

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 550 (HB 409)

2018 Regular Session

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Existing law (R.S. 18:532) provides that the governing authority of each parish shall establish precincts and shall define each precinct's territorial limits, prescribe each precinct's boundaries, and designate each precinct by ordinance in accordance with existing law (R.S. 18:532 and 532.1). 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 different 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.

Existing law provides that the requirement that the parish governing authority is responsible for all election expenses incurred in a small precinct that has fewer than 300 registered voters if the small precinct does not meet one of the other exceptions shall not apply during a specified time period.

Prior law provided that the time period the requirement did not apply was from Jan. 1, 2009, through Dec. 31, 2013.

New law provides instead that such requirement does not apply during the period of Dec. 31st of any year ending in nine and Jan. 1st of any year ending in three, as established in new law (see below).

Existing law (R.S. 18:532.1) provides relative to changing the boundaries of precincts. Authorizes the parish governing authority to change the configuration, boundaries, or designation of an election precinct. Provides for requirements for changing precinct boundaries.

Prior law provided that no precinct shall be created, divided, abolished, or merged, or the boundaries thereof otherwise changed between Jan. 1st of any year of which the last digit is nine and Dec. 31st of any year of which the last digit is three, unless ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction. Prior law further contained specific dates regarding the establishment of precincts and mergers of precincts for the 2010 federal decennial census and the redistricting efforts following said census.

New law provides instead that no precinct shall be created, divided, abolished, or merged, or the boundaries thereof otherwise changed between Dec. 31st of any year of which the last digit is nine and Jan. 1st of any year of which the last digit is three. New law retains existing law exception to allow the division of a precinct if a parish governing authority is unable to comply with applicable law regarding redistricting and reapportionment in the creation of its redistricting or reapportionment plan.

Existing law provides relative to the merger of precincts or parts of precincts. New law removes prior law which specifically authorized the merger of precincts to accomplish reapportionment.

New law further removes specific provisions regarding the establishment of block boundaries for the 2010 federal decennial census and precinct changes during the time that redistricting efforts following said census occurred and provides instead that in order to establish block boundaries for a subsequent federal decennial census, precinct mergers submitted for review through Dec. 31st of any year ending in nine shall not be subject to the requirement that all parts be in the same voting districts. Further provides that such mergers shall be effective for March 31st for the federal decennial census and for reapportionment and redistricting purposes following that federal decennial census and not later than July 1st of any year of which the last digit is one for all purposes.

New law further provides, relative to precinct mergers, that the secretary of state shall make a determination that all parts of the precinct be in same voting districts. New law further allows a merger if the secretary of state makes a determination that the voting machine is

capable of accommodating all elections that will occur in the precinct and the proposed merger will not cause voter inconvenience.

Prior law (R.S. 18:1903) also prohibited an election precinct from being created, divided, abolished, or merged, or the boundaries thereof otherwise changed between Jan. 1st of any year of which the last digit is nine and Dec. 31st of any year of which the last digit is three. New law removes this specific prohibition.

Effective August 1, 2018.

(Amends R.S.18:532(A) and (B)(5) and 532.1(B)(2), (C)(3), and (D)(1) and (2)(a); Repeals R.S. 18:1903)