to his parish registrar of voters a copy of a state employee identification card or identification card showing employment with the registrar of voters.

Proposed law additionally authorizes such qualified voters employed by the Dept. of State to submit a letter from his supervisor on secretary of state letterhead confirming his employment, or a paystub; and a qualified voter employed by a registrar of voters to submit a letter from the registrar of voters confirming his employment, or a paystub.

Present law (R.S. 18:1310) provides for the marking of an absentee by mail ballot. Proposed law provides that in order to cast a vote on an absentee by mail ballot, a voter must make a selection for a candidate or for or against a proposition by completely filling in the oval to the right of a selection and returning the ballot to the registrar of voters as provided in this Section within the applicable deadline set forth by law. If a voter makes selections for more than the number of candidates to be elected for an office or makes selections for and against the same proposition, the selections for that office or proposition will be void.

Present law (R.S. 18:1313 and 1313.1) provides that absentee by mail and early voting ballots shall be counted at a time fixed by the parish board of election supervisors which shall be on election day no later than 8:00 p.m.

Proposed law retains present law and further provides that if the time selected by the parish board of election supervisors to count absentee by mail and early voting ballots is after 4:00 p.m. on election day, the start time must be submitted to the commissioner of elections for approval no later than the fourth day prior to election day.

Present law (R.S. 18:1315(A)) provides for the challenge of an absentee by mail or early voting ballot may be filed with the registrar no later than the 4th day before the election. Proposed law limits present law to apply only to the challenge of absentee by mail ballots, and instead provides that early voting ballots may be challenged prior to the person casting an early voting ballot, in which case the voter shall cast his vote on a paper ballot instead of on an early voting machine.

Present law (R.S. 18:1315(B)) provides that failure to include a witness's mailing address on an absentee ballot certificate shall not be grounds to challenge an absentee by mail ballot.

Proposed law retains present law and further provides that failure to include a witness's printed name shall not be grounds to challenge an absentee by mail ballot.

Present law (R.S. 18:1316) provides for the parish board to reject an absentee by mail or early voting ballot having distinguishing marks; provides for circumstances that shall lead to the rejection of a ballot and for certain ballots that shall not be considered as having distinguishing marks.

Proposed law retains present law and authorizes the secretary of state to adopt rules necessary to effectuate present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:1317) provides for the curing of absentee mail ballot deficiencies. Proposed law retains present law and provides that the failure of a witness to provide his printed name or address on the absentee by mail certificate shall not be deemed a deficiency requiring cure.

Present law (R.S. 18:1333) provides for the nursing home early voting program authorizing qualified voters who reside in a nursing home to vote early during the period extending two weeks prior to the beginning day for early voting through the last day for early voting, which is seven days prior to the scheduled election.

Proposed law extends the nursing home early voting period to end on the fourth day before election day.

Election contests

Present law (R.S. 18:1401) provides for election contests and challenges, including actions objecting to candidacy, actions brought by a candidate or person in interest contesting an election, actions objecting to the calling of a special election to fill a vacancy, actions contesting the certification of a recall petition, and actions contesting a recall election.

Proposed law retains present law and authorizes a qualified elector to bring an action objecting to the placement of a constitutional amendment on a ballot.

Present law (R.S. 18:1402) provides for the proper parties to the various actions contesting an election.

Proposed law retains present law and provides that the secretary of state is a proper party, in his official capacity, in an action objecting to the placement of a constitutional amendment on the ballot.

Present law (R.S. 18:1405) provides for the timing for the commencement of election contests.

Present law provides for the deadlines to file an action objecting to candidacy, an action contesting any election involving election to office, an action contesting an election submitting certain propositions to the voters, an action objecting to the calling of a special election, and an action contesting any election involving the recall of a public officer, but does not provide for the first day such actions can be filed.

Proposed law provides that an action objecting to candidacy shall be instituted no earlier than the day the candidate submits his notice of candidacy to the qualifying official.

Proposed law provides that an action contesting any election involving election to office, an action contesting an election submitting certain propositions to the voters, or an action contesting any election involving the recall of a public officer shall be instituted no earlier than the day after the date of the election.

Proposed law provides that an action objecting to the calling of a special election shall be instituted no earlier than the date the election is called.

Proposed law provides that an action objecting to the placement of a constitutional amendment on the ballot shall be instituted no earlier than the date of the final passage of the joint resolution calling the election and no later than 4:30 p.m. of the 30th day after final passage of the legislative instrument calling the election.

(Amends R.S. 18:53(B)(2)(b), 55(D), 59(F), 62, 108(A), 110(B)(3), 154(C)(1)(h) and (D)(1) and (3), 192(B)(1)(a), 193(A), 196(B) and (C)(2)(a), 197, 402(A)(1), 433(B)(1), 465(B) and (D), 469(A), 491(B), 493, 495(B), 501(C), 532(F), 532.1(C)(1) and (4), 562(B)(2), 564(B)(5)(b), 565(B) and (C), 571(A)(8), 573(E), 574(A)(2) and (3), 602(E)(2)(d), 604(B)(2)(c), 621(B), 1254(C), 1259(B)(2)(intro. para.), 1300.3(A)(1)(b), 1303(K) and (L),

1309(D)(2), (K), and (N)(5), 1309.3(B)(4)(b), 1313(C)(1) and (H)(3) and (5), 1313.1(C)(2) and (I)(2), 1314(B)(2) and (C)(2)(a) and (3), 1315(A)(1) and (2)(intro. para.), (B), and (D)(2), 1317, 1333(B) and (G)(1) and (7), 1371(A)(1) and (2)(intro. para.), 1401(G), 1402(B)(1)(a), 1405, 1413, and 1922.2; Adds R.S. 18:106.2, 107(H), 110(B)(1)(c), 192(C), 465(E)(3), 1310(A)(3), 1316(D), and 1401(H)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Remove the proposed law requirement that the chief deputy registrar or confidential assistant, specifically, remain in the registrar's office during the time that the office is open on election day.
2. Provide for the timely receipt of a change in registration to be effective for a special primary election or regularly scheduled or special general election.
3. Remove proposed law provisions authorizing the secretary of state to bring an action contesting any election if he alleges irregularities in the conduct of the election may have effected the outcome of the election.
4. Make technical changes.