
DIGEST

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HB 951 Engrossed

2016 Regular Session

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Abstract: Changes the close of registration records from 30 days prior to the election to 20 days prior to the election for certain people who register to vote online.

Present law (R.S. 18:521) provides that all persons who have registered to vote prior to the time the registration records are closed as required in present law (R.S. 18:135) may vote in the election for any candidates except those seeking membership on a committee of a political party with which the voter is not registered as being affiliated.

Present law (R.S. 18:103) provides that a person who meets the qualifications for voter registration may apply in person at the office of the registrar, using the federal postcard application, through the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C), through designated voter registration agencies, and through the mail using certain forms.

Present law (R.S. 18:115.1) additionally provides that a person who has a valid La. driver's license or La. special identification card may apply to register to vote or make changes to his existing registration by completing and submitting an electronic voter registration application on the secretary of state's website. Provides for the content of the electronic voter registration application. Provides for immediate verification of the driver's license number or special identification card number submitted by the applicant. Provides that if a verification is made, the secretary of state shall electronically forward the information provided in the application to the appropriate registrar of voters to determine the eligibility of the applicant in accordance with present law and to immediately inform the applicant.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:135) generally requires the registrar to close the registration records 30 days prior to an election, unless the deadline falls on a legal holiday, in which case the deadline is moved to the next day that is not a holiday. Provides that the registration records may be closed at a later time under certain circumstances involving emergencies.

Proposed law provides that registrars shall close the registration records 20 days prior to an election (instead of 30 days prior to an election) for a person who makes application online pursuant to present law (R.S. 18:115.1) to register to vote or make changes to an existing registration and who has been informed pursuant to present law that his application has been electronically forwarded to the appropriate registrar of voters. Otherwise retains present law for other methods of registration.

Present law (R.S. 18:101) provides that a person who is otherwise qualified to vote, who has begun residence in another state or another political subdivision of this state before an election for president and vice president of the U.S. or for electors for president and vice president and who for that reason does not satisfy the registration requirements set forth in present law, may vote in such an election in person or absentee by mail at the place in the state where he resided immediately before his removal.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law applies to a person who begins residence in another state or political subdivision after the 30th day prior to the election. Proposed law provides instead that present law applies to a person who begins residence in another state or political subdivision after registration records are closed pursuant to present law and proposed law.

Present law (R.S. 18:157) requires the registrar prior to an election to deliver a precinct register to each precinct in the parish that is involved in the election. Requires the precinct register to include the official list of voters and the inactive list of voters in each precinct. Present law (R.S. 18:562 and 1309) requires election officials during early voting and on election day to attempt to establish the identity of each voter by matching identifying information presented by the voter with information in the precinct register (during early voting, officials also use the state voter registration computer system for verification).

Present law (R.S. 18:152) requires the registrar prior to delivery of the precinct register to add the names and collateral information on those mail registrants that were verified after the printing of the precinct register. Provides that such listing of registrants shall be considered to be a supplement to the official list of voters and a part of the precinct register. Requires the registrar subsequent to the delivery of the precinct register, to add the names and collateral information on those mail registrants that were verified after the delivery of the precinct register. Provides that such listing of registrants shall be considered another supplement to the official list of voters and a part of the precinct register. Provides that any supplemental list so produced shall be delivered to the precinct in the same manner as a list of absentee voters who voted absentee by mail and whose ballots were received after the precinct register was sealed.

Proposed law retains present law. Additionally requires the registrar to supplement the official list of voters in the precinct register with the names and collateral information for registrants who registered pursuant to proposed law and who were verified after the printing or delivery of the precinct register.

Effective February 1, 2017.

(Amends R.S. 18:101(D)(intro. para.) and 152(C)(2)(b); Adds R.S. 18:135(A)(3))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on House and Governmental

Affairs to the original bill:

1. Change the proposed deadline for the close of registration records for electronic voter registration applications via the secretary of state's website from 10 days prior to an election to 20 days prior to an election.
2. Remove proposed provision for a case in which the close of registration records for electronic voter registration applications falls on a legal holiday.
3. Change effective date from Jan. 1, 2017, to Feb. 1, 2017.