

Prior law provided for a closed primary system for the election of members of congress, which included first party primary, second party primary, and general elections.

Prior law provided that all recognized political parties made nominations of congressional candidates by direct party primary elections. Provided that in such party primary elections, all qualified voters of the state were allowed to vote on the candidates for public office who were affiliated with the same political party with which the voter was affiliated; however, prior law allowed voters unaffiliated with a recognized political party to vote in a party primary election of a party that chose to allow such voters to vote by party rules and regulations, but permitted such a voter to cast a vote in only one such primary related to each election.

Prior law provided that a candidate in a congressional first primary election was required to be affiliated with a recognized political party and could qualify as a candidate only in the party primary of the party with which he was affiliated as shown in his voter registration.

Prior law provided that a majority vote was required in the congressional first party primary election for a candidate to be nominated by his party as a congressional candidate in the general election. Further provided that absent such majority vote, the two candidates from the same party receiving the highest number of votes in the first party primary would be voted on in the second party primary.

Prior law provided relative to tie votes in the first party primary and death, withdrawal, and disqualification of a candidate. Provided that there would be no third party primary and that the state central committee would provide for the selection of a nominee in any situation not specifically provided for by statute.

Prior law provided that the congressional candidate from each political party who received the highest number of votes in the second party primary would qualify for the general election as well as any candidate who received a majority in the first party primary. Provided that only one candidate from each recognized political party could qualify for the general election by party nomination.

Prior law provided that a person who was not affiliated with a recognized political party could become a candidate in a general election by filing his notice of candidacy, accompanied by either the qualifying fee or a ballot access petition with the same number of signatures required for candidates in the first party primary, in the same manner and during the same time period as provided for candidates in the first party primary affiliated with a recognized political party.

Prior law provided that all qualified voters could vote on candidates for public office in general elections without regard to the voter's party affiliation or lack thereof, and all candidates for public office who qualified for a general election could be voted on without regard to the candidate's party affiliation or lack thereof. Prior law specified that in a general election, the candidate with the most votes was elected whether or not he received a majority of the total votes cast.

Prior law provided that congressional first party primary elections were held on the first Saturday in Sept., and congressional second party primary elections and primary elections for officers elected at the same time as members of congress were held on the first Saturday in Oct. in even-numbered years.

Prior law provided that the general election date for members of congress and officers elected at the same time as members of congress was the first Tuesday after the first Monday in Nov.

New law repeals prior law.

New law provides that all qualified voters of this state may vote on candidates for public office in both primary and general elections, including congressional elections, without regard to the voter's party affiliation or lack thereof, and that all candidates for public office who qualify for a primary or general election may be voted on without regard to the candidate's party affiliation or lack thereof.

New law provides that all candidates, including congressional candidates, run in a single primary and that, unless a candidate receives a majority vote in the primary and is elected, the top two candidates who receive the most votes are the candidates in the general election.

New law provides that a candidate, including a congressional candidate, who receives a majority of the votes cast for an office in a primary election is elected.

New law provides that the candidate who receives the most votes cast for an office in a general election is elected.

New law provides that primary elections for members of congress and for officers elected at the same time as members of congress shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in Nov. of an election year. Provides that general elections for members of congress and for officers elected at the same time as members of congress shall be held on the first Saturday in Dec. of an election year.

New law establishes procedures for carrying out the provisions of the election system established by new law.

New law repeals all provisions relative to a closed primary system for congressional candidates and repeals all references and provisions applicable to the closed primary system for congressional elections contained in prior law, including references to first party primary and second party primary.

Effective January 1, 2011.

(Amends R.S. 18:44(A) and (B)(5)(b), 110(B), 193(F), 197, 401(B), 402(B), (C)(intro. para.), (E), and (G), 433(G)(1) and (H)(1)(intro. para.), 434(A)(1), (C)(intro. para.), and (D)(1) and (2), 435(A)(1) and (B), 436, 453(A) and (B), 467(intro. para.) and (2), 468(A), 481, 491(A) and (C), 511(A) and (B), 512(B), 535(B), 552(A)(intro. para.), 1272(A), 1278(B), 1279, 1285(B)(1)(a), 1300(C)(1), 1300.7(A), 1306(A)(4) and (C)(2), 1307(A)(intro. para.) and (8) and (E), 1308(A)(2)(a), 1314(B) and (C), 1355(6), 1401(B), 1402(B)(1)(c), 1405(A), 1406(B), 1407, 1409(B)(1) and (2), 1432(A), and 1461(A)(17); Repeals R.S. 18:1275.1-1275.24)