

July 1, 2021

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Honorable Clay J. Schexnayder
Speaker of the House
Louisiana House of Representatives
Post Office Box 94062
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9062

RE: Veto of House Bill 704 of the 2021 Regular Session

Dear Speaker Schexnayder:

Please be advised that I have vetoed House Bill 704 of the 2021 Regular Session.

This bill attempts to address election integrity by providing for a political party “watcher” in every precinct on election day and political party “super watchers” in every parish. The watchers and super watchers would be designated by the state central committee of a recognized political party having at least 25% of the registered voters in the state. However, there are five recognized political parties in Louisiana presently. If this bill were signed into law, it would be impossible for every recognized political party to have a watcher in every precinct or super watchers in every parish. Current law authorizes each candidate to have one watcher at every precinct on election day where the office he seeks is voted and additionally authorizes the candidate to designate a super watcher to have access to every precinct in a designated parish where the office the candidate seeks is on the ballot. There is no good reason to further politicize the operation of elections by inserting the state central committee of certain parties into the poll watching process.

Sincerely,

John Bel Edwards
Governor

cc: Honorable Patrick Page Cortez
Louisiana Senate President