

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 502

BY REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:53(A) and (B)(1) and (2), 55(A)(4)(b), 59(B)(4)(b) and
3 (C)(4)(b), 60, and 134(A) and to enact R.S. 18:58(E), relative to the compensation,
4 evaluation, duties, and removal of registrars of voters; to provide for grounds for
5 removal; to provide for allegations brought by the commissioner of elections; to
6 provide for a firing freeze during the pendency of removal proceedings; to provide
7 for merit evaluations; to provide for office closures; to provide for the performance
8 of duties by the registrar of voters during office closures; to provide for the duty of
9 the registrar to report to the parish governing authority; to provide for effectiveness;
10 and to provide for related matters.

11 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

12 Section 1. R.S. 18:53(A) and (B)(1) and (2), 55(A)(4)(b), 59(B)(4)(b) and (C)(4)(b),
13 60, and 134(A) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 18:58(E) is hereby enacted to
14 read as follows:

15 §53. ~~Tenure; removal~~ Removal from office; may not be own immediate successor

16 A. A registrar shall be subject to removal by the State Board of Election
17 Supervisors for cause for any of the following reasons:

18 (1) Willful ~~willful~~ misconduct relating to his official duty;

19 (2) Willful ~~willful~~ and persistent failure to perform his duty;

20 (3) Persistent ~~persistent~~ public conduct prejudicial to the administration of
21 the laws relative to the registration of voters that brings the office into disrepute; ~~or,~~

22 (4) Incompetence.

23 (5) Consistent under-performance.

24 (6) Abuse of leave policies established by the secretary of state.

25 (7) Violation of substance abuse policies established by the secretary of
26 state.

(8) A finding of "unsuccessful" on a merit evaluation for two successive years.

(9) Conviction ~~conviction~~ of a felony.

B.(1) A registrar accused of any of the types of conduct set forth in ~~Subsection A Paragraphs (A)(1) through (7)~~ of this Section, found "unsuccessful" on a merit evaluation for two successive years, or convicted of a felony shall be subject to immediate suspension from office, with or without pay, by majority vote of the State Board of Election Supervisors.

(2)(a) If the board receives a resolution from a parish governing authority as provided in this Paragraph accusing the parish registrar of any ~~of the types of~~ conduct set forth in ~~Subsection A Paragraphs (A)(1) through (7)~~ of this Section, the board shall schedule a hearing on the accusations contained in the resolution within thirty days of the receipt of such resolution. Such resolution must be adopted by a favorable vote of at least two-thirds of the membership of the parish governing authority and transmitted to the chairman of the board by certified mail, return receipt requested. The provisions of this Paragraph shall in no way be construed to limit the powers conferred upon the board by Paragraph (1) of this Subsection.

(b) If the commissioner of elections raises allegations that the parish registrar has engaged in any conduct set forth in Paragraphs (A)(1) through (7) of this Section, the board shall schedule a hearing on the allegations brought by the commissioner of elections within thirty days of the receipt of the accusations. If the commissioner of elections serves as a regular member of the board, he shall not serve for the purposes of such hearings, and the secretary of state shall designate a member of the Registrars of Voters Association to serve in the commissioner's place and shall notify the board in writing of any such designation as provided in R.S. 18:23.

* * *

§55. Compensation of registrar of voters; amount and manner of payment; reduction during tenure prohibited; prohibited increase

A.

* * *

1 (4)

2 * * *

3 (b) Each registrar whose salary is at the level of step one or higher shall be
4 evaluated as to merit in January. The merit evaluation shall result in a finding of
5 "excellent", "successful", "unsuccessful", or "not assessed". The criteria and
6 procedure for the merit evaluation shall be determined by the secretary of state in
7 conjunction with the Registrar of Voters Association. Each registrar shall be
8 evaluated by the secretary of state or his designee acting on his behalf. Upon a
9 finding of "excellent" on a merit evaluation, the registrar shall receive a salary
10 increase to the next step until the registrar's salary is equal to the highest step of the
11 appropriate population range. A registrar may appeal the finding on a merit
12 evaluation to the State Board of Election Supervisors in accordance with rules
13 promulgated by the board. If a member of the board participates in the merit
14 evaluation of a registrar, the member shall not participate in an appeal of the
15 evaluation.

16 * * *

17 §58. Powers and duties of registrars

18 * * *

19 E. The registrar shall appear before the parish governing authority upon the
20 request of the parish governing authority.

21 §59. Deputies, confidential assistants, and other permanent office employees;
22 temporary employees; appointment and compensation; prohibited increase
23 in compensation

24 * * *

25 B.

26 * * *

27 (4)

28 * * *

29 (b) Each chief deputy whose salary is at the level of step one or higher shall

1 be evaluated as to merit in January. The merit evaluation shall result in a finding of
2 "excellent", "successful", "unsuccessful", or "not assessed". The criteria and
3 procedure for the merit evaluation shall be determined by the Registrar of Voters
4 Association. It shall provide that each chief deputy will be evaluated by the registrar
5 of his parish. Upon a finding of "excellent" on a merit evaluation, the chief deputy
6 shall receive a salary increase to the next step until his salary equals the highest step
7 of the appropriate population range.

8 C.

9 * * *

10 (4)

11 * * *

12 (b) Each confidential assistant whose salary is at the level of step one or
13 higher shall be evaluated as to merit in January. The merit evaluation shall result in
14 a finding of "excellent", "successful", "unsuccessful", or "not assessed". The criteria
15 and procedure for the merit evaluation shall be determined by the Registrar of Voters
16 Association. It shall provide that each confidential assistant be evaluated by the
17 registrar of his parish. Upon a finding of "excellent" on a merit evaluation, the
18 confidential assistant shall receive a salary increase to the next step until the
19 confidential assistant's salary is equal to the highest step of the appropriate
20 population range.

21 * * *

22 §60. Removal of deputies and employees

23 Subject to applicable civil service law, a registrar may remove any ~~deputy,~~
24 ~~clerk,~~ deputy registrar, confidential assistant, or other employee. However, no
25 registrar who is subject to removal by the State Board of Election Supervisors
26 pursuant to R.S. 18:53 may remove a deputy registrar, confidential assistant, or other
27 employee from the time the registrar is made aware that he is subject to removal until
28 after the State Board of Election Supervisors makes a final determination on the
29 removal of the registrar.

30 * * *

1 §134. Office hours

2 A.(1) A registrar shall keep his principal office open for business on those
3 days that state departments are open. A registrar shall observe the holidays that are
4 provided by law or proclaimed by the governor for state departments. On days that
5 a registrar's office is open, his office hours shall be from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.
6 Notwithstanding any provision of this Subsection, any registrar may keep his
7 principal office open during additional hours and on additional days.

8 (2) A registrar may close his principal office on days that state departments
9 are open only in extreme circumstances. However, on such days the registrar shall
10 still perform essential functions.

11 * * *

12 Section 2. The provisions of this Act shall become effective upon signature by the
13 governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become
14 law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the
15 Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the
16 legislature, the provisions of this Act shall become effective on the day following such
17 approval.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____