AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 18:402(A), (C), (D), (E)(1)(a), (c), (d), and (e) and (2)(a), (c), (d), and (e), and (F)(1), (3), (4), and (6), 467(1) through (4) and (6), 501, 502, 503(A)(1), 1256, and 1280.22(C), relative to elections; to provide for election dates for certain elections; to provide for qualifying for certain elections; to provide for the opening of the qualifying period for certain elections; to provide for the close of the qualifying period for certain elections; to provide relative to withdrawal by a candidate; to provide procedures and requirements for withdrawal; to provide for the effect of a withdrawal; to provide relative to the powers, duties, and responsibilities of the secretary of state relative to a withdrawal; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1.  R.S. 18:402(A), (C), (D), (E)(1)(a), (c), (d), and (e) and (2)(a), (c), (d), and (e), and (F)(1), (3), (4), and (6), 467(1) through (4) and (6), 501, 502, 503(A)(1), 1256, and 1280.22(C) are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§402.  Dates of primary and general elections

A.  Gubernatorial elections.  Elections for governor and officers elected at the same time as the governor shall be held every four years, beginning in 1983.

(1)  Gubernatorial primary elections shall be held on the second third to last Saturday in October of an election year.

(2)  Gubernatorial general elections shall be held on the fourth fifth Saturday after the second third to last Saturday in October of an election year.

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C.  Municipal and ward elections.  In all municipalities with a population of less than three hundred thousand, elections for municipal and ward officers who are...
not elected at the same time as the governor or members of congress shall be held every four years.

(1) Primary elections for municipal and ward officers who are not elected at the same time as the governor or members of congress shall be held on the first last Saturday in April March of an election year, or on the first Saturday in March of the presidential election year.

(2) General elections for municipal and ward officers who are not elected at the same time as the governor or members of congress shall be held on the fourth fifth Saturday after the first last Saturday in April March of an election year unless the primary election for such officers is held on the first Saturday in March; in such case, the general election shall be held on the fourth fifth Saturday after the first Saturday after the first Tuesday in March of an election year.

D. Parochial and municipal elections in a parish containing a municipality with a population of three hundred thousand or more. Elections for parochial and municipal officers in a parish containing a municipality with a population of three hundred thousand or more shall be held every four years, beginning in 2017, as follows:

(1) Primary elections for parochial and municipal officers shall be held on the third second Saturday in October of an election year.

(2) General elections for parochial and municipal officers shall be held on the fourth fifth Saturday after the third second Saturday in October of an election year.

E. Special elections to fill newly created office or vacancy in office. An election to fill a newly created office or vacancy in an existing office, except the office of representative in congress, shall be held on the dates fixed by the appropriate authority in the proclamation ordering a special election as follows:

(1) A special primary election shall be held on the first of the following days that is after the date on which the proclamation calling the special primary election was issued, provided that the proclamation was issued at least four weeks prior to the opening of the qualifying period for the special primary election:

CODING: Words in struck through type are deletions from existing law; words underscored are additions.
(a) The second third to last Saturday in October, when the special general election is held on the fourth fifth Saturday after the second third to last Saturday in October.

* * *

(c) The first last Saturday in April March, when the special general election is held on the fourth fifth Saturday after the first last Saturday in April March or on the first Saturday in March during the presidential election year; however, commencing in 1986 and every fourth year thereafter, this date shall not be applicable in a parish containing a municipality with a population of three hundred thousand or more.

(d) The third second Saturday in October, when the special general election is held on the fourth fifth Saturday after the third second Saturday in October of 1985 and every fourth year thereafter.

(e) The third second Saturday in October of an election year for parish and municipal officers in a parish containing a municipality with a population of three hundred thousand or more.

(2) A special general election shall be held on one of the following days:

(a) The fourth fifth Saturday after the second third to last Saturday in October of 1983 and every fourth year thereafter.

* * *

(c) The fourth fifth Saturday after the first last Saturday in April March of any year unless the primary election is held on the first Saturday in March; in such case, the general election shall be held on the fourth fifth Saturday after the first Saturday after the first Tuesday in March; however, commencing in 1986 and every fourth year thereafter, this date shall not be applicable in a parish containing a municipality with a population of three hundred thousand or more.

(d) The fourth fifth Saturday after the third second Saturday in October of 1985 and every fourth year thereafter.

(e) The fourth fifth Saturday after the third second Saturday in October in a parish containing a municipality with a population of three hundred thousand or more.
more, when the special primary election in such parish and municipality is held on
the third second Saturday in October of an election year for parish and municipal
officers.

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F. Bond, tax, or other elections. Every bond, tax, or other election at which
a proposition or question is to be submitted to the voters shall be held only on one
of the following dates:

(1) The second third to last Saturday in October or the fourth fifth Saturday
after the second third to last Saturday in October of 1983 and every fourth year
thereafter.

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(3) The first last Saturday in April March or the fourth fifth Saturday after
the first last Saturday in April March of any year or on the first Saturday in March
or the fourth fifth Saturday after the first Saturday in March during the presidential
election year, however, commencing in 1994 and every fourth year thereafter, the
first Saturday in April shall not be applicable in a parish containing a municipality
with a population of three hundred thousand or more.

(4) The third second Saturday in October or the fourth fifth Saturday after
the third second Saturday in October of 1985 and every fourth year thereafter.

(6) For a parish containing a municipality with a population of three hundred
thousand or more, the third second Saturday in October or the fourth fifth Saturday
after the third second Saturday in October in 2017 and every fourth year thereafter.

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§467. Opening of qualifying period

The qualifying period for candidates in a primary election shall open:

(1) For candidates in a gubernatorial primary election and those in any
special primary election to be held at the same time, on the first Tuesday after the
first Monday in September August of the year of the election.
(2) For candidates in a congressional primary election and those in any special primary election to be held at the same time, on the third Wednesday in August July of the year of the election.

(3) For candidates in a primary election for municipal and ward officers who are not elected at the same time as the governor or members of congress in municipalities with a population of less than three hundred thousand and those in any special primary election to be held at the same time, on the second Wednesday in February January of the year of the election, unless the primary election is held on the third first Saturday after the first Tuesday in March; in such case the qualifying period for candidates in such primary election shall open on the first Wednesday in December of the year prior to the election.

(4) For candidates in a primary election for parochial and municipal officers in a parish containing a municipality with a population of three hundred thousand or more and in which the municipal and parochial elections are held at the same time, on the second Wednesday in August July in the year of the election.

(6) For candidates in a primary election held on the third second Saturday in October of 1981 and every fourth year thereafter, on the second Wednesday in August July of the year of the election.

§501. Procedure for withdrawal

A.(1) Prior to the close of the polls on election day, a candidate in a primary or general election may withdraw from the election by filing notice of his withdrawal; with the secretary of state prior to 4:30 p.m. on the seventh day after the close of the qualifying period. The notice of withdrawal shall be signed by the candidate and duly acknowledged by him before an officer authorized to administer oaths, with the secretary of state, who,

(2)(a) The secretary of state shall not accept a notice of withdrawal that does not satisfy the requirements of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection. The secretary of state shall endorse the date and time of receipt of such a notice of withdrawal and
return the notice forthwith, either personally or by registered or certified mail, to the
candidate. The provisions of this Subparagraph shall not apply to a notice of
withdrawal filed pursuant to a court order as provided in R.S. 18:494(B).

(b) The secretary of state shall forward a copy of the notice of withdrawal
that satisfies the requirements of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection or was filed
pursuant to a court order as provided in R.S. 18:494(B) and that was filed by a local
or municipal candidate to the president of the board of election supervisors and the
clerk of court of the parish in which the candidate has qualified.

B.(1) A candidate in a general election may withdraw from the election by
filing notice of his withdrawal with the secretary of state prior to 4:30 p.m. on the
ninth day after the date of the primary election. The notice of withdrawal shall be
signed by the candidate and duly acknowledged by him before an officer authorized
to administer oaths.

(2)(a) The secretary of state shall not accept a notice of withdrawal that does
not satisfy the requirements of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection. The secretary of
state shall endorse the date and time of receipt of such a notice of withdrawal and
return the notice forthwith, either personally or by registered or certified mail, to the
candidate.

(b) The secretary of state shall forward a copy of a notice of withdrawal that
satisfies the requirements of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection and that was filed by
a local or municipal candidate to the president of the board of election supervisors
and the clerk of court of the parish in which the candidate has qualified.

§502. Effect of withdrawal

A notice of withdrawal shall be effective when it is filed with the secretary
of state if the notice satisfies the requirements of R.S. 18:501 or was filed pursuant
to a court order as provided in R.S. 18:494(B), and the candidate who filed the notice
no longer shall be qualified as a candidate in the election from which he withdrew.
If the election ballot was printed with a withdrawn candidate's name on it, any votes
received by the withdrawn candidate shall be null and void and shall not be counted
for any purpose whatsoever.
§503. Notice of withdrawal and disqualification

A.(1) If the early voting election ballot was prepared with a withdrawn candidate's name on it and the withdrawal was filed prior to the close of early voting for the election, the registrar of voters of any parish where such ballot will be used shall, to the extent possible, cause notice to be posted of the withdrawal of such candidate at any location for early voting where the candidate's name appears on the ballot. Failure to post such notice of withdrawal shall not void the election.

§1256. Withdrawal of candidate

A.(1) Any person nominated as a candidate may withdraw his candidacy by written statement of withdrawal made, signed, and acknowledged before an officer qualified to administer oaths. The original of the statement shall be filed prior to 4:30 p.m. on the seventh day after the close of the qualifying period with the secretary of state, who shall note thereon the date it was filed.

(2) The secretary of state shall not accept a statement of withdrawal that does not satisfy the requirements of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection. The secretary of state shall endorse the date and time of receipt of such a notice of withdrawal and return the notice forthwith, either personally or by registered or certified mail.

B. The statement of withdrawal filed in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph (A)(1) of this Section shall become effective on the date of the filing. Once filed as herein provided, a statement of withdrawal shall not be returned to the person withdrawing. The effect of his withdrawal shall be as provided in R.S. 18:502.

§1280.22. Candidates; procedure for qualifying

C.(1)(a) Any person who qualifies as a candidate for presidential nominee may withdraw his candidacy by filing a notice of his withdrawal; that is signed by the candidate; and duly acknowledged before an officer authorized to administer oaths. The notice of withdrawal shall be filed prior to 4:30 p.m. on the seventh day...
after the close of the qualifying period with the secretary of state, who shall note
thereon the date it was filed.

(b) The secretary of state shall not accept a statement of withdrawal that does
not satisfy the requirements of Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph. The secretary of
state shall endorse the date and time of receipt of such a notice of withdrawal and
return the notice forthwith, either personally or by registered or certified mail.

(2) A notice of withdrawal filed in accordance with the provisions of
Subparagraph (1)(a) of this Subsection shall become effective when it is filed with
the secretary of state. Once filed as herein provided, a notice of withdrawal shall not
be returned to the person withdrawing. The effect of his the withdrawal shall be as
provided in R.S. 18:502.

Section 2. This Act shall become effective on January 1, 2016.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: ____________________