

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 177

BY SENATOR APPEL

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the secretary of state to create a committee to study the provisions of the Louisiana Election Code regarding involuntarily displaced voters and make recommendations regarding any legislation needed to properly address the issues and challenges facing such displaced voters.

WHEREAS, the right to vote is fundamental to American democracy and without it there is no "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" as so eloquently expressed by President Abraham Lincoln; and

WHEREAS, hurricanes Katrina and Rita clearly illustrated that natural disasters have the capacity to displace a significant portion of the state's population which, in addition to the resultant physical, emotional, and economic toll, also impacts the electoral process; and

WHEREAS, the legislature has a solemn responsibility to ensure that every involuntarily displaced resident, who is properly registered to vote, is afforded every possible opportunity to participate in state and local elections held in the place of residence from which they were displaced; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the secretary of state to determine whether an involuntarily displaced voter has established residency outside of the state and therefore no longer meets the eligibility criteria to be a registered voter in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon the legislature and the secretary of state to take every step feasible to protect the voting rights of involuntarily displaced voters, while maintaining the integrity of the electoral process.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the secretary of state to create a committee to study the provisions of the Louisiana Election Code regarding involuntarily displaced voters and make recommendations regarding any legislation needed to properly address the issues and challenges facing such displaced voters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall be composed of the following members, who shall serve without compensation:

1. The secretary of state, or his designee, who shall serve as chairman.
2. The commissioner of elections, or his designee.
3. The attorney general, or his designee.
4. The chairman of the Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs, or his designee.
5. The chairman of the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs, or his designee.
6. The president of the Louisiana Registrar of Voters Association, or his designee.
7. Such other members as the secretary of state deems necessary or appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the secretary of state shall submit a written report of the committee's findings and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs and the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs, not later than March 1, 2013.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of state.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE