

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 582

BY REPRESENTATIVE WALTERS

VOTERS/VOTING: Provides for eligibility to vote for certain offices beginning at age seventeen

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:101(A), 114(B)(1), 154(C)(1)(h), 425(B)(5), and 426(A)(4),
3 relative to elections; to provide relative to the eligibility to vote; to allow seventeen
4 year olds to vote in elections for state and local offices; to provide for certain records
5 of election officials relative thereto; to provide relative to the qualifications to be a
6 commissioner and alternate commissioner of certain persons at least seventeen years
7 of age; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 18:101(A), 114(B)(1), 154(C)(1)(h), 425(B)(5), and 426(A)(4) are
10 hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

11 §101. Registration to vote; qualifications; more than one residence; presidential
12 elections

13 A.(1) Every citizen of Louisiana who is at least ~~eighteen~~ seventeen years of
14 age or will attain that age on or before the next election, is an actual bona fide
15 resident of this state, and the parish, municipality, if any, and precinct in which he
16 offers to register as a voter, is not disfranchised, and who complies with the
17 provisions of this Chapter shall be eligible to register to vote in local; and state ~~and~~
18 ~~national~~ elections held in this state. No one under the age of seventeen years shall
19 be permitted to vote in any state or local election.

1 registrar, the clerk of court, the Department of State, the office of motor vehicles of
2 the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and any entity that contracts with
3 the office, each voter registration agency and any entity that contracts with a voter
4 registration agency, and any person who handles the voter registration application
5 form of another person shall be prohibited from circulating on a commercial list or
6 otherwise disclosing the following:

7 * * *

8 (h) The voter registration application and any information contained on the
9 voter registration application of any person who is sixteen ~~or seventeen~~ years of age.

10 * * *

11 §425. Commissioners

12 * * *

13 B. Qualifications and classifications.

14 * * *

15 (5) A person who is at least seventeen years of age, ~~under the age of~~
16 ~~eighteen~~, and is not a qualified registered voter but is otherwise qualified to serve as
17 a commissioner pursuant to this Subsection may be selected to serve as a
18 commissioner in any precinct of the ward where he may register to vote pursuant to
19 R.S. 18:101(A), provided that the person is enrolled in the twelfth grade of any
20 Louisiana public high school or state-approved nonpublic high school, is
21 participating at the twelfth grade level in a home study program approved by the
22 State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, has received a diploma from
23 any Louisiana public high school or state-approved nonpublic high school, has
24 received a diploma for completion of a home study program approved by the State
25 Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, or has been issued a high school
26 equivalency diploma after successfully completing the test of General Educational
27 Development.

28 * * *

1 §426. Alternate commissioners; qualifications, powers, and duties; oath and compensation

2 A. Qualifications.

3 * * *

4 (4) A person who is at least seventeen years of age, ~~under the age of~~
5 ~~eighteen,~~ and is not a ~~qualified~~ registered voter but is otherwise qualified to serve as
6 an alternate commissioner pursuant to this Subsection may be selected to serve as an
7 alternate commissioner in any precinct of the ward where he may register to vote
8 pursuant to R.S. 18:101(A), provided that the person is enrolled in the twelfth grade
9 of any Louisiana public high school or state-approved nonpublic high school or is
10 participating at the twelfth grade level in a home study program approved by the
11 State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

12 * * *

13 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
14 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
15 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
16 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
17 effective on the day following such approval.

DIGEST

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

HB 582 Original

2024 Regular Session

Walters

Abstract: Provides that 17 year olds who are actual bona fide residents of this state and meet the requirements of the La. Election Code, may register and vote in state and local elections and makes related changes to the election code.

Present constitution guarantees every person who is both a citizen of the state and of the U.S., upon reaching 18 years of age, the right to register and vote, except that this right may be suspended for a person who is interdicted and judicially declared mentally incompetent or who is under an order of imprisonment for conviction of a felony.

Present law (R.S. 18:101) provides that every citizen of La. who is at least 18 years of age or will attain that age on or before the next election, is an actual bona fide resident of this state, and the parish, municipality, if any, and precinct in which he offers to register as a voter, is not disfranchised, and who complies with the provisions of present law in the La. Election Code shall be eligible to register to vote in local, state, and national elections held in this state. Further provides that any person age 17 and who is otherwise qualified to vote

may register to vote at any time prior to the first election at which he shall have attained the age of 18 years. Present law further specifies that no one under the age of 18 years old shall be permitted to vote in any election.

Proposed law provides instead that every citizen of La. who is at least 17 years of age or will attain that age on or before the next election, is an actual bona fide resident of this state, and the parish, municipality, if any, and precinct in which he offers to register as a voter, is not disfranchised, and who complies with the provisions of present law in the La. Election Code shall be eligible to register to vote in local and state elections. Further limits the prohibition on persons under the age of 18 voting to national elections only and removes additional present law provisions specifying that no one under the age of 18 years old shall be permitted to vote in any election. Specifies that no one under the age of 17 shall be permitted to vote in any state or local election

Proposed law retains present law provisions for citizens of the U.S. residing outside the U.S. who were domiciled in this state immediately prior to departure from the U.S. and who is at least 18 years of age or will attain that age on or before the next national election, and who is not disfranchised, shall be eligible to register absentee and vote absentee by mail if certain qualifications in the La. Election Code are met.

Present law relative to registration applications at driver's licenses facilities provides that each application to obtain, renew, or change the name or address on a driver's license or identification card issued by the Dept. of Public Safety & Corrections made by an applicant who is 18 years or older shall also serve as an application for voter registration by the applicant unless the applicant declines to register to vote or fails to sign the voter registration application.

Proposed law changes the age from 18 years or older to 17 years or older, removes related provisions regarding 17 year olds registering to vote prior to the first election at which they will be 18 and specifying that no one under the age of 18 years old shall be permitted to vote in any election. Otherwise retains present law.

Present law protects certain records of election official from disclosure including 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 removes the voter registration applications of 17 year olds from the list of protected information.

Present law provides relative to the qualifications of commissioners and alternate commissioners and provides that a person who is at least 17 years of age, under the age of 18, and is not a qualified voter but is otherwise qualified to serve pursuant to present law may be selected to serve in any precinct of the ward where he may register to vote, provided that the person is enrolled in the 12th grade of any La. public high school or state-approved nonpublic high school, is participating at the 12th grade level in a home study program approved by BESE, has received a diploma from any La. public high school or state-approved nonpublic high school, has received a diploma for completion of a home study program approved by BESE, or has been issued a high school equivalency diploma after successfully completing the test of General Educational Development.

Proposed law removes the provision requiring the person to be under the age of 18 and not a qualified voter and provides instead that a person who is at least 17 but not a registered voter and who otherwise meets the requirements of present law is eligible to be a commissioner or alternate commissioner.

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

(Amends R.S. 18:101(A), 114(B)(1), 154(C)(1)(h), 425(B)(5), and 426(A)(4))