
DIGEST

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HB 1 Engrossed

2025 First Extraordinary Session

Beaulieu

Abstract: Provides for the conduct of spring elections in 2026, including election dates, the date for the opening of qualifying, and special provisions for nominating petitions and campaign finance disclosure deadlines and provides certain authorizations to the secretary of state.

Proposed law changes certain provisions in present law (Louisiana Election Code) applicable to the 2026 spring elections for municipal and ward officers, for candidates in a party primary election for a party primary office, and for other elections held at the same time.

Proposed law provides for the spring primary election in 2026 to occur on May 16, 2026, instead of April 18, 2026, and for the spring general election in 2026 to occur on June 27, 2026, instead of May 30, 2026.

Election dates

Present law effective January 1, 2026, provides for a spring primary election to be held on the third Saturday in April (April 18, 2026) for municipal and ward officers elected in the spring of a nonpresidential congressional election year and for candidates in a party primary election for a party primary office to be elected in that year.

Proposed law changes the date for the spring primary election to May 16, 2026, and requires any contest, proposition, question, or constitutional amendment scheduled to appear on the April 18, 2026, ballot to instead appear on the ballot for May 16, 2026.

Present law effective January 1, 2026, provides for a spring general election to occur on the sixth Saturday after the third Saturday in April (May 30, 2026) for municipal and ward officers and, if necessary, a second party primary for candidates in a party primary election for a party primary office to be elected that year.

Proposed law changes the date for the spring general election to June 27, 2026, and requires any contest, proposition, question, or constitutional amendment scheduled to appear on the May 30, 2026, ballot to instead appear on the ballot for June 27, 2026.

Proposed law provides that the change of election dates shall not be construed to invalidate any action undertaken by the governing authority of a political subdivision in an effort to place a bond, debt, tax, or proposition election or other question to be presented to the voters on either the April 18, 2026, or May 30, 2026, ballot. Further provides that any notice, resolution, proclamation, or

certification that states either the April 18, 2026, or May 30, 2026, election date shall not be invalidated for failure to state the May 16, 2026, or June 27, 2026, election date.

Opening of qualifying

Present law effective January 1, 2026, provides that the qualifying period of the spring primary election in 2026 for candidates in the spring primary election, for all candidates in a party primary office to be elected that year, and those in any special primary election to be held at the same time, opens on the second Wednesday in January (January 14, 2026).

Proposed law instead provides that the qualifying period for the spring primary election in 2026 for candidates in the spring primary election, for all candidates for a party primary office to be elected in 2026, and those in any special primary election to be held at the same time, shall open on February 11, 2026.

Nominating petitions

Present law effective January 1, 2026, provides that a person may only be nominated as a candidate in a primary election by persons who are registered to vote on the office he seeks who sign a nominating petition for him no more than 120 days before the qualifying period opens for candidates in the primary election (September 16, 2025).

Proposed law provides that any signature collected on or after September 16, 2025, on a nominating petition for an office that will appear on the ballot for the May 16, 2026, election, shall be considered timely.

Present law provides that the number of qualified voters who must timely sign a nominating petition for a candidate for United States representative in Congress is 750 from within the *congressional district*.

Proposed law instead provides that the number of qualified voters who must timely sign a nominating petition for a candidate for United States representative in Congress for the May 16, 2026, election is 750 from within the *state*.

Present law provides that the number of qualified voters who must timely sign a nominating petition for a candidate for United States senator is 2,500, *not less than 250 of which shall be from each of the congressional districts into which the state is divided*.

Proposed law instead provides that the number of qualified voters who must timely sign a nominating petition for a candidate for United States senator for the May 16, 2026, election is 2,500 from within *the state*.

Election campaign finance disclosure deadlines

Present law effective January 1, 2026, provides that each committee which is participating in the election of a candidate for major office, excluding a candidate for party primary office, shall file a

report no later than the 180th day prior to the primary election (October 20, 2025), which shall be complete through the 190th day prior to the primary election.

Proposed law requires that a committee required to file such a report for the May 16, 2026, election is to file the report no later than November 20, 2025, which shall be complete through the 190th day prior to the May 16, 2026, election. Provides that it is not a violation of present law (Campaign Finance Disclosure Act) for a committee to fail to file the report prior to November 20, 2025.

Present law effective January 1, 2026, provides that each candidate for major office which is participating in the election, excluding a candidate for party primary office, shall file a report no later than the 180th day prior to the primary election (October 20, 2025), which shall be complete through the 190th day prior to the primary election.

Proposed law requires that a candidate required to file such a report for the May 16, 2026, election is to file the report no later than November 20, 2025, which shall be complete through the 190th day prior to the May 16, 2026, election. Provides that it is not a violation of present law (Campaign Finance Disclosure Act) for a candidate to fail to file the report prior to November 20, 2025.

Present law requires candidates to file certain supplemental and annual reports by February 15, 2026.

Proposed law instead requires candidates to file such supplemental and annual reports by March 2, 2026.

Authorization to the secretary of state

Proposed law authorizes the secretary of state to make necessary changes to any rules, regulations, forms, instructions, statements, ballots, nominating petitions, early voting ballot instructions, or absentee by mail ballot envelopes, instructions, certificates, or other balloting paraphernalia to reflect the dates and deadlines provided for in proposed law without approval as otherwise required by present law.

Proposed law authorizes the secretary of state to proceed with emergency rulemaking authority as provided in present law (Administrative Procedure Act) if necessary to implement the provisions of proposed law.

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

(Adds R.S. 18:419.1 and 419.2)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs to the original bill:

1. Provide for the validity of actions undertaken in an effort to place a bond, debt, tax, or

proposition election or other question to be presented to the voters on either the April 18, 2026, or May 30, 2026, ballot and the validity of any notice, resolution, proclamation, or certification that states either the April 18, 2026, or May 30, 2026, election date.