VOTERS/VOTING. Provides for the holding of elections impaired as the result of a gubernatorially declared disaster or emergency.

1	AN ACT
2	To enact R.S. 18:401.3, relative to holding certain elections; to provide for a election
3	impaired as a result of a gubernatorially declared disaster or emergency; to provide
4	for a toll-free telephone line; to provide for the validation of absentee voting by mail;
5	to provide for use of all operating polling places; to provide for compliance with the
6	Voting Rights Act of 1965; and to provide for related matters.
7	Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:
8	Section 1. R.S. 18:401.3 is hereby enacted to read as follows:
9	**§401.3. Conducting elections impaired as a result of a gubernatorially declared**
10	**disaster or emergency; plan for establishing a toll-free telephone**
11	**line, validating absentee voting by mail, and using all operating**
12	**polling places**
13	**A. Due to the possibility of an emergency or common disaster occurring**
14	**before or during a regularly scheduled or special election, and in order to**
15	**ensure maximum citizen participation in the electoral process and provide a**
16	**safe and orderly procedure for persons seeking to qualify or exercise their right**
17	**to vote, to minimize to whatever degree possible a person's exposure to danger**

1   **during declared states of emergency, and to protect the integrity of the electoral**

2   **process, it is hereby found and declared to be necessary to designate a**

3   **procedure to hold elections when the election is impaired as a result of a**

4   **gubernatorially declared disaster or emergency, including the emergency**

5   **suspension or delay of the election, establishing a toll-free telephone line,**

6   **validating absentee voting by mail, and using all operating polling places.**

7   **B. Notwithstanding any contrary provision of law, upon issuance of an**

8   **executive order by the governor declaring a state of emergency or impending**

9   **emergency and if the emergency impairs a scheduled election, the secretary of**

10   **state may develop a written emergency election plan. Any such plan shall**

11   **provide for emergency suspension or delay, establishing a toll-free telephone**

12   **line, validating absentee voting by mail, and using all operating polling places.**

13   **C. The secretary of state shall take all necessary steps to implement the**

14   **emergency plan following compliance with Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act**

15   **of 1965.**

16   Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not

17   signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature

18   by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If

19   vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become

20   effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Tabitha I. Gray.

DIGEST

Proposed law authorizes the secretary of state, upon a gubernatorial declaration of emergency and if the emergency will impair a scheduled election, to develop emergency election procedures including establishing a toll-free telephone line, validating absentee voting by mail, and using all operating polling places. Proposed law requires the secretary of state to take all necessary steps to implement the plan following compliance with the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

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

(Adds R.S. 18:401.3)

Coding: Words which are ~~struck through~~ are deletions from existing law;
words in **boldface type and underscored** are additions.