
DIGEST

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HB 593 Engrossed

2016 Regular Session

Danahay

Abstract: Provides for the manner of appointment of the registrar of voters.

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.

Present law requires the parish governing authority to fill a vacancy in the office of registrar of voters within 30 days. 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 and provides for the manner of appointment of the registrar.

Proposed law requires the parish governing authority to take all reasonable steps to make as many people in the parish as possible aware of the upcoming appointment of a registrar, including without limitation by issuing press releases to local news services and other media outlets and if the governing authority has a website, by posting notice on its website.

Proposed law provides that at a minimum, the parish governing authority shall publish notice of the upcoming appointment together with a request for the submission of applications to fill the office on two separate days at least one week apart in the official journal of the governing authority and in another newspaper with a larger circulation within the parish than the official journal if there is such a newspaper. Provides requirements for the notice. Requires the governing authority to offer to interview each applicant who meets the qualifications provided by law for the office of registrar of voters.

Present law requires the governor to issue a commission to the registrar upon appointment.

Proposed law provides that if the governing authority fails to submit notice and documentation pursuant to proposed law or if the notice and documentation submitted by the governing authority is not sufficient to show the governing authority complied with the requirements of proposed law in appointing the registrar, the governor shall not issue a commission to the registrar but shall instead send notice to the governing authority that it has failed to show compliance.

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.459 of the 2016 R.S. is adopted at a statewide election and becomes effective.

(Amends R.S. 18:51(A), (B), and (C)(1); Adds R.S. 18:51.1)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Make technical amendments.