



1 Section 2. No provision of this Act shall deprive any judge in office of the ability to  
 2 serve the entire remainder of his or her term. To effectuate the provisions of this Act, no  
 3 further elections shall be held for Division G of the first district of the fourth circuit or for  
 4 the at large seat currently held by Chief Judge Roland Belsome with a term expiring on  
 5 December 31, 2031, whether at the end of the current term or due to a vacancy caused by the  
 6 death, resignation, retirement, or incapacity of the judge.

7 Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
 8 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
 9 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
 10 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
 11 effective on the day following such approval.

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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)]

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#### DIGEST

SB 197 Reengrossed

2026 Regular Session

Morris

Present law provides for 12 judges at the Court of Appeal for the Fourth Circuit in New Orleans. Provides election of eight judges from the first district of the fourth circuit; one judge elected from the third district; and two judges elected from the circuit at large.

Proposed law reduces from 12 to 10 the total number of judges in the fourth circuit as follows:

- (1) Reduces from eight to seven, the judges elected from the first district.
- (2) Reduces from two to one, the judges elected from the circuit at large.

Proposed law is not to deprive any judge in office of the ability to serve the entire remainder of his or her term. To effectuate the provisions of this Act, no further elections shall be held for Division G, of the first district of the fourth circuit or for the at large seat currently held by Chief Judge Roland Belsome with a term expiring on December 31, 2031, whether at the end of the current term or due to a vacancy caused by the death, resignation, retirement, or incapacity of the judge.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 13:312.1(D))

#### Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

##### Senate Floor Amendments to engrossed bill

1. Makes technical changes.

2. Changes the amount of judgeships being reduced by the bill from a reduction of four to a reduction of two.
3. Changes the amount of judges elected from the first district from five to seven.
4. Changes the Divisions that would no longer hold elections from Divisions F, G, or H to Division G.
5. Provides for effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.