

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

HB 359

2026 Regular Session

Beaulieu

May 26, 2026

To the Honorable Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives and the Honorable President and Members of the Senate.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We, the conferees appointed to confer over the disagreement between the two houses concerning House Bill No. 359 by Representative Beaulieu, recommend the following concerning the Engrossed bill:

- 1. That the set of Senate Floor Amendments by Senator Reese (#2774) be adopted.
- 2. That the set of Senate Committee Amendments by the Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs (#2526) be adopted.
- 3. That the following amendments be adopted:

AMENDMENT NO. 1

In Senate Committee Amendment No. 3 by the Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs (#2526), on page 1, delete line 11 and insert the following:

"C. If a major party candidate qualifies for the general election pursuant to this Section or"

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Gerald "Beau" Beaulieu, IV	Senator Mike Reese
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Representative Doyle Boudreaux	Senator Stewart Cathey Jr.
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Representative Troy Hebert	Senator Patrick McMath
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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)]

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT DIGEST

HB 359

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Keyword and oneliner of the instrument as it left the House

ELECTIONS/CANDIDATES: Provides relative to the death of a candidate for a party primary office who is not affiliated with a major political party

Report adopts Senate amendments to:

1. Provide for effectiveness.
2. Provide for the election of a major party candidate in a special election to fill an unexpired term if there are no other remaining candidates for the general election.

Report amends the bill to:

1. Add a reference to present law relative to qualification for the general election for a party primary office in proposed provisions relative to the election of a major party candidate in a special election to fill an unexpired term if there are no other remaining candidates for the general election.
2. Make technical changes.

Digest of the bill as proposed by the Conference Committee

Present law (R.S. 18:410.8) provides for qualifying for the general election for a party primary office for candidates not affiliated with a major political party. Provides for who is allowed to sign the nominating petition for a candidate not affiliated with a major political party.

Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law provides that if a person qualifies as a candidate pursuant to present law and subsequently dies after the close of the qualifying period, the candidate's name shall not be printed on the general election ballot. Provides that if the deceased candidate's name is printed on the ballot, any votes received for the deceased candidate shall be void and shall not be counted for any purpose.

Present law (R.S. 18:410.9) provides that if after the close of the qualifying period for candidates in a party primary election, only one candidate qualified for the major political party or only one candidate for the major political party remains after the withdrawal of one or more candidates, the candidate is declared the nominee of the party. Further provides that if, after the close of the qualifying period for candidates for a party primary office, only one candidate qualified for a party primary election or the general election or only one candidate remains after the withdrawal or disqualification of one or more candidates, the candidate is declared elected by the people at the close of the polls on the day of the general election.

Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law provides that if a major party candidate qualifies for the general election pursuant to present law (R.S. 18:410.7 or 410.9) in a special election held to fill an unexpired term and there are no other remaining candidates for the general election then the qualified candidate is declared elected by the people and shall be certified pursuant to present law (R.S. 18:513).

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

(Adds R.S. 18:410.8(C) and 410.9(C))