
DIGEST

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HB 708 Engrossed

2026 Regular Session

Ventrella

Abstract: Provides for concurrent jurisdiction between the justice of the peace and city courts in East Baton Rouge Parish over evictions and for the jurisdictional boundaries and election districts of justice of the peace courts and constable districts in East Baton Rouge Parish.

Statistical summaries of proposed law including maps illustrating proposed election section boundaries accompany this digest. *(Attached to the bill version on the internet.)*

Present law (C.C.P. Art. 4912) provides that a justice of the peace court has concurrent jurisdiction with a parish or district court over suits for the possession or ownership of movable property and over suits by landowners or lessors for the eviction of occupants or tenants of leased residential premises regardless of the amount of monthly or yearly rent or rent for the unexpired term of the lease.

Present law provides that a justice of the peace court has jurisdiction over suits by landowners or lessors for the eviction of occupants or tenants of leased commercial premises and leased farmlands where the amount of the monthly rental does not exceed \$5,000 per month, regardless of the amount of rent due or the rent for the unexpired term of the lease.

Proposed law provides that justices of the peace in East Baton Rouge Parish shall have concurrent jurisdiction with the city courts in East Baton Rouge Parish for the eviction of occupants or tenants of leased residential or commercial premises and leased farmlands where the amount of the monthly rental does not exceed \$5,000 per month, regardless of the amount of yearly rent or rent for the unexpired term of the lease.

Present law (R.S. 13:2602) provides that the territorial jurisdiction of the six justice of the peace courts within the parish of East Baton Rouge, as they exist on Sept. 12, 1980, shall continue and shall not be diminished or otherwise changed by reason of the annexation into any municipality within the parish of all or any part of the area comprising such territorial jurisdiction of a justice of the peace court. Further provides that whenever, by reason of annexation, the territorial jurisdiction of a mayor's court or a city court is extended into all or any part of the existing territorial jurisdiction of a justice of the peace court, the territorial jurisdiction of the mayor's court or the city court, as the case may be, shall be concurrent with that of the justice of the peace court.

Proposed law repeals present law and instead provides for the territorial jurisdiction of the six justice of the peace courts in East Baton Rouge Parish and provides that each district serves as an election district for justice of the peace and constable.

Proposed law provides that the persons elected to the offices of justice of the peace and constable for such justice of the peace courts in East Baton Rouge Parish at the regularly scheduled election in 2026 and their successors shall be elected from the districts provided in proposed law.

Proposed law specifies that precincts referenced in district descriptions are those precincts contained in the file named "2026 Precinct Shapefiles (01-27-2026)" available on the legislature's website. Provides that the 2025 Precinct Shapefiles are based upon those Voting Districts (VTDs) contained in the 2020 Census Redistricting TIGER/Line Shapefiles for the state of La. as those files have been modified and validated through the data verification program of the La. House of Representatives and the La. Senate to represent precinct changes submitted through Jan. 27, 2026, to the Legislature of La. by parish governing authorities.

Proposed law also specifies that if any such precinct has been subdivided by action of the parish governing authority on a nongeographic basis or subdivided by action of the parish governing authority on a geographic basis in accordance with present law, the enumeration of the general precinct designation shall include all nongeographic and all geographic subdivisions thereof. Further provides that the territorial limits of the districts as enacted shall continue in effect until changed by law regardless of any subsequent change made to the precincts by the parish governing authority.

Population data in the summaries accompanying this digest are derived from 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171), Summary File for La. Population data, statistical information, and maps are supplied for purposes of information and analysis and comprise no part of proposed law.

Proposed law provides that each justice of the peace court in East Baton Rouge Parish shall retain jurisdiction over any matter properly filed with the court on or before the effective date of proposed law.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 13:2602; Adds C.C.P. Art. 4912(C))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Judiciary to the original bill:

1. Remove a provision regarding the territorial jurisdiction of the justice of peace court in East Baton Rouge Parish coinciding with the district boundaries of the court.
2. Change the territorial jurisdiction and districts of the justice of the peace and constable districts in East Baton Rouge Parish and provide for the elections from such districts.
3. Provide for the retention of jurisdiction for matters properly filed with a justice of the peace court on and before the effective date of proposed law.

4. Add an effective date.