

2020 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 623

BY REPRESENTATIVES FREEMAN AND IVEY

REAPPORTIONMENT: Creates and provides for a redistricting study and advisory commission

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Chapter 15 of Title 18 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised
3 of R.S. 18:1961, relative to redistricting; to create and provide for a study and
4 advisory commission to make recommendations to the legislature regarding
5 redistricting; to provide for the membership of the commission; and to provide for
6 related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. Chapter 15 of Title 18 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950,
9 comprised of R.S. 18:1961, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 CHAPTER 15. REAPPORTIONMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION

11 §1961. Study and advisory commission

12 A. No later than the end of April of each year ending in zero, the chairman
13 of the study and advisory commission established by this Section shall call an
14 organizational meeting of the commission to establish a meeting schedule to enable
15 the commission to perform its functions and duties in the manner required by this
16 Section and to conduct any other business deemed necessary by the chairman.

17 B.(1) The study and advisory commission shall consist of the following:

18 (a) A non-voting chairman appointed by the chairman of the Committee on
19 House and Governmental Affairs and the chairman of the Committee on Senate and
20 Governmental Affairs, acting jointly.

1 (b) Three members appointed by the speaker of the House of
2 Representatives, who shall be appointed in a manner which reflects the demographic
3 diversity of the state of Louisiana specifically in gender, race, ethnicity, and political
4 party affiliation, but who shall not be legislators.

5 (c) Three members appointed by the president of the Senate, who shall be
6 appointed in a manner which reflects the demographic diversity of the state of
7 Louisiana specifically in gender, race, ethnicity, and political party affiliation, but
8 who shall not be legislators.

9 (d) Three members appointed by the governor, one of whom shall be female,
10 one of whom shall be from a recognized minority group, and at least one of whom
11 shall not be affiliated with the same recognized political party as the governor.
12 Further, the governor shall ensure that at least one of the members he appoints is
13 either an academic or legal professional or a demographer with relevant knowledge
14 of or experience with the redistricting process in Louisiana.

15 (e) One member appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court.

16 (f) The secretary of state, or his designee.

17 (g)(i) One member appointed by the chair of the Louisiana Democratic
18 Party.

19 (ii) One member appointed by the chair of the Independent Party of
20 Louisiana.

21 (iii) One member appointed by the chair of the Republican Party of
22 Louisiana.

23 (h) Three members who shall be appointed by the commission as
24 representatives from nonprofit civic organizations in accordance with the provisions
25 of this Subparagraph in the manner determined by the commission at its
26 organizational meeting. Prior to making the appointment of members pursuant to
27 this Subparagraph, the commission shall compare the composition of the existing
28 membership on the commission to the demographic diversity of the state of
29 Louisiana specifically in gender, race, ethnicity, and political party affiliation, and

1 shall make every effort to appoint members pursuant to this Subparagraph in a
2 manner to make total composition of the membership of the commission as reflective
3 of the demographic diversity of the state of Louisiana specifically in gender, race,
4 ethnicity, and political party affiliation as possible.

5 (2) Any vacancy on the commission shall be filled in the manner of initial
6 selection as soon as possible.

7 C.(1) No later than March fifteenth of each year ending in zero, the chairmen
8 of the house and senate governmental affairs committees shall jointly appoint the
9 chairman of the commission as provided in Subsection B of this Section. No later
10 than March twentieth of each year ending in zero, the chairman appointed pursuant
11 to this Paragraph shall notify each of the appointing or designating authorities in
12 Subparagraphs (B)(1)(a) through (g) of this Section regarding the applicable
13 provisions of this Section.

14 (2) No later than April first of each year ending in zero, each appointing or
15 designating authority in Subparagraphs (B)(1)(a) through (g) of this Section shall
16 submit the name and contact information of each person such authority has selected
17 to serve on the commission.

18 D.(1) The commission shall study the following:

19 (a) Past redistricting proceedings including, at minimum, those from the two
20 most recent redistricting cycles.

21 (b) Best redistricting practices established in other states.

22 (c) Redistricting tools and resources that have become available since the
23 most recently completed redistricting cycle, including digital map-drawing tools,
24 redistricting algorithms, and other technological resources.

25 (d) Proposed redistricting plans.

26 (2) The commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the
27 legislature no later than February fifteenth of each year ending in one. The
28 commission may make additional recommendations to the legislature until December
29 thirty-first of the year ending in one.

1 E. The presiding officers of the legislature shall designate appropriate staff
2 to provide assistance to the commission in carrying out its duties.

3 F. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation, except
4 per diem or expense reimbursement to which a member may be individually entitled
5 as a member of his organization.

6 G. All state and local agencies and officials shall cooperate with and assist
7 the commission in carrying out its functions and duties.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 623 Original

2020 Regular Session

Freeman

Abstract: Creates a study and advisory commission to make recommendations to the legislature regarding redistricting.

Proposed law provides for a study and advisory commission to study redistricting and make recommendations to the legislature. Requires the commission to study and report findings and recommendations to the legislature no later than Feb. 15th of each year ending in one regarding past redistricting proceedings, best redistricting practices established in other states, redistricting tools and resources that have become available since the most recently completed redistricting cycle, and proposed redistricting plans. Provides that the commission may make additional recommendations to the legislature until December thirty-first of the year ending in one.

Proposed law provides that the commission consist of:

- (1) A non-voting chairman appointed jointly by the chairs of the House and Senate governmental affairs committees.
- (2) Three non-legislator members appointed by the speaker of the House in a manner which reflects the demographic diversity of the state specifically in gender, race, ethnicity, and political party affiliation.
- (3) Three non-legislator members appointed by the president of the Senate in a manner which reflects the demographic diversity of the state specifically in gender, race, ethnicity, and political party affiliation.
- (4) Three members appointed by the governor, one female, one from a recognized minority group, and at least one who is not affiliated with the same recognized political party as the governor. Further, at least one of the members the governor appoints shall be an academic or legal professional or a demographer with relevant knowledge of or experience with the redistricting process in La.
- (5) One member appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court.
- (6) The secretary of state, or his designee.

- (7) One member appointed by the chair of the Louisiana Democratic Party.
- (8) One member appointed by the chair of the Independent Party of Louisiana.
- (9) One member appointed by the chair of the Republican Party of Louisiana.
- (10) Three members who shall be appointed by the commission as representatives from nonprofit civic organizations. Requires the commission to compare the composition of the existing membership on the commission to the demographic diversity of the state specifically in gender, race, ethnicity, and political party affiliation, and to make every effort to appoint members in a manner to make total composition of the membership as reflective of the demographic diversity of the state as possible.

Proposed law provides that any vacancy on the commission shall be filled in the manner of initial selection as soon as possible.

Proposed law requires the chairs of the governmental affairs committees to appoint the chairman of the commission no later than March 15th of each year ending in zero. Requires the chairman to notify the other appointing or designating authorities by March 20th of the year ending in zero. Requires each appointing or designating authority to submit to the chairman, the name and contact information of each person such authority has appointed to serve on the commission by April 1 of the year ending in zero. Provides that the chairman shall call an organizational meeting no later than the end of April of the year ending in zero to establish a meeting schedule to enable the commission to perform its functions and duties in the manner required by proposed law.

Proposed law provides that the members serve without compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which a member may be individually entitled as a member of his organization. Requires all state and local agencies and officials to cooperate with and assist the commission in carrying out its functions and duties. Requires the presiding officers of the legislature to designate appropriate staff to provide assistance to the commission in carrying out its duties.

(Adds R.S. 18:1961)