

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 159

BY REPRESENTATIVE FARNUM

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

VOTING/REGISTRATION: Provides for a supplemental annual canvass of registered voters

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:196(A)(1) and (D) and to enact R.S. 18:194, relative to the
3 annual canvass of persons registered to vote; to provide for a supplemental annual
4 canvass of persons registered to vote; to provide relative to the inactive list of voters;
5 to provide for updating voter registration information; to provide for an effective
6 date; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 18:196(A)(1) and (D) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.
9 18:194 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §194. Supplemental annual canvass

11 A. Each year, once the registrars have sent address confirmation notices as
12 set forth in R.S. 18:192 and 193, the Department of State shall conduct the
13 supplemental annual canvass set forth in this Section.

14 B. The purpose of the supplemental annual canvass is to identify other
15 registrants who have moved and need to update their voter registration records to
16 reflect their current addresses.

17 C. The secretary of state shall identify, from information available in the
18 state voter registration computer system, registrants to whom all the following apply:

19 (1) The registrant's name did not appear with a corrected address provided
20 by the United States Postal Service or its licensee under R.S. 18:192(A)(1)(b).

1 (2) The registrant has not voted in an election in the past ten years.

2 (3) The registrant failed to engage in any of the following activities in the
3 past ten years: make an application for voter registration; receive an absentee ballot;
4 validly sign a petition submitted to the registrar of voters for certification pursuant
5 to law; change a name, address, or party affiliation or nonaffiliation; make any other
6 change in registration; or participate in the nursing home program.

7 D. The Department of State shall send to the registrants so identified a
8 supplemental address confirmation notice and place the registrant on the inactive list
9 of voters.

10 E. For the purposes of this Section, "supplemental address confirmation
11 notice" means a postage prepaid and pre-addressed return notice, sent by forwardable
12 mail. The Department of State is responsible for developing the supplemental
13 address confirmation notice and shall submit it to the House Committee on House
14 and Governmental Affairs and the Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental
15 Affairs for review. The department is also responsible for informing the registrant
16 about his voting rights under the supplemental address confirmation process.

17 F. If a registrant responds to the supplemental address confirmation notice
18 and has not moved or has moved within the parish, the registrar shall remove the
19 registrant's name from the inactive list of voters if it is on the inactive list and correct
20 the registrant's address if necessary.

21 G.(1) If a registrant responds to the supplemental address confirmation
22 notice and has permanently moved to a different parish, the registrar shall transfer
23 the registrant's registration information to the parish of residence.

24 (2) If a registrant responds to the supplemental address confirmation notice
25 and has permanently moved outside the state, the registrar shall cancel the
26 registrant's registration.

27 H. A registrant on the inactive list of voters who fails to respond to the
28 supplemental address confirmation notice shall remain on the inactive list of voters
29 until his address is confirmed in accordance with the procedures set forth in R.S.

1 18:196 or not later than a period of two regularly scheduled federal general elections,
2 at which time the registrar shall cancel the registrant's registration.

3 I. The Department of State shall maintain a list of names and addresses to
4 whom supplemental address confirmation notices are sent and whether or not each
5 registrant responded to the notice for a period of two years and shall make the list
6 open to inspection and copying as provided in R.S. 18:154. Ninety days prior to a
7 regularly scheduled federal primary election, the names and addresses of those
8 registrants on the inactive list shall be published for one day in the official journal
9 of the parish governing authority or in a newspaper calculated to provide maximum
10 notice in the parish.

11 * * *

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

13 A.(1) In addition to the official list of voters, there shall be an inactive list
14 of voters which shall consist of registrants who have been mailed an address
15 confirmation ~~card~~ notice or a supplemental address confirmation notice. The names
16 of registrants on the inactive list of voters shall not be counted in computing the
17 number of ballots required for an election, the number of voters required to divide
18 or constitute a precinct, the number of signatures required on any petition, the
19 number of commissioners at a precinct pursuant to R.S. 18:425, the number of voting
20 machines to be allocated and used in each voting precinct pursuant to R.S. 18:1363,
21 or the number of registered voters necessary to recognize or determine the
22 organization of a political party or committee.

23 * * *

24 D. If a registrant who has failed to respond to an address confirmation ~~card~~
25 notice or a supplemental address confirmation notice and whose name appears on the
26 inactive list of voters does not vote in any election from the date he is placed on the
27 inactive list of voters until the day after the second regularly scheduled general
28 election for federal office held after such date, the registrar shall cancel the
29 registration of the registrant.

1 Section 2. This Act shall become effective on March 31, 2024.

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 159 Original

2023 Regular Session

Farnum

Abstract: Requires the Dept. of State to conduct a supplemental annual canvass of registered voters.

Present law requires each registrar of voters to conduct an annual canvass of registered voters in order to update voter registration records. Elements of the annual canvass include:

- (1) A requirement that the Dept. of State use the U.S. Postal Service or its licensee to verify names and addresses of registered voters.
- (2) A requirement that the registrar of voters send an address confirmation card to each registrant whose address is not verified or whose corrected address is outside of the parish and place the names of such registrants on the inactive list of voters.

Proposed law requires the Dept. of State to conduct an annual supplemental canvass, after the canvass provided for by present law, in order to update voter registration records. Elements of the supplemental canvass include:

- (1) A requirement that the secretary of state identify registered voters for whom there is not a corrected address pursuant to the initial canvass and who have not participated in an election, updated their registration information, or taken other specified actions in the previous 10 years.
- (2) A requirement that the secretary of state send such persons an address confirmation notice and place the names of such registrants on the inactive list of voters.

Elements of present law, which also apply to proposed law, include:

- (1) A requirement that the registrar transfer the registration information of a voter who has permanently moved to a different parish to the new parish of residence.
- (2) A requirement that the registrar cancel the registration of a voter who has permanently moved outside the state.
- (3) A requirement that the registrar cancel the registration of a voter who is on the inactive list of voters and who fails to confirm his address prior to the second regularly scheduled federal general election after his name is placed on the list.
- (4) A requirement for the publication of the names and addresses of registrants on the inactive list of voters from each parish in the official journal of or other newspaper in the parish 90 days prior to each regularly scheduled federal primary election.
- (5) A requirement that a list of names and addresses of persons to whom confirmation notices are sent and whether or not each person responded to the notice be maintained for a period of two years and be open to inspection.

Effective on March 31, 2024.

(Amends R.S. 18:196(A)(1) and (D); Adds R.S. 18:194)