

2022 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 343

BY SENATOR CARTER

VOTERS/VOTING. Requires each parish to have at least two early voting locations and requires early voting locations for certain municipalities. (gov sig)

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:1309(A)(2) and (B)(1) and to enact R.S. 18:1303(M), relative
3 to early voting; to provide relative to voting other than on election day; to provide
4 for early voting locations; to provide for absentee by mail voting; and to provide for
5 related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 18:1309(A)(2) and (B)(1) are hereby amended and reenacted and
8 R.S. 18:1303(M) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §1303. Persons entitled to vote in compliance with this Chapter

10 * * *

11 **M. Rural voters. A voter living more than twenty-five miles by roadway**
12 **from the closest early voting location in his parish may vote absentee by mail**
13 **upon meeting the requirements of this Chapter.**

14 * * *

15 §1309. Early voting; verification

16 A. * * *

17 (2)(a) During the early voting period, the registrar shall maintain regular

1 office hours, remaining open from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.
 2 Early voting on each day of the early voting period shall terminate when all persons
 3 who were in line to vote at the close of the regular office hours of the registrar's
 4 office, as provided in this Paragraph, have been allowed to vote. If the office space
 5 of the registrar is insufficient or inconvenient to accommodate early voting, the
 6 registrar may provide for an alternate location to conduct early voting, which
 7 location shall be in the courthouse or in a public building in the immediate vicinity
 8 thereof, and in such case, adequate notice shall be posted at the registrar's office
 9 informing the public of the location where early voting is being conducted.

10 **(b) In addition to the location for early voting provided in Subparagraph**
 11 **(a) of this Paragraph, at least one other location for early voting shall be**
 12 **provided in each parish.**

13 **(c) At least one location for early voting shall be provided in each**
 14 **municipality with a population of ten thousand or more voters, as recorded by**
 15 **the close of registration in the most recent statewide election cycle, with an**
 16 **additional site provided for each multiple of ten thousand voters in the**
 17 **municipality.**

18 * * *

19 B.(1) For the purpose of facilitating early voting, the registrar may designate,
 20 in addition to the ~~location~~ **locations** for early voting provided in Subsection A of this
 21 Section, one or more branch offices wherein early voting may be conducted. Any
 22 such branch office shall be located in a public building, and the days during which
 23 early voting may be conducted therein shall be fixed by the registrar, with the
 24 approval of the secretary of state, at least thirty days prior to a primary election and
 25 twenty-one days prior to a general election, as provided in Subsection A of this
 26 Section, and the registrar shall post at his office adequate notice of the days on which
 27 early voting will be held at each branch office. However, if a branch office of a
 28 registrar is destroyed, inaccessible, or unsafe during or following a gubernatorially
 29 declared state of emergency, the registrar may utilize a temporary building as a

1 branch office to discharge his duties until an office that meets the requirements of
 2 this Section becomes available. Such temporary office shall be located within the
 3 parish, or if there is no appropriate location within the parish due to the emergency,
 4 then in an immediately adjacent parish, or if there is no appropriate location in any
 5 immediately adjacent parish due to the emergency, then in the nearest parish in
 6 which there is an appropriate location.

7 * * *

8 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
 9 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
 10 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
 11 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
 12 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 LG Sullivan.

DIGEST

SB 343 Original

2022 Regular Session

Carter

Present law provides that certain persons entitled to vote by absentee mail including anyone who has attained the age of 65 and certain employees of the secretary of state and of registrars.

Proposed law retains present law and allows any voter living over 25 miles by roadway from the closest early voting location in his parish to the list of those who may vote absentee by mail.

Present law requires the registrar of voters to meet certain requirements during early voting including certain hours of operation at the registrar's office. Allows the registrar to designate branch offices as early voting locations. Provides for the registrar to provide alternative locations for early voting under certain conditions.

Proposed law retains present law and requires each parish, in addition to the registrar's office, to have at least one other voting location.

Proposed law further provides that at least one location for early voting shall be provided in each municipality with a population of 10,000 or more voters, as recorded by the close of registration in the most recent statewide election cycle, with an additional site provided for each multiple of 10,000 voters in the municipality.

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

(Amends R.S. 18:1309(A)(2) and (B)(1); adds R.S. 18:1303(M))