

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 154

BY SENATOR DUPLESSIS

A RESOLUTION

To create the Task Force on Ensuring Voter Participation in the Political Process; to provide for membership of the task force; to provide that the task force study mechanisms to encourage and promote voter participation in the political process; and to require the task force to make written recommendations to the legislature prior to the 2026 Regular Session.

WHEREAS, voting is the cornerstone of American democracy; and

WHEREAS, the resiliency of Louisiana's political institutions relies on the robust political participation of the citizens of this state; and

WHEREAS, voter turnout in the 2024 election cycle dropped to the lowest numbers recorded in the past four presidential election cycles; and

WHEREAS, voter turnout for local elections, often lower than 25 percent statewide, has dropped to single digits in recent off-cycle elections and has declined at times to near negligible numbers in some precincts; and

WHEREAS, from January 2020 to January 2025, there have been 25 elections held in our state while during the same five-year period, neighboring states held nearly the same amount of elections combined, averaging only a fraction of the total number of elections in each state; and

WHEREAS, the multitude of elections in Louisiana has created voter fatigue with a further reduction in voter turnout; and

WHEREAS, the expense and cost to taxpayers with frequent elections can be substantially reduced by election consolidation or other cost efficiency considerations; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that consolidation of elections increases voter turnout across the board and leads to more engaged local officials, while not granting advantage to any political party; and

WHEREAS, every election is important and every vote has unique, invaluable weight in the maintenance of our democracy and the intrinsic worth of voter participation in elections if valuable in the legislative process.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana hereby establishes the Task Force on Ensuring Voter Participation in the Political Process to study mechanisms to encourage and support voter participation, including but not limited to supporting development of partnerships for civic engagement, policies supporting voter registration and turnout, and recommendations for consolidation or streamlining of elections in our state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that its primary objective is to deliberate on all applicable facts, circumstances, policies, and procedures that contribute to our state's rates of voter participation and present legislation to increase engagement of the electorate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is encouraged to actively solicit broad community feedback, including via online surveys or remote participation opportunities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership of the task force shall be selected from the following entities:

(1) The person representing State Senate District 5, or his designee, who shall serve as chairman of the task force.

(2) The Louisiana Secretary of State, or her designee.

(3) The president of the Louisiana Registrars of Voters Association, or his designee.

(4) The president of the Louisiana Clerks of Court Association, or her designee.

(5) The president of the Executive Board of the Police Jury Association of Louisiana, or his designee.

(6) The chair of the Legislative Democratic Caucus, or his designee.

(7) The chair of the Legislative Republican Delegation, or his designee.

(8) The chair of the Legislative Rural Caucus, or his designee.

(9) The chair of Senate and Governmental Affairs, or his designee.

(10) The president of the League of Women Voters of Louisiana, or her designee.

(11) The executive director of the Voice of the Experienced (V.O.T.E.), or his designee.

(12) The president of Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, or her designee.

(13) The president of the Board of Directors of the Pelican Institute, or his designee.

(14) The president of the Louisiana State Conference of the NAACP, or his designee.

(15) The executive director of Disability Rights Louisiana, or his designee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each entity shall submit the names of its appointees or designees to the task force chairman no later than August 1, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chairman of the task force shall preside over the first meeting and the task force may elect from among its membership such other positions as deemed necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the total membership shall constitute a quorum of the task force and that any official action by the task force shall require an affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum present and voting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall convene its first meeting by August 1, 2025, and shall meet at least three times and as frequently as it deems necessary for the timely performance of its duties.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the legislature no later than thirty days prior to the convening of the 2026 Regular Session of the Legislature and shall provide a copy of the report to the Senate and to the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:771 and 772, no later than thirty days prior to the convening of the 2026 Regular Session.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve without compensation, except per diem or expenses reimbursement to which they may be individually entitled as members of their constituent organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be staffed by the legislative staff, including the staff of the Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE