

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 499

BY REPRESENTATIVE BILLINGS

ELECTIONS/ABSENTEE VOTE: Provides relative to the preparation, verification, tabulation, and counting of absentee by mail and early voting ballots

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:1313.1(B), relative to the preparation, verification, tabulation,
3 and counting of absentee by mail and early voting ballots; to provide for the
4 preparation and verification process without a majority of the parish board of
5 election supervisors present; to provide for notice to the state board of election
6 supervisors; to provide for the authorization of the commissioner of elections; and
7 to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 18:1313.1(B) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

10 §1313.1. Preparation, verification, tabulation, and counting of absentee by mail and
11 early voting ballots

12 * * *

13 B.(1) The parish board of election supervisors shall be responsible for the
14 preparation, verification, counting, and tabulation of all absentee by mail and early
15 voting ballots in the parish. The board may utilize parish board commissioners to
16 count the absentee by mail and early voting ballots in the parish. If the board
17 determines that parish board commissioners are necessary for the preparation and
18 verification process to count and tabulate the absentee by mail and early voting
19 ballots before the election and to count and tabulate the absentee by mail and early

1 voting ballots on election day, it shall select parish board commissioners in
2 accordance with the provisions of R.S. 18:1314.

3 (2) If less than a majority but at least two of the members of the board are
4 ~~not~~ present for the preparation and verification process to count the absentee by mail
5 and early voting ballots ~~or to count the absentee by mail and early voting ballots~~ and
6 no parish board commissioners were previously selected, the members present may
7 select a sufficient number of parish board commissioners ~~three days before the~~
8 ~~election or on election day, as applicable,~~ to assist in the preparation and verification
9 process for the tabulation and counting of absentee by mail and early voting ballots
10 ~~and the tabulation and counting of the ballots.~~ Prior to conducting the preparation
11 and verification process without a majority of the members present, the board shall
12 give notification to the commissioner of elections that a majority of the members of
13 the board are not present and shall receive approval of the commissioner of elections
14 to continue the preparation and verification process without a majority present.

15 * * *

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 499 Original

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Billings

Abstract: Requires notification to the commissioner of elections by the parish board of election supervisors and approval from the commissioner of elections prior to conducting the preparation and verification process for absentee by mail and early voting ballots without a majority of the parish board present.

Present law requires the parish board of election supervisors to conduct the preparation verification, tabulation, and counting of absentee by mail and early voting ballots in the parish.

Present law requires a majority of the parish board of election supervisors to be present to determine whether an absentee by mail or early voting ballot is invalid and requires the inspection by a candidate of certificates removed from valid absentee by mail and early voting ballots be done in the presence of a majority of the parish board of election supervisors.

If less than a majority of the parish board members are present for the preparation and verification process to count the absentee by mail and early voting ballots or to count the absentee by mail and early voting ballots and no parish board commissioners were previously selected, present law authorizes the members present to select a sufficient number

of parish board commissioners three days before the election or on election day, as applicable, to assist in the preparation and verification process for the tabulation and counting of absentee by mail and early voting ballots and the tabulation and counting of the ballots.

Proposed law instead requires at least two parish board members to be present to select parish board commissioners to assist in conducting the preparation and verification process. Removes the authorization to select parish board commissioners to count absentee and early voting paper ballots and the requirement that parish commissioners be selected three days before the election.

Proposed law provides that if a majority of the parish board is not present for the preparation and verification process, the board shall give notification to the commissioner of elections that a majority of the members of the board are not present and shall seek approval of the commissioner of elections to continue the preparation and verification process without a majority present prior to conducting the process.

(Amends R.S. 18:1313.1(B))