

SENATE BILL NO. 243

BY SENATORS MORRELL, BARROW, BISHOP, BOUDREAUX, CARTER, CLAITOR, LAFLEUR, LONG, LUNEAU, PETERSON, PRICE AND GARY SMITH AND REPRESENTATIVES BAGNERIS, BISHOP, BOUIE, BRASS, CARPENTER, GARY CARTER, CONNICK, COX, DUPLESSIS, FRANKLIN, GAINES, GLOVER, HALL, JIMMY HARRIS, HUNTER, JACKSON, JAMES, JEFFERSON, JENKINS, JORDAN, TERRY LANDRY, LYONS, MARCELLE, MARINO, GREGORY MILLER, NORTON, PIERRE, SMITH AND STAGNI

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A JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing to amend Article I, Section 17(A) of the Constitution of Louisiana, relative to jury trials in criminal cases; to require unanimous vote of twelve jurors in all felony cases for offenses committed on or after January 1, 2019; to provide for submission of the proposed amendment to the electors; and to provide for related matters.

Section 1. Be it resolved by the Legislature of Louisiana, two-thirds of the members elected to each house concurring, that there shall be submitted to the electors of the state, for their approval or rejection in the manner provided by law, a proposal to amend Article I, Section 17(A) of the Constitution of Louisiana, to read as follows:

§17. Jury Trial in Criminal Cases; Joinder of Felonies; Mode of Trial

Section 17.(A) Jury Trial in Criminal Cases. A criminal case in which the punishment may be capital shall be tried before a jury of twelve persons, all of whom must concur to render a verdict. A case for an offense committed prior to January 1, 2019, in which the punishment is necessarily confinement at hard labor shall be tried before a jury of twelve persons, ten of whom must concur to render a verdict. A case for an offense committed on or after January 1, 2019, in which the punishment is necessarily confinement at hard labor shall be tried before a jury of twelve persons, all of whom must concur to render a verdict. A case in which the punishment may be confinement at hard labor or confinement without hard labor for more than six months shall be tried before a jury of six persons, all of whom must concur to render a verdict. The accused shall have a right to full voir dire examination of prospective jurors and to challenge jurors peremptorily. The number

1 of challenges shall be fixed by law. Except in capital cases, a defendant may  
2 knowingly and intelligently waive his right to a trial by jury but no later than forty-  
3 five days prior to the trial date and the waiver shall be irrevocable.

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5 Section 2. Be it further resolved that this proposed amendment shall be submitted  
6 to the electors of the state of Louisiana at the statewide election to be held on November 6,  
7 2018.

8 Section 3. Be it further resolved that on the official ballot to be used at said election  
9 there shall be printed a proposition, upon which the electors of the state shall be permitted  
10 to vote YES or NO, to amend the Constitution of Louisiana, which proposition shall read as  
11 follows:

12 Do you support an amendment to require a unanimous jury verdict in all  
13 noncapital felony cases for offenses that are committed on or after January 1,  
14 2019?

15 (Amends Article I, Section 17(A))

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES