
DIGEST

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HB 619 Original

2016 Regular Session

Zeringue

Abstract: Changes and removes specific exceptions allowing precincts having fewer than 300 voters and provides for the payment of election expenses in such precincts.

Present law (R.S. 18:532) provides for the establishment of precincts, definition of territorial limits for which each precinct is established, prescription of boundaries, and designation of precincts by the governing authority of each parish. Prohibits any precinct from having fewer than 300 registered voters within its boundaries except in certain circumstances, including making it more convenient for voters to vote in geographically isolated areas who would otherwise have to travel more than 10 miles or cross a public ferry to vote, when the precinct contains the entire area of an incorporated place (small municipality), when a precinct may not be merged because of voting district boundaries, under extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances as permitted by the secretary of state, and when a parish governing authority is responsible for all election expenses incurred in the precinct.

Proposed law increases the mileage for the exception for geographically isolated areas to from 10 to 15 miles, removes the ability for the secretary of state to permit such precincts under extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances, and explicitly prohibits a parish governing authority from establishing or maintaining a precinct with fewer than 300 registered voters unless it is in compliance with present law (R.S. 18:532.1) regarding appropriate precinct boundaries and approvals of precinct changes, has submitted documentation to the Dept. of State that the precinct meets one of the exceptions, and has received written confirmation from the secretary of state that the precinct meets one of the exceptions.

Present law (R.S. 18:532) provides that a precinct may contain fewer than 300 voters if the parish governing authority is responsible for all of the election expenses incurred in the precinct as provided in present law (R.S. 18:1400.7)

Proposed law provides instead that if a precinct contains fewer than 300 registered voters and the parish governing authority has not received written confirmation from the secretary of state that the precinct meets one of the exceptions, the parish governing authority shall be responsible for all election expenses incurred in the precinct as provided in present law (R.S. 18:1400.7).

Present law suspended present law with regard to precincts with fewer than 300 registered voters from Jan. 1, 2009, through Dec. 31, 2013. Proposed law removes this provision.

Effective January 1, 2017.

(Amends R.S. 18:532(B)(4); Repeals R.S. 18:532(B)(5))