

SENATE BILL NO. 261

BY SENATOR HODGES

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AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 18:435(A)(4) and (B)(2) and to enact R.S. 18:435(A)(5) and (B)(1)(c) and 1309(N), relative to elections; to provide for the appointment of poll watchers; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 18:435(A)(4) and (B)(2) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 18:435(A)(5) and (B)(1)(c) and 1309(N) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

§435. Watchers; appointment and commission

A.(1) * * *

(4)(a) The parish executive committee of a recognized political party having at least twenty-five percent of the registered voters in the state registered as being affiliated with the political party is entitled to have political party super watchers in the parish if a candidate affiliated with the political party is on the ballot. The designation of political party super watchers shall be made in accordance with this Section and as provided in Subparagraph (b) of this Paragraph.

(b)(i) In a parish with fewer than fifty thousand registered voters, the parish executive committee of the recognized political party may designate one political party super watcher.

(ii) In a parish with fifty thousand or more but fewer than one hundred thousand registered voters, the parish executive committee of the recognized political party may designate two political party super watchers.

(iii) In a parish with one hundred thousand or more but fewer than one hundred-fifty thousand registered voters, the parish executive committee of the recognized political party may designate three political party super watchers.

(iv) In a parish with one hundred-fifty thousand or more but fewer than two hundred thousand registered voters, the parish executive committee of the recognized political party may designate four political party super watchers.

1 (v) In a parish with two hundred thousand or more registered voters, the
 2 parish executive committee of the recognized political party may designate five
 3 political party super watchers.

4 (c) Each political party super watcher shall have the qualifications,
 5 powers, and duties of watchers provided for by R.S. 18:427 and shall be
 6 admitted as a watcher in every precinct in the designated parish where a
 7 candidate affiliated with his political party is on the ballot, except that not more
 8 than one political party super watcher may serve at a single precinct at the same
 9 time.

10 (d) The chairman of the parish executive committee of the political party
 11 shall sign and be responsible for filing the list of political party super watchers.

12 (e) The chairman of the state central committee of a recognized political
 13 party may designate super watchers for the parish, in accordance with this
 14 Section, in any parish without a parish executive committee of the recognized
 15 political party.

16 ~~(4)(5)~~ The commissioners shall regulate the number of watchers inside the
 17 polling place as provided in R.S. 18:427.

18 B.(1) * * *

19 (c) A list of political party super watchers submitted by a party for the
 20 primary election may be used for the general election only if the chairman of the
 21 parish executive committee or the state central committee of the party notifies
 22 the clerk of court in writing by 4:30 p.m. on the tenth business day before the
 23 general election that he wants to use the same list of political party super
 24 watchers.

25 (2) Except for a candidate, parish executive committee or state central
 26 committee of a recognized political party filing a list of political party super
 27 watchers, or recognized political party filing for a slate of candidates for presidential
 28 elector, any person filing a list of watchers ~~must~~ shall attach a certified statement
 29 that the report required by R.S. 18:1486 has been filed with the supervisory
 30 committee in compliance with the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act.

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§1309. Early voting; verification
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N.(1) The parish executive committee of a recognized political party having at least twenty-five percent of the registered voters in the state registered as being affiliated with the political party is entitled to have an early voting watcher at each early voting location in the parish, as space permits, at which a candidate affiliated with the political party is on the ballot.

(2) A qualified voter of the state who is not a candidate in the election may serve as an early voting watcher.

(3) A watcher shall be admitted within the designated early voting location during the conduct of early voting where a candidate affiliated with the political party is on the ballot and shall call any infraction of the law to the attention of the registrar of voters or deputy registrar. An early voting watcher may keep notes on the conduct of early voting, but he shall not take part in performing the procedures of Subsections D, E, or F of this Section. An early voting watcher shall not electioneer, engage in political discussions, or unnecessarily delay a voter at the polling place. An early voting watcher is subject to the authority of the registrar of voters or deputy registrar and shall not interfere with the registrar or deputy registrar in the performance of their duties. The parish executive committee of a political party shall be entitled to have both a watcher and alternate watcher serve at the same early voting location, except that the early voting watcher and alternate watcher may not serve at a single voting location at the same time.

(4) The registrar of voters or deputy registrar shall regulate the number of watchers inside the early voting location as provided in R.S. 18:427.

(5) A list of early voting watchers shall be filed with the registrar of voters by hand delivery, facsimile, mail, or commercial courier before 4:30 p.m. on the fourteenth business day before the first day of early voting for the primary or general election; however, if the fourteenth business day before the

1 first day of early voting for the primary or general election falls on a Saturday,
 2 Sunday, or other legal holiday, the list shall be filed on the next day which is not
 3 a Saturday, Sunday, or other legal holiday. For purposes of this Paragraph,
 4 "commercial courier" shall have the same meaning as provided in R.S.
 5 13:3204(D).

6 (6) The chairman of the parish executive committee of the political party
 7 shall sign and be responsible for filing the list of early voting watchers.

8 (7) A list of early voting watchers submitted for the primary election may
 9 be used for the general election only if the chairman of the parish executive
 10 committee of the political party notifies the registrar of voters in writing by 4:30
 11 p.m. on the tenth business day before the start of early voting for the general
 12 election that he wants to use the same list of early voting watchers.

13 (8) A list of early voting watchers shall contain only one early voting
 14 watcher and one alternate watcher for each early voting location where the state
 15 central committee of the political party is entitled to have an early voting
 16 watcher. The list shall be typed or legibly written, and it shall contain the name
 17 and mailing address of each early voting watcher and alternate watcher and a
 18 designation of the early voting location where each is to serve.

19 (9) The chairman of the state central committee of a recognized political
 20 party may designate early voting watchers for the parish in accordance with
 21 this Subsection in any parish without a parish executive committee of the
 22 recognized political party.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____