

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

SB 224

2021 Regular Session

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Present law provides for the information required to be included on absentee by mail ballot envelope certificates.

Proposed law would retain the requirements in present law and additionally require the certificate to include the voter's Louisiana driver's license or special identification card number or last four digits of the voter's social security number if the voter does not have a Louisiana driver's license or special identification card. Would further require that the statement certify that the voter does not possess a Louisiana driver's license or special identification card and has not been issued a social security number, if applicable.

Present law provides for the information required to be included on an application for an absentee by mail ballot.

Proposed law would retain the requirements in present law and additionally require the application to include the voter's Louisiana driver's license or special identification card number or last four digits of the voter's social security number, if issued.

Present law provides for the information required to be included on the affidavit utilized by early voters who do not possess a Louisiana driver's license, special identification card, other generally recognized picture identification card that contains the voter's name and signature, or United States military picture identification card that contains the voter's name and signature.

Proposed law would retain the requirements in present law and additionally require the affidavit to include the last four digits of the voter's social security number.

Present law provides for the verification of the voter information contained on the certificate or flap of the envelope containing an absentee by mail ballot by parish boards of election supervisors during the counting and tabulation process.

Proposed law would retain the verification of the information required in present law and further require verification of the additional voter information required to be provided on the certificate or envelope flap in proposed law.

Present law provides that any person present during the preparation, verification, counting, and tabulation of absentee by mail and early voting ballots may leave the location where the process is taking place or communicate with any person outside until the close of polls, nor shall they possess a cellular telephone or electronic device.

Proposed law would retain present law and further expressly prohibit the recordation or dissemination of any voter information read aloud during the process. Would provide that any person who knowingly, willfully, or intentionally violates this prohibition be subject to the criminal penalties applicable to violations of certain mandatory provisions of the Election Code (R.S. 18:1461.7(A)(5)) and any other applicable penalties or remedies otherwise provided by law, including penalties for identify theft (R.S. 14:67.16).

Present law provides for the grounds for challenging an absentee by mail or early voting ballot during the counting preparation and verification process.

Proposed law would retain present law and further provide that reasons for challenging an absentee by mail ballot for cause shall include, but not be limited to, the information provided on the certificate or flap of the envelope containing the absentee by mail ballot not matching the voter's information as it appears on his voter registration.

Present law provides for the grounds for challenging an absentee by mail or early voting ballots cast in an election impaired as a result of a declared disaster or emergency during the counting preparation and verification process.

Proposed law would delete present law.

Would become effective January 1, 2023.

(Proposed to amend R.S. 18:1306(E)(1)(f), 1307(A)(9), 1309(D)(1)(b), 1313(E) and (G)(2), 1313.1(E) and (G)(2), and 1315(B); add R.S. 18:1306(E)(1)(g) and (h) and 1307(A)(10))

VETO MESSAGE: "Please be advised that I have vetoed Senate Bill 224 of the 2021 Regular Session.

This bill, as finally passed, would require more stringent requirements to make application to vote absentee by mail than what is currently required to actually vote absentee by mail. The crux of the fate of this bill lies with Louisiana election law being changed in the haste of the final days and without proper debate making it more difficult for the voters of Louisiana to vote absentee by mail. Louisiana election law being changed overnight without proper vetting is an incredible disservice to the people of the state. We should strive to make access to voting easier for voters, not create barriers."