
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)]

Stuart Bishop

HB No. 191

Abstract: Requires the secretary of state to take action necessary to allow members of the U.S. service and persons residing outside the U.S. to vote at all times, not only during a period of declared emergency, and requires the secretary of state to allow registered voters who are unable to vote during early voting or at the polling place on election day due to out-of-state work responsibilities relating to a declared emergency to vote.

Present law (La. Election Code) provides for absentee by mail and early voting for registered voters who are unable to vote at the polls on election day. Provides that any qualified voter may vote in person during the early voting period (the period between 14 days to seven days before the election) at certain locations.

Present law provides that only specified persons may vote absentee by mail, including a member of the U.S. service and his spouse and dependents, a person who resides outside of the U.S., and a person who expects to be temporarily outside the normal territorial limits of the state or absent from the parish in which he is qualified to vote during the early voting period and on election day. Requires a person to make application to the registrar by letter, over his signature or mark, setting forth certain required information. Provides deadlines. Allows for electronic transmission of ballot information to members of the U.S. service and persons residing outside the U.S. Allows a voter to fax a voted ballot to the registrar if he feels he will not have sufficient time to vote timely by mail.

Present law (R.S. 18:1308) provides that the secretary of state as the chief election officer of the state shall take all actions reasonably necessary to allow members of the U.S. Service and persons residing outside the U.S. to vote according to federal law (the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act) or otherwise during a period of declared emergency, whether by mail, facsimile, or other means of transmission of the ballot. Proposed law repeals the requirement that a period of declared emergency exist for these responsibilities of the secretary of state to apply. Otherwise retains present law.

Proposed law additionally provides that the secretary of state as the chief election officer of the state shall take all actions reasonably necessary to allow registered voters who are unable to vote during early voting or at the polling place on election day due to out-of-state work responsibilities relating to a declared emergency to vote, whether by mail, facsimile, or other means of transmission of the ballot.

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

(Amends R.S. 18:1308(A)(2)(j))