
DIGEST

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HB 538 Original

2023 Regular Session

Jenkins

Abstract: Provides for additional early voting locations in certain parishes and the payment of certain expenses related to those additional locations.

Present law (R.S. 18:1309(A)) requires the registrar of voters to conduct early voting in the registrar's office, unless the space is insufficient, in which case the registrar may provide for an alternate location which shall be in a courthouse or a public building in the immediate vicinity of the courthouse.

Proposed law removes the requirement that the alternate location be in a courthouse or public building in the immediate vicinity of the courthouse.

Present law (R.S. 18:1309(B)) provides that to facilitate early voting, the registrar may designate, in addition to the location for early voting provided in present law, one or more branch offices wherein early voting may be conducted.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:1309(C)) provides that in parishes which extend in one direction more than 50 miles and which are interspersed with navigable waters, the registrar may designate, in addition to the locations for early voting provided for in present law, one additional branch office wherein early voting may be conducted.

Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law provides that the minimum number of early voting locations shall be as follows:

Parish Population Range	Minimum Total Number of Early Voting Sites
0 to 30,000	1
30,001 to 100,000	2
100,001 to 200,000	3
200,001 to 300,000	4
300,001 to 400,000	5
400,001 or more	6

Parish Area

Minimum Total Number of Early Voting Sites

Less than 1,000 square miles	1
1,000 square miles or more	2

Present law requires notice to be posted at the registrar's office informing the public of the location where early voting is being conducted.

Proposed law retains present law and further requires notice to be posted on the website of the registrar, if the registrar has a website, and on the website of the clerk of court, if the clerk of court has a website.

Present law (R.S. 18:1400.8) provides that election expenses incurred by a registrar of voters and his permanent employees to perform election duties and responsibilities associated with early voting shall be paid from funds appropriated to the secretary of state for that purpose and shall be a reimbursable election expense.

Proposed law retains present law but provides that for each additional early voting location required by proposed law at a statewide election in 2024, \$22,000.00 shall be paid to the registrar of voters from funds appropriated to the secretary of state for that purpose, if adequate funds are appropriated.

Proposed law further provides that beginning with the first statewide election in 2025, for each new early voting location required by proposed law, one-half of the technology replacement fee and a subsidy for the salary of four temporary registrar of voters staff for each day of early voting at the current rate paid to a commissioner-in-charge shall be paid to the registrar of voters from funds appropriated to the secretary of state for that purpose.

(Amends R.S. 18:1309(A)(2) and (B)(1) and 1400.8)