SLS 24RS-546 ORIGINAL

2024 Regular Session

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SENATE BILL NO. 178

BY SENATOR SEABAUGH

COURTS. Constitutional amendment to provide for statewide districts and election of the chief justice for the Louisiana Supreme Court. (2/3 - CA13s1(A))

## A JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing to amend Article V, Section 3 and Section 6 of the Constitution of Louisiana and to repeal Article V, Section 4 of the Constitution of Louisiana, relative to the supreme court; to provide for statewide election of justices; to repeal supreme court district configurations; to provide for selection of the chief justice; and to specify an election for submission of the proposition to electors and provide a ballot proposition.

Section 1. Be it resolved by the Legislature of Louisiana, two-thirds of the members elected to each house concurring, that there shall be submitted to the electors of the state, for their approval or rejection in the manner provided by law, a proposal to amend Article V, Section 3 and Section 6 and to repeal Article V, Section 4 of the Constitution of Louisiana, to read as follows:

§3. Supreme Court; Composition; Judgments; Elections; Terms

Section 3. The supreme court shall be composed of a chief justice and six associate justices, four of whom must concur to render judgment. The term of a supreme court judge shall be ten years. Each justice shall be elected for a term of

ten years by the electors of the state.

1 §4. Supreme Court; Districts 2 3 §6. Supreme Court; Chief Justice Section 6. The judge oldest in point of service on the supreme court shall be 4 chief justice. The chief justice shall be selected by a majority vote of the justices. 5 He is the chief administrative officer of the judicial system of the state, subject to 6 7 rules adopted by the court. 8 Section 2. Be it further resolved that this proposed amendment shall be submitted to 9 the electors of the state of Louisiana at the statewide election to be held on November 5, 10 2024. 11 Section 3. Be it further resolved that on the official ballot to be used at said election there shall be printed a proposition, upon which the electors of the state shall be permitted 12 13 to vote YES or NO, to amend the Constitution of Louisiana, which proposition shall read as 14 follows: Do you support an amendment to eliminate supreme court districts, provide 15 16 for the statewide election of supreme court justices, and provide for the chief justice to be selected by a majority vote of the justices? 17 18 (Amends Article V, Sections 3 and 6 and repeals Article V, Section 4)

> The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Matt DeVille.

## **DIGEST**

SB 178 Original

2024 Regular Session

Seabaugh

Present constitution provides that the supreme court shall be composed of a chief justice and six associate justices, four of whom must concur to render judgment. Further provides that the term of a justice shall be ten years.

Present constitution provides that the state shall be divided into at least six supreme court districts, and at least one judge shall be elected from each. Further provides that the districts and number of judges assigned to each are subject to change by law enacted by two-thirds of the elected members of each house of the legislature.

Proposed constitutional amendment retains the composition of the court and length of term in <u>present constitution</u> and provides that each justice shall be elected statewide.

Present constitution provides that the judge oldest in point of service on the supreme court shall be chief justice.

<u>Proposed provides</u> that the chief justice shall be selected by a majority vote of the justices.

Specifies submission of the amendment to the voters at the statewide election to be held on November 5, 2024.

(Amends Const. Art. V, Sec. 3 and Sec. 6; repeals Const. Art. V, Sec. 4)