
DIGEST

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HB 452 Original

2015 Regular Session

Smith

Abstract: Provides for the manner of appointment of the registrar of voters and prohibits the registrar, chief deputy registrar, and confidential assistant of the registrar from receiving an increase in salary under certain circumstances.

Present law (R.S. 18:51) provides that there shall be a registrar of voters for each parish in the state, who shall be appointed by the governing authority of the parish. Present law (R.S. 18:52) provides that each registrar shall be a resident and qualified voter of the parish in which he is to perform his duties.

Proposed law retains present law and provides for the manner of appointment of the registrar. Provides that the registrar shall be appointed for a term concurrent with the term of the members of the governing authority as follows:

- (1) No later than 10 months prior to the end of the term of its members, the parish governing authority shall advertise the upcoming appointment of the registrar of voters and solicit applications in accordance with certain minimum requirements.

Advertising must be complete at least eight months prior to the end of the term, and the deadline for submitting applications shall be no later than seven months prior to the end of the term.

- (2) The parish governing authority shall forward all timely-filed applications to the State Bd. of Election Supervisors as soon as possible after the deadline for submitting applications.
- (3) The State Bd. of Election Supervisors shall consider the applicants and send to the parish governing authority a list of three recommended applicants who meet the qualifications provided in present law (R.S. 18:52). If there are fewer than three applicants who meet the qualifications, the list shall contain the names of all of the applicants who meet the qualifications.

The State Bd. of Election Supervisors shall give particular consideration to education and training, elections administration or voter registration experience, and ability to work with technology.

The State Bd. of Election Supervisors shall send the list within the first 10 days of the beginning of the term.

- (4) No later than the 60th day following the beginning of the term, the parish governing authority shall appoint the registrar of voters from among the recommended applicants. The parish governing authority shall give particular consideration to education and training, elections administration or voter registration experience, and ability to work with technology.

Present law requires the parish governing authority to fill a vacancy in the office of registrar of voters. Provides that until the appointment is made, the chief deputy shall perform the duties of the registrar in a parish having a chief deputy. Provides that if there is no chief deputy, within 48 hours after the office becomes vacant, the parish governing authority shall appoint a person temporarily to perform the duties of the registrar until the parish governing authority fills the vacancy. Provides, however, that if the parish governing authority neither fills the vacancy nor, in a parish having no chief deputy, designates a person temporarily to perform the duties of registrar within 48 hours after the office becomes vacant, the State Bd. of Election Supervisors shall appoint a person to perform the duties until the parish governing authority fills the vacancy. Provides further that a person appointed temporarily to perform the duties of registrar shall have authority to register voters in accordance with law.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that the parish governing authority must fill a vacancy within 30 days.

Proposed law provides instead that the parish governing authority must fill the vacancy within 60 days. Requires the parish governing authority to advertise the vacancy and solicit applications for the office in accordance with certain minimum requirements. Requires advertising to be completed within 30 days and the deadline for applications to be no later than 10 days after the completion of advertising. Provides that the parish governing authority shall give particular consideration to education and training, elections administration or voter registration experience, and ability to work with technology.

Proposed law provides that the members of parish governing authorities who begin a term in Jan. of 2016 shall appoint the registrar of voters for their parish in accordance with the provisions of proposed law relative to vacancies as though a vacancy in the office of registrar of voters exists.

Present law (R.S. 18:55) provides relative to the compensation of registrars of voters, chief deputy registrars, and confidential assistants of the registrars. Provides for a five-category population range and 12-step pay scale for the salaries of registrars of voters, chief deputy registrars, and confidential assistants of registrars. Provides for each registrar, chief deputy registrar, and confidential assistant to automatically receive an annual salary increase to the next step on July first until his annual salary equals the highest step of the appropriate population range. Further provides that each registrar, chief deputy registrar, and confidential assistant whose salary is at the level of step one or higher shall be evaluated as to merit in Jan. Provides that upon a finding of "excellent" on a merit evaluation, the registrar, chief deputy registrar, or confidential assistant receives a salary increase to the next step until the salary is equal to the highest step of the appropriate population range. Provides, however, that no registrar, chief deputy registrar, or confidential assistant shall receive an increase in salary as provided in present law during a time period when the State Civil Service

Commission has suspended the authority to award merit increases to classified employees.

Proposed law retains present law and additionally provides that no registrar, chief deputy registrar, or confidential assistant of a registrar shall receive an increase in salary as provided in present law when the secretary of state has submitted a determination to the Dept. of State Civil Service that it is necessary not to grant or to reduce performance adjustments in order to avoid or reduce layoffs.

Provisions of proposed law relative to the appointment of registrars of voters become effective if and when the proposed amendment of Article XI, Section 5 of the Constitution of La. contained in the Act which originated as House Bill No. 237 of this 2015 R.S. of the Legislature is adopted at a statewide election and becomes effective.

Remaining provisions of proposed law become effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 18:51(A) and (C)(1), 55(F), and 59(M); Adds R.S. 18:51.1)