

2024 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 74

BY SENATOR BARROW

VOTERS/VOTING. Creates the Task Force on Election Cost Efficiency and Alignment to study mechanisms to support and promote voter participation.

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To create and provide for the Task Force on Election Cost Efficiency and Alignment.

3 WHEREAS, voting is the cornerstone of American democracy; and

4 WHEREAS, the resiliency of Louisiana's political institutions relies on the robust
5 political participation of the citizens of the state; and

6 WHEREAS, the administration of elections requires incredible investment from the
7 state and the taxpayers of Louisiana; and

8 WHEREAS, the cost of implementing closed party primary elections for Congress,
9 the Public Service Commission, and the Supreme Court will require the secretary of state
10 to spend an estimated \$11.7 million to \$19.7 million in 2026 alone; and

11 WHEREAS, voter turnout during Louisiana's frequent elections has declined at times
12 to near negligible numbers in some precincts and is often lower than twenty-five percent
13 statewide; and

14 WHEREAS, voter turnout in the 2023 election cycle dropped to the lowest numbers
15 recorded in decades; and

16 WHEREAS, from January 2019 to January 2024, Louisiana held twenty-seven
17 elections; and

18 WHEREAS, during the same five-year period, neighboring states held nearly the

1 same amount of elections combined and a mere fraction of that total each; and

2 WHEREAS, Louisiana is one of five states that elect state officials in off-cycle years;

3 and

4 WHEREAS, the multitude of elections in Louisiana come at great expense to its
5 taxpayers, which could be reduced through election consolidation or other cost efficiency
6 considerations; and

7 WHEREAS, voter turnout has proven to be two times higher when local elections
8 coincide with a larger election cycle; and

9 WHEREAS, research has shown the election consolidation increases turnout across
10 the board and leads to more engaged local officials without providing an advantage to any
11 political party; and

12 WHEREAS, every election is important and every voter has unique, invaluable
13 weight in the maintenance of democracy; and

14 WHEREAS, the Legislature of Louisiana values the intrinsic worth of voter
15 participation in elections.

16 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana hereby
17 establishes the Task Force on Election Cost Efficiency and Alignment to study mechanisms
18 to support voter participation and to propose recommendations, together with specific
19 proposals for legislation, by written report to the legislature and to the David R. Poynter
20 Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:771 and 772, no later than thirty days
21 prior to the convening of the 2025 Regular Session.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall include consideration of the
23 development of partnerships for civic engagement, policies to support voter registration and
24 turnout, and the consolidation or streamlining of Louisiana's elections.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the primary objective of the task force is to
26 review and deliberate all applicable facts, circumstances, policies, and procedures that
27 contribute to Louisiana's low rates of voter participation and to develop recommendations
28 to increase engagement of the electorate.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist of the following
30 members:

1 (1) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs, or
2 his designee.

3 (2) The chairman of the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs, or
4 his designee.

5 (3) The chairman of the Legislative Democratic Caucus, or his designee.

6 (4) The chairman of the Legislative Republican Caucus, or his designee.

7 (5) The chairman of the Legislative Black Caucus, or his designee.

8 (6) The president of the Louisiana Registrars of Voters Association, or his designee.

9 (7) The executive director of the Louisiana Clerks of Court Association, or her
10 designee.

11 (8) The president of the Police Jury Association of Louisiana, or his designee.

12 (9) The president of the Louisiana Municipal Association, or his designee.

13 (10) The president of the Louisiana District Judges Association, or her designee.

14 (11) The president of the Louisiana District Attorneys Association, or his designee.

15 (12) The president of the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, or her designee.

16 (13) The president of the Louisiana State Conference of the NAACP, or his designee.

17 (14) The president of the League of Women Voters of Louisiana, or her designee.

18 (15) The executive director of the Voice of the Experienced, or his designee.

19 (16) The president of the Pelican Institute, or his designee.

20 (17) The president of the Public Affairs Research Council, or his designee.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each designating authority shall submit the
22 names of designees to the task force to the chairman of the Senate Committee on Senate and
23 Governmental Affairs, or his designee, no later than July 1, 2024.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Senate and Louisiana House of
25 Representatives shall provide staff to support the task force.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the task force shall convene for its first meeting no
27 later than August 1, 2024, at the call of the chairman of the Senate Committee on Senate and
28 Governmental Affairs, or his designee, and at the first meeting, the members shall elect a
29 chairman and other officers as the task force may deem appropriate.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the task force shall constitute a

1 quorum for the transaction of business. All official actions of the task force shall require the
2 affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve
4 without compensation, except per diem or expenses reimbursement to which they may be
5 individually entitled as members of their constituent organizations.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall terminate on the date of the
7 submission of its report or the convening of the 2025 Regular Session, whichever occurs
8 first.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the written report of the task force findings and
10 recommendations shall be posted on the website of the Louisiana Legislature.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to each
12 member of the task force.

The original instrument was prepared by Matt DeVille. The following digest,
which does not constitute a part of the legislative instrument, was prepared
by Dawn Romero Watson.

DIGEST

SCR 74 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Barrow

Creates the Task Force on Election Cost Efficiency and Alignment to study mechanisms to support voter participation and to propose recommendations.

Provides that the membership of the task force shall be:

- (1) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs, or his designee.
- (2) The chairman of the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs, or his designee.
- (3) The chairman of the Legislative Democratic Caucus, or his designee.
- (4) The chairman of the Legislative Republican Caucus, or his designee.
- (5) The chairman of the Legislative Black Caucus, or his designee.
- (6) The president of the Louisiana Registrars of Voters Association, or his designee.
- (7) The executive director of the Louisiana Clerks of Court Association, or her designee.
- (8) The president of the Police Jury Association of Louisiana, or his designee.
- (9) The president of the Louisiana Municipal Association, or his designee.
- (10) The president of the Louisiana District Judges Association, or her designee.

- (11) The president of the Louisiana District Attorneys Association, or his designee.
- (12) The president of the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, or her designee.
- (13) The president of the Louisiana State Conference of the NAACP, or his designee.
- (14) The president of the League of Women Voters of Louisiana, or her designee.
- (15) The executive director of the Voice of the Experienced, or his designee.
- (16) The president of the Pelican Institute, or his designee.
- (17) The president of the Public Affairs Research Council, or his designee.

Provides for appointments to be submitted to the chairman of the committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs no later than July 1, 2024. Provides for the first meeting to be held no later than August 1, 2024. Requires report on recommendations to be submitted not less than 30 days prior to the 2025 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Senate Floor Amendments to original bill

1. Reduce membership on the task force.
2. Change responsibility for receiving appointments, convening first meeting, and staffing the task force from the secretary of state to the chairman of Senate and Governmental Affairs and the legislature.