

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 506

BY REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS

VOTING/REGISTRATION: Provides relative voter registration applications collected through registration drives

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:18(A)(9) and 1461.7(A)(1) and to enact R.S. 18:119, relative
3 to voter registration drives; to require registration of persons conducting voter
4 registration drives; to require acknowledgment of the laws relative to voter
5 registration; to provide for the duties of the secretary of state relative thereto; to
6 provide relative to the criminal offense of failing to timely submit a completed voter
7 registration form to a registrar of voters; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide
8 for related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 18:18(A)(9) and 1461.7(A)(1) are hereby amended and reenacted and
11 R.S. 18:119 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 §18. Secretary of state; powers and duties

13 A. The secretary of state shall administer the laws relating to custody of
14 voting machines and voter registration, and for this purpose he shall:

15 * * *

16 (9) Provide for the ~~voluntary~~ registration of individuals or entities that
17 conduct voter registration drives in the state of Louisiana.

18 * * *

19 §119. Voter registration drives; mandatory registration

20 A. Each individual or entity that intends to conduct a voter registration drive,
21 except a registrar of voters or employee thereof, the secretary of state or employee

1 thereof who performs election duties, or a person or entity that is required by law to
2 perform voter registration activities, shall first register with the secretary of state
3 either directly or through a registrar of voters in the manner prescribed by the
4 secretary of state.

5 B. The registration required by this Section shall require acknowledgment
6 of the requirements applicable to voter registration activities as well as the election
7 offenses applicable to voter registration and voter registration activities.

8 * * *

9 §1461.7. Miscellaneous election offenses; penalties

10 A. No person shall knowingly, willfully, or intentionally:

11 (1) Fail to submit to the parish registrar of voters a completed registration
12 application collected through a registration drive within thirty days of receipt of the
13 completed application from the applicant or no later than the date provided in R.S.
14 18:135(A)(1), whichever occurs first.

15 * * *

16 Section 2. The provisions of this Act shall not be applicable to electronic voter
17 registration drives.

18 Section 3. The provisions of this Act shall not be effective June 30, 2025.

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 506 Reengrossed

2024 Regular Session

Thomas

Abstract: Requires individuals and entities intending to conduct a voter registration drive to first register with the secretary of state and to acknowledge the laws relative to voter registration activities including criminal offenses and provides for the related duties of the secretary of state.

Present law provides that the secretary of state shall administer the laws relating to custody of voting machines and voter registration, and for this purpose he shall perform enumerated functions and duties. Present law specifically requires that the secretary of state provide for the voluntary registration of individuals or entities that conduct voter registration drives.

Proposed law provides instead that the secretary of state shall provide for the registration for individuals or entities that conduct voter registration drives. Further requires each individual or entity that is not an election official or voter registration agency that intends to conduct

a voter registration drive to first register with the secretary of state either directly or through a registrar of voters in the manner prescribed by the secretary of state. Requires the registration to include an acknowledgment of the requirements applicable to voter registration activities as well as the election offenses applicable to voter registration and voter registration activities.

Present law prohibits a person from knowingly, willfully, or intentionally failing to submit a completed voter registration application collected through a registration drive to the registrar of voters within 30 days of receipt of the completed application from the applicant.

Proposed law changes the time period a person has to submit the completed form to within 30 days of receipt of the completed application from the applicant, or the date provided in present law (R.S. 18:135(A)(1) for the close of registration records prior to an election), whichever occurs first.

Present law provides that a person who violates present law shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or be imprisoned for not more than one year, or both. On a second offense, or any subsequent offense, the penalty shall be a fine of not more than \$2,500 or imprisonment for not more than five years, or both. Violations of proposed law are subject to the present law penalties.

Proposed law does not apply to electronic voter registration drives.

Proposed law is not effective on June 30, 2025.

(Amends R.S. 18:18(A)(9) and 1461.7(A)(1); Adds R.S. 18:119)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Provide that an individual or entity that conducts voter registration drives may register with the secretary of state either directly or through a registrar of voters.
2. Change the proposed new deadline to submit a completed voter registration application from no later than the day prior to the close of registration records for the first election that occurs after the completed registration application is collected to no later than the date provided in R.S. 18:135(A)(1) for the close of registration records prior to an election.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Provide that proposed law does not apply to electronic voter registration drives.
2. Provide for effectiveness.