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## DIGEST

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HB 251 Original

2019 Regular Session

Gaines

**Abstract:** Provides for automatic voter registration through driver's license facilities.

Present law (R.S. 18:114) requires voter registration services to be available at all driver's license facilities in the state. Provides that each application to obtain, renew, or change the name or address on a driver's license or identification card issued by the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections made by an applicant who is 18 years or older shall also serve as an application for voter registration by the applicant unless the applicant declines to register to vote through specific declination. Provides that each application to obtain a driver's license issued by the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections made by an applicant who is 16 years old shall also serve as an application for voter registration by the applicant unless the applicant declines to register to vote through specific declination. Provides that any person age 17 may register to vote at any time prior to the first election at which he shall have attained the age of 18 years. Prohibits anyone under the age of 18 from voting in any election.

Present law requires the secretary of state to design and provide a standard notice informing the public of the eligibility requirements for and availability of voter registration and requires the notice to be posted in each driver's license facility of the state.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that an application to obtain, renew, or change the name or address on a driver's license or identification card by an applicant who is 18 years or older, or an application to obtain a driver's license by a person who is 16 years old, shall not be considered an application for voter registration if the applicant fails to sign the voter registration application.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law requires the secretary of state and the deputy secretary for public safety services of the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections to develop application forms for use at driver's license facilities.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law requires the development of voter registration application forms and requires such forms to be in conformity with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993.

Proposed law repeals present law. Requires the development of an application form that includes

spaces for all of the information necessary to apply for a driver's license or identification card, to decline voter registration, and the minimum information necessary to register to vote.

Present law provides that any employee authorized to accept an application to obtain, renew, or change the name or address on a driver's license or identification card shall offer voter registration to any person making such an application and, upon request, shall provide assistance to any person who desires to register to vote. Provides that such assistance may consist of answering any question that person might have about completing the registration application form. Provides, however, if the person requesting assistance has a physical disability or is unable to read or write English, the authorized employee shall provide such assistance as is allowed to be provided by registrars of voters under the provisions of present law (R.S. 18:106).

Proposed law repeals references to "registration application form" and refers instead to "the application form". Otherwise retains present law.

Present law provides that prior to generating the portion of the form which is an individual registration form, the authorized employee shall require the applicant to submit his current La. driver's license, if he has one, or his birth certificate or birth certification card, or other documentation which reasonably and sufficiently establishes the applicant's identity, age, and residency.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law requires each applicant to complete the registration application form in the presence of an authorized employee. Provides that upon completion of the registration application form, the applicant shall return the form to an authorized employee. Requires the authorized employee to ensure that the registration form has been completely filled out.

Proposed law repeals references to "registration application form" and "registration form" and refers instead to "the application form". Otherwise retains present law.

Present law requires the applicant to sign the affidavit provision of the registration form before the authorized employee who shall be authorized to administer any oath required on the registration form.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law requires the authorized employee to inform the applicant that he will not be officially registered to vote until approved by the registrar of voters.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that the authorized employee shall, within five working days, return the completed registration application to the registrar of voters within the parish where the office is located who shall transmit such application to the appropriate registrar of voters for the parish in

which the applicant resides, as determined from the information contained on the registration application. Provides that if a registration application is accepted within five days before the last day for registration, each driver's license facility shall transmit the completed voter registration application forms at the conclusion of each business day.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Proposed law provides that the deputy secretary for public safety services of the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections shall compile and transmit to the secretary of state at least every five days information in electronic format concerning persons over the age of 16 who have been issued a driver's license or identification card by the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections or have renewed or changed the name or address on such a driver's license or identification card and who did not decline voter registration when making application for the issuance, renewal, or change. Requires the deputy secretary to include the information for each person that is necessary to register the person to vote, including the electronic signature of the person.

Proposed law provides that the secretary of state shall provide voter registration information relative to a person that is received pursuant to proposed law to the registrar of voters for the parish in which the person may be registered to vote. Requires the secretary of state to notify each person about whom voter registration information is received pursuant to proposed law how the person can indicate or change party affiliation or decline voter registration or decline to update an existing registration.

Proposed law provides that if a person who is notified by the secretary of state does not decline voter registration or decline to update an existing registration within 21 calendar days after the secretary of state issued the notification, the voter registration information received pursuant to proposed law for the person shall constitute a voter registration application for purposes of present law or an update to an existing registration if the person is already registered to vote.

Present law provides that if the voter registration information is insufficient to register the applicant, the registrar of voters shall mail a notice to the applicant at the address provided on the application form informing the applicant that he has 10 days from the date on which the notice was mailed to provide the necessary information. Provides that if the applicant fails to provide the necessary information within that time, the applicant shall not be registered and the registrar shall so advise the applicant.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that if the voter registration information received by the registrar establishes that the applicant meets the requirements for registration, the registrar shall register the applicant and mail notice of registration to the applicant's residence.

Proposed law retains present law and specifies that the applicant will be registered only if he is not already registered. Specifies that the notice shall be sent pursuant to present law (R.S. 18:109).

Present law provides that any completed voter registration application transmitted to and received by a registrar by a driver's license facility shall be considered an update of any existing registration for that person. Provides, however, that if a registrar accepts any application for registration, change of name, or change of address that has been received by a driver's license facility while the registration records are closed for a particular election as required by present law (R.S. 18:135(A)), none of the changes in a registration shall be effective until at least the day after the particular election has been held. Provides that in the case of a change of address, the change shall be effective in accordance with the provisions of present law (R.S. 18:110(B)).

Proposed law replaces references to receipt of "registration applications" with receipt of "voter registration information". Specifies that the voter registration information will be considered an update if the person is already registered. Requires the registrar to update the person's registration information as necessary and mail notice to the person's residence pursuant to present law (R.S. 18:109). Otherwise retains present law.

Present law provides that the transmittal of a change of address or change of name shall be handled in the same manner as the transmittal of a voter registration application.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law provides that no individual shall be registered to vote pursuant to present law if he does not meet the requirements for registration as provided in present law (Chapter 4 of Title 18 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950), except where the provisions are specifically in conflict with present law.

Present law provides that any public official or employee who attempts to register any person without complying with the applicable provisions of present law shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$500 or be imprisoned for not more than six months, or both.

Present law provides that the secretary of state, after consultation with the deputy secretary for public safety services of the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections, shall adopt rules and regulations to provide for the implementation of present law. Provides that such rules and regulations shall be adopted in accordance with present law (Administrative Procedure Act) and shall be subject to oversight by the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs and the Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs.

Proposed law retains present law and makes present law applicable to proposed law.

Present law provides that if an applicant declines to register to vote, the fact that the applicant has declined to register will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes. Provides that the fact that any particular applicant has submitted an application to register to vote at a driver's license facility shall be kept confidential and shall be used only for voter registration purposes.

Present law provides that each driver's license facility shall maintain such statistical records on the

number of applications to register to vote as requested by the secretary of state.

Proposed law retains present law.

Eff. Jan. 1, 2020.

(Amends R.S. 18:114(B)(1), (E), and (F); Repeals R.S. 18:114(J))