

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 648

BY REPRESENTATIVE BEAULLIEU

ELECTIONS/CANDIDATES: Increases candidate qualifying fees and dedicates the monies to the Campaign Sign Recycling Fund

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:1254(A) and 1280.22(A) and to enact R.S. 18:454 and  
3 464(B)(5), relative to candidate qualifying fees for an election; to provide for the  
4 imposition of a candidate qualifying fee for certain candidates; to provide for the  
5 dedication of certain revenues from the collection of a candidate qualifying fee; to  
6 establish the Campaign Sign Recycling Fund as a special fund in the state treasury;  
7 to provide for the transfer, deposit, and use of monies in the Campaign Sign  
8 Recycling Fund; to provide for the powers and duties of the state treasurer; to  
9 provide for the powers and duties of the secretary of state; to provide for a prior Act  
10 of the Legislature of Louisiana; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide for  
11 related matters.

12 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

13 Section 1. R.S. 18:1254(A) and 1280.22(A) are hereby amended and reenacted and  
14 R.S. 18:454 and 464(B)(5) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

15 §454. Campaign Sign Recycling Fund

16 A. There is hereby established in the state treasury, as a special fund, the  
17 Campaign Sign Recycling Fund, hereinafter referred to in this Section as the "fund".

18 B.(1) After allocation of money to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund  
19 as provided in Article VII, Section (9)(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana, the  
20 treasurer shall deposit into the fund the following:

(a) Monies collected from candidate qualifying fees for an election pursuant  
to R.S. 18:464(B)(5).

(b) Monies designated for the fund and received by the state treasurer from  
donations, gifts, grants, appropriations, or other revenue.

(2) Monies in the fund shall be invested in the same manner as monies in the state general fund. Interest earned on investment of monies in the fund shall be deposited into the state general fund. Unexpended and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund.

C.(1) Monies in the fund shall be appropriated to the secretary of state for  
the recycling of political campaign signs.

(2) The secretary of state shall promulgate rules in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act necessary for implementation and administration of the provisions of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection.

\* \* \*

§464. Qualifying fees; additional fees imposed by political party committees;  
financial statements

\* \* \*

B. Amount of qualifying fees. The qualifying fees for candidates in primary elections are:

\* \* \*

(5) All candidates other than candidates for membership on a school board or the state central committee or parish executive committee of a political party, in addition to the qualifying fees established pursuant to Paragraphs (1) through (4) of this Subsection, shall pay an additional qualifying fee of twenty-five dollars. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the additional fee paid pursuant to the provisions of this Paragraph shall be deposited into the Campaign Sign Recycling Fund as established in R.S. 18:459.

\* \* \*

1        §1254. Slates of candidates not affiliated with a recognized political party;  
2                nominating petitions and qualifying by payment of qualifying fees

3                A. A slate of candidates for presidential elector who are not affiliated with  
4                a recognized political party may be nominated by nominating petition or may qualify  
5                by the payment of a qualifying fee of five hundred dollars. Such qualifying fee shall  
6                be paid in accordance with the provisions of R.S. 18:464(A). The candidate shall also  
7                pay a qualifying fee pursuant to R.S. 18:464(B)(5). The period for filing such  
8                qualifying fee shall begin on the third Tuesday in July and shall end at 4:30 p.m. on  
9                the first Friday following the third Tuesday in August of each year in which a  
10               presidential election is to be held. Each qualifying fee shall be accompanied by the  
11               notice of candidacy and notarized affidavit of each candidate for elector signifying  
12               his acceptance of the nomination. A candidate for presidential elector who is not  
13               affiliated with a recognized political party may be registered to vote with or without  
14               a declaration of party affiliation.

15                                \*        \*        \*

16        §1280.22. Candidates; procedure for qualifying

17                A. Candidates for presidential nominee shall qualify in accordance with  
18                procedures established by the party. Prior to qualification as a candidate of a  
19                political party for presidential nominee, a person shall pay a qualifying fee of seven  
20                hundred fifty dollars and any additional ~~fee~~ fees as authorized by ~~R.S. 18:464(C)~~  
21                R.S. 18:464(B)(5) and (C) or shall have obtained a nominating petition, bearing the  
22                handwritten signatures of no less than one thousand registered voters affiliated with  
23                the party from each of the congressional districts into which the state is divided. If  
24                the candidate is qualifying by paying a fee, the fee shall be paid in cash, by certified  
25                or cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank or credit union, by United States  
26                postal money order, or by a money order issued by a state or national bank or credit  
27                union.

28                                \*        \*        \*

Section 2. R.S. 18:1254(A) and 1280.22(A) are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§1254. Slates of candidates not affiliated with a recognized political party;  
nominating petitions and qualifying by payment of qualifying fees

A. A slate of candidates for presidential elector who are not affiliated with a recognized political party may be nominated by nominating petition or may qualify by the payment of a qualifying fee of one thousand dollars. Such qualifying fee shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of R.S. 18:464(A). The candidate shall also pay a qualifying fee pursuant to R.S. 18:464(B)(5). The period for filing such qualifying fee shall begin on the third Tuesday in July and shall end at 4:30 p.m. on the first Friday following the third Tuesday in August of each year in which a presidential election is to be held. Each qualifying fee shall be accompanied by the notice of candidacy and notarized affidavit of each candidate for elector signifying his acceptance of the nomination. A candidate for presidential elector who is not affiliated with a recognized political party may be registered to vote with or without a declaration of party affiliation.

\* \* \*

§1280.22. Candidates; procedure for qualifying

A. Candidates for presidential nominee shall qualify in accordance with procedures established by the party. Prior to qualification as a candidate of a political party for presidential nominee, a person shall pay a qualifying fee of one thousand dollars and any additional ~~fee~~ fees as authorized by ~~R.S. 18:464(C)~~ R.S. 18:464(B)(5) and (C) or shall have obtained a nominating petition, bearing the handwritten signatures of no less than one thousand registered voters affiliated with the party from each of the congressional districts into which the state is divided. If the candidate is qualifying by paying a fee, the fee shall be paid in cash, by certified or cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank or credit union, by United States

1 postal money order, or by a money order issued by a state or national bank or credit  
2 union.

3 \* \* \*

4 Section 3(A). R.S. 18:1254(A) and 1280.22(A) as amended and reenacted in Section  
5 2 of this Act shall supercede R.S. 18:1254(A) and 1280.22(A) as amended and reenacted in  
6 Act No. 1 of the 2024 First Extraordinary Session of the Legislature.

7 (B) The additional qualifying fee provided for in this Act shall be required of  
8 candidates qualifying on and after August 1, 2025.

9 Section 4.(A) This Section and Sections 1 and 3 of this Act shall become effective  
10 upon signature of this Act by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration  
11 of the time for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article  
12 III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If this Act is vetoed by the governor and  
13 subsequently approved by the legislature, this Section and Sections 1 and 3 of this Act shall  
14 become effective on the day following such approval.

15 (B) The provisions of Section 2 of this Act shall become effective when Act 1 of the  
16 2024 First Extraordinary Session of the Legislature becomes effective.

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#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 648 Engrossed

2025 Regular Session

Beaullieu

**Abstract:** Imposes an additional \$25 candidate qualifying fee for an election and provides for the deposit of the additional fee into the Campaign Sign Recycling Fund.

Proposed law establishes the Campaign Sign Recycling Fund as a special fund in the state treasury. Directs the state treasurer to invest the monies in the fund in the same manner as the state general fund. Interest earned on investment of monies shall be deposited into the state general fund. Unexpended and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund.

Proposed law imposes an additional \$25 fee for each candidate qualifying for an election in the state, except for candidates for membership on a school board or the state central committee or parish executive committee of a political party, beginning Aug. 1, 2025. Monies collected from the additional fee shall be deposited into the Campaign Sign Recycling Fund. Monies in the fund shall be appropriated to the secretary of state for the recycling of political campaign signs.

Proposed law authorizes the secretary of state to promulgate rules necessary for the implementation of a program to recycle political campaign signs.

Effective in part upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action; effective in part Jan. 1, 2026 (see Act No. 1 of the 2024 1st E.S.).

(Amends R.S. 18:1254(A) and 1280.22(A); Adds R.S. 18:454 and 464(B)(5))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs to the original bill:

1. Exempt candidates for school board and political party committee from the requirement to pay the additional qualifying fee.
2. Provide for the additional qualifying fee to be paid by candidates qualifying on and after Aug. 1, 2025.