

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 906

BY REPRESENTATIVE BILLINGS

ELECTIONS/CANDIDATES: Provides for nominating petitions and party primary elections

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:410.3, 445.1, 521(B)(1), 1280.21, and 1280.22(A) and  
3 (B)(3)(b), relative to elections; to provide relative to party primary elections; to  
4 provide relative to participation by unaffiliated voters in party primary elections; to  
5 authorize a major political party to allow for participation by unaffiliated voters; to  
6 provide for notification to the Department of State; to provide for nominating  
7 petitions for candidates for presidential nominee; to provide for the required number  
8 of signatures; to provide for requirements for voters who sign the nominating  
9 petition; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide for related matters.

10 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

11 Section 1. R.S. 18:410.3, 445.1, 521(B)(1), 1280.21, and 1280.22(A) and (B)(3)(b)  
12 are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

13 §410.3. Purpose and nature of party primary elections

14 A. For general elections, major political parties shall make all nominations  
15 of candidates for party primary office by direct primary elections held pursuant to  
16 this Part. In party primary elections, each voter voting in such election may vote  
17 only for a candidate who is affiliated with the same party as the voter. However, the  
18 state central committee of a major political party may in its bylaws allow voters who  
19 are not affiliated with a political party to participate in its party primary elections.



1 §445.1. Political party committees; election

2 A. Notwithstanding any other provision in this Part, if the presidential  
3 preference primary is repealed, all elections for members of a state central committee  
4 or a parish executive committee of a recognized political party shall occur at the  
5 same time as the statewide presidential general election.

6 B. If the state central committee of a major political party notifies the  
7 Department of State that voters not affiliated with a political party may choose to  
8 participate in its primary elections pursuant to R.S. 18:410.3(B), such notification  
9 shall also allow unaffiliated voters to choose to participate in elections for the state  
10 central committee and parish executive committee of the major political party. Any  
11 voter who is not affiliated with any political party and who is allowed to cast his vote  
12 on the ballot of a major political party shall cast his vote on the ballot for only one  
13 major political party.

14 \* \* \*

15 §521. Qualifications of voters

16 \* \* \*

17 B. Candidates for party office. (1) In a primary or general election at which  
18 members of a political party committee are voted on, only qualified voters who are  
19 registered as being affiliated with the same political party as the candidates for  
20 membership on a political party committee may vote on such candidates. However,  
21 the state central committee of a major political party as defined in R.S. 18:410.1 may  
22 allow in its bylaws voters who are not affiliated with any political party to participate  
23 in an election at which members of a political party committee are voted on. The  
24 secretary of state shall adjust the voting machines so that the candidates for  
25 membership on a political party committee may only be voted on by voters who are  
26 registered as being affiliated with the same political party as the candidates, unless  
27 provided for otherwise by a state central committee.

28 \* \* \*

1 §1280.21. Presidential preference primary election

2 A. A statewide presidential preference primary election shall be held on the  
3 last Saturday in March in 2024 and every fourth year thereafter for the purpose of  
4 allowing the ~~electors~~ voters of each political party in the state which has forty  
5 thousand or more registered members to express their preference for a person to be  
6 the nominee of the party for president of the United States.

7 B. Each ~~elector~~ voter voting in such election may vote only for a candidate  
8 who is affiliated with the same party as the ~~elector~~ voter.

9 C. If the state central committee of a major political party as defined in R.S.  
10 18:410.1 notifies the Department of State that voters not affiliated with a political  
11 party may choose to participate in its party primaries pursuant to R.S. 18:410.3(B),  
12 such notification shall also allow unaffiliated voters to chose to participate in the  
13 statewide presidential preference primary election of the major political party. Any  
14 voter who is not affiliated with any political party and who is allowed to cast his vote  
15 on the ballot of a major political party shall cast his vote on the ballot of only one  
16 major political party.

17 §1280.22. Candidates; procedure for qualifying

18 A. Candidates for presidential nominee shall qualify in accordance with  
19 procedures established by the party. Prior to qualification as a candidate of a  
20 political party for presidential nominee, a person shall pay a qualifying fee of one  
21 thousand dollars and any additional fees as authorized by R.S. 18:464(B)(5) and (C)  
22 or shall have obtained a nominating petition, bearing the handwritten signatures of  
23 no less than ~~one thousand~~ two thousand five hundred registered voters affiliated with  
24 the party, not less than two hundred fifty of which shall be from each of the  
25 congressional districts into which the state is divided. If the candidate is qualifying  
26 by paying a fee, the fee shall be paid in cash, by certified or cashier's check drawn  
27 on a state or national bank or credit union, by United States postal money order, or  
28 by a money order issued by a state or national bank or credit union.

1 B.

2 \* \* \*

3 (3)

4 \* \* \*

5 (b) ~~Each~~ In addition to his signature, each voter who signs a nominating  
6 petition shall ~~include his name and residence address~~ provide the information  
7 required by R.S. 18:3. Once a voter has signed a nominating petition, he may not  
8 withdraw the nomination.

9 \* \* \*

10 Section 2. This Act shall become effective January 1, 2027.

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)]

HB 906 Engrossed

2026 Regular Session

Billings

**Abstract:** Provides for nominating petitions for presidential nominee and for participation in party primary elections by unaffiliated voters.

Present law (R.S. 18:410.3) provides that political parties make all nominations of candidates for party primary office by direct primary elections. Provides that each voter may vote only for a candidate who is affiliated with the same party as the voter.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that voters not affiliated with a political party may vote in a major party primary if a party primary ballot is selected by the voter prior to casting his ballot, but such a voter may vote only in one major party primary.

Proposed law repeals present law and provides that a state central committee of a major political party may, through its bylaws, allow unaffiliated voters to participate in its party primary elections. Provides that a state central committee of a major political party shall notify the Dept. of State at least 180 days prior to the opening of qualifying for the first party primary that its bylaws either allow or prohibit participation by voters who are not affiliated with a political party.

Present law (R.S. 18:445.1) provides that if the presidential preference primary is repealed, all elections for members of a state central committee or a parish executive committee of a recognized political party shall occur at the same time as the statewide presidential general election.

Proposed law retains present law and provides that if a state central committee of a major political party allows unaffiliated voters to participate in its party primary elections, then the unaffiliated voters are also allowed to participate in elections for the state central committee and parish executive committee elections.

Present law (R.S. 18:521(B)) provides that in a primary or general election at which members of a political party committee are voted on, only qualified voters who are registered as being affiliated with the same political party as the candidates for membership on a political party committee may vote on such candidates. Requires the secretary of state to adjust the voting machines so that the candidates for membership on a political party committee may only be voted on by voters who are registered as being affiliated with the same political party.

Proposed law retains present law and provides that a state central committee of a major political party may, through its bylaws, allow unaffiliated voters to participate in its party committee elections.

Present law (R.S. 18:1280.21) provides for when a statewide presidential preference primary election is to be held. Provides that each voter voting in such election may vote only for a candidate who is affiliated with the same party as the voter.

Proposed law retains present law and provides that if a state central committee of a major political party, through its bylaws, allows unaffiliated voters to participate in its party primary elections, then the unaffiliated voters shall also be allowed to vote in the statewide presidential preference primary election.

Present law (R.S. 18:1280.22(A)) provides for the manner in which a candidate for presidential nominee shall qualify. Provides that a candidate, prior to qualifying, shall either pay a qualifying fee of \$1,000 or shall have obtained a nominating petition bearing the handwritten signatures of no less than 1,000 registered voters affiliated with the party from each congressional district. Provides for the method of paying the qualifying fee.

Proposed law changes the signature requirement for the nominating petition from 1,000 from each congressional district to 2,500 with at least 250 from each of the congressional districts. Otherwise retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:1280.22(B)) provides for when the qualifying period is to open and close. Requires a presidential candidate to file a notice of candidacy with the secretary of state and further provides that the notice of candidacy shall be in writing and contain certain information. Provides for what is to be included in the nominating petition.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that each voter who signs a nominating petition shall include his name and residence address.

Proposed law instead provides that in addition to his signature, each voter who signs a nominating petition shall provide the information required by present law (R.S. 18:3). Further provides that once a voter has signed a nominating petition he may not withdraw the nomination.

Effective January 1, 2027.

(Amends R.S. 18:410.3, 445.1, 521(B)(1), 1280.21, and 1280.22(A) and (B)(3)(b))

#### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Add language giving the ability for a state central committee of a major political party to allow, through its bylaws, unaffiliated voters to participate in its party

primary elections and provide that unaffiliated voters can only vote in one major political party's primary elections, if allowed.

2. Require a state central committee to notify the Dept. of State if it allows or prohibits unaffiliated voters from participating in its party primary elections.
3. Provide that if a state central committee allows unaffiliated voters to participate in its party primary elections, then the unaffiliated voters shall also be allowed to participate in the elections for the state central committee, parish executive committee, and the statewide presidential preference primary.
4. Make technical changes.
5. Add effective date of Jan. 1, 2027.