

2026 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 342

BY SENATOR BARROW

VOTERS/VOTING Provides for the voter protection act. (8/1/26)

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AN ACT

To enact Chapter 15 of Title 18 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 18:1955 through 1962, relative to elections; to provide for definitions; to provide for voter protections; to prohibit voter intimidation and misinformation; to provide for enhanced voter registration access; to provide for polling place protections; to provide for transparency in voter roll maintenance; to provide for protections for voter assistance providers; to provide for enforcement and penalties; to provide for judicial relief; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Chapter 15 of Title 18 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 18:1955 through 1962, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

**CHAPTER 15. VOTER PROTECTION ACT**

**§1955. Short Title. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Voter Protection Act"**

**§1955.1 Findings and Purpose. The legislature finds that:**

**A. The right to vote is fundamental to democracy, and every eligible Louisiana voter should have fair and equal access to the ballot.**

1           B. Laws should protect voters from intimidation, misinformation,  
2           administrative barriers, and unnecessary burdens in registration and voting.

3           C. Enhancing transparency, voter access, and election integrity  
4           strengthens public confidence in Louisiana's electoral process.

5           §1956. Definitions

6           For purposes of this Chapter, the following terms shall have the  
7           meanings unless the context indicated otherwise:

8           (1) "Voter assistance provider" means any individual or entity providing  
9           nonpartisan assistance to voters for registration, absentee ballot applications,  
10           or voting procedures.

11           (2) "Voting rights violations" means actions that unlawfully discourage  
12           or prohibit a person from registering or voting, including intimidation,  
13           misinformation, or discriminatory practices.

14           §1957. Protection against voter intimidation and misinformation

15           A. Prohibition on intimidation and misinformation.

16           (1) No person shall knowingly or intentionally intimidate, deceive,  
17           misinform, or coerce any voter, prospective voter, or voter assistance provider  
18           regarding any aspect of registration, voting, or qualifications to vote.

19           (a) Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to threatening  
20           language, dissemination of false information regarding voter eligibility, voting  
21           requirements, polling times, or locations.

22           (b) This Subsection reinforces existing protections against intimidation  
23           under R.S. 18:1461.4 and complements laws governing conduct at polling  
24           places.

25           B. Enforcement and penalties.

26           (1) Violations of this Section shall be a misdemeanor, punishable by a  
27           fine of not less than one thousand dollars and not more than five thousand  
28           dollars, imprisonment for up to six months, or both.

29           (2) Violations involving organized or systematic voter suppression shall

1 be a felony with enhanced penalties.

2 C. No person shall knowingly or intentionally intimidate, threaten,  
3 deceive, coerce, or misinform any voter, prospective voter, or voter assistance  
4 provider regarding any of the following items:

5 (1) Eligibility to vote.

6 (2) Requirements for registration.

7 (3) Polling place location.

8 (4) Voting times or dates.

9 (5) Procedures for casting a ballot.

10 D. The conduct prohibited by this Section including, but not be limited  
11 to dissemination of materially false information intended to discourage or  
12 prevent lawful voting.

13 E.(1) Whoever violates the provisions of this Section shall be guilty of a  
14 misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not less than one thousand  
15 dollars nor more than five thousand dollars, imprisoned for not more than six  
16 months, or both.

17 (2) If the violation involves coordinated, organized, or systematic efforts  
18 to suppress voter participation, the offender shall be guilty of a felony and, upon  
19 conviction, shall be imprisoned, with or without hard labor, for not more than  
20 five years, fined not more than ten thousand dollars, or both.

21 §1958. Voter registration and access enhancements; modernization

22 A. Standardized statewide materials. The secretary of state shall develop  
23 and provide standardized, accessible voter registration forms, instructions, and  
24 outreach materials in multiple languages reflective of the state's demographic  
25 needs.

26 B. Extended early registration period. The deadline for voter registration  
27 shall be extended by seven days before the close of registration under R.S.  
28 18:135, to improve eligible voters' ability to register prior to elections.

29 C. Online and mobile-friendly services. The secretary of state shall

1 expand digital voter registration capabilities, with secure online systems and  
2 mobile-friendly applications.

3 §1959. Polling place protections

4 A.(1) No interference zone. In addition to existing campaign-free zones,  
5 no individual shall engage in electioneering, distribution of false voting  
6 information, or acts of persuasion targeting voters within six hundred feet of  
7 any polling place during early voting or on election day.

8 (2) Law enforcement officers and election officials may enforce the  
9 provisions of this Section to ensure orderly and lawful voting.

10 B. Each polling place shall prominently display signage outlining voter  
11 rights under state and federal law.

12 C. All parish registrars shall provide reasonable assistance to voters with  
13 disabilities and ensure compliance with federal accessibility laws.

14 §1960. Transparency of voter roll maintenance

15 A. Annual notification. Registrars shall provide written notification to  
16 any voter whose registration is considered inactive, with clear instructions on  
17 how to confirm or update registration status and preserve voting eligibility. This  
18 notice shall include all of the following items:

19 (1) The reason for the designation.

20 (2) Instructions on how to restore or maintain active status.

21 B. Public reporting. The secretary of state shall publish an annual report  
22 on voter roll maintenance activities, including counts of inactive voters,  
23 removals, and confirmations.

24 §1961. Voter assistance provider protections

25 A. No person providing voter assistance in good faith shall be prosecuted  
26 or penalized for providing nonpartisan help to a voter, including registration,  
27 absentee ballot assistance, or information regarding voting procedures, unless  
28 the provider knowingly provides fraudulent information.

29 §1962. Judicial Review

1                    **Any person aggrieved by an act prohibited under this Act may seek**  
2                    **injunctive relief in a court of competent jurisdiction.**

3                    Section 2. This Act shall become effective on August 1, 2026.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, 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)]

DIGEST

SB 342 Original                    2026 Regular Session                    Barrow

Present law (Title 18 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes) provides for the administration of elections, including voter registration, early voting, absentee voting, polling place conduct, voter roll maintenance, and penalties for election offenses.

Present law prohibits voter intimidation and certain election offenses, including coercion, fraud, and interference with the election process.

Present law establishes deadlines and procedures for voter registration, including in-person and online registration.

Present law provides for campaign-free zones and restrictions on electioneering at polling places.

Present law authorizes registrars of voters and the secretary of state to conduct voter roll maintenance and removal of ineligible voters pursuant to specified procedures.

Proposed law enacts new law to be designated as the "Voter Protection Act" and to be codified at R.S. 18:1955 - 1962.

Proposed law provides definitions applicable to the new Subpart.

Proposed law prohibits knowingly or intentionally intimidating, deceiving, misinforming, or coercing any voter, prospective voter, or voter assistance provider regarding voter eligibility, registration requirements, polling locations, voting times or dates, or voting procedures.

Proposed law provides that violations are punishable as a misdemeanor and provides enhanced felony penalties for organized or systematic voter suppression.

Proposed law requires the secretary of state to develop standardized, accessible voter registration materials, including multilingual materials reflective of the state's demographics.

Proposed law extends the voter registration deadline by seven days beyond the deadline otherwise provided by law.

Proposed law requires expansion of secure online and mobile-friendly voter registration services.

Proposed law creates a 600 foot no-interference zone around polling places during early voting and on election day prohibiting electioneering, dissemination of false voting information, or acts of persuasion targeting voters.

Proposed law requires polling places to display signage explaining voter rights and requires

reasonable accommodations for voters with disabilities.

Proposed law requires written notification to voters whose registration status is designated inactive and requires the secretary of state to publish an annual public report on voter roll maintenance activities.

Proposed law provides protections for voter assistance providers acting in good faith and in a nonpartisan manner.

Proposed law authorizes an aggrieved person to seek injunctive relief.

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Adds R.S. 18:1955-1962)