Hutter **HB No. 509**

(KEYWORD, SUMMARY, AND DIGEST as amended by Senate committee amendments)

ELECTIONS/PRES PRIMARY. Changes the date of the presidential preference primary and elections held at the same time.

DIGEST

Present law (R.S. 18:1280.21) provides that a statewide presidential preference primary election shall be held on the second Saturday in February in 2008 and every fourth year thereafter for the purpose of allowing the electors of each political party in the state which has 40,000 or more registered members to express their preference for a person to be the nominee of the party for president of the U.S., except when a legal holiday falls on the second Tuesday of February, in which case, the presidential preference primary election shall be held on the third Saturday in February.

Present law (R.S. 18:402) provides that municipal and ward officers in municipalities with a population of less than 300,000 who are not elected at the same time as the governor or members of congress may be elected at a primary held at the same time as the presidential preference primary and at a general election held four weeks later.

Present law provides that a special primary election to fill a newly created office or vacancy in office may be held at the same time as the presidential preference primary and a special general election may be held four weeks later.

Present law provides that a bond, tax, or other election at which a proposition or question is to be submitted to the voters may be held on the same date as the presidential preference primary.

Proposed law changes the date of the presidential preference primary and elections held at the same time from the second or third Saturday in February to the third Saturday after the first Tuesday in March. Changes corresponding dates for general elections from four weeks after the second or third Saturday in February to four weeks after the third Saturday after the first Tuesday in March.

Present law (R.S. 18:1280.22) provides that the qualifying period for presidential candidates opens on the second Wednesday in December and closes at 5:00 p.m. on the following Friday.

Proposed law provides that the qualifying period for presidential candidates shall open on the first Wednesday in December. Proposed law otherwise retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 18:443) provides that all members of the state central committee of a recognized political party shall be elected every four years at the same time as the presidential preference primary election. Provides that the term of office shall not extend for a period beyond the time for which the member was elected.

Present law (R.S. 18:443.2) provides relative to a recognized political party with which 30% or less of the registered voters in the state are affiliated. Provides that members of the state central committee of such a party, except for certain elected officials who are automatically members, shall be elected at the same time as the presidential preference primary election. Provides that such members serve a four-year term and that the term of office shall not extend for a period beyond the time for which the member was elected.

Present law (R.S. 18:444) provides that members of a parish executive committee of a recognized political party are elected every four years at the same time as the presidential preference primary election. Provides that the term of office shall not extend beyond the

time for which the member was elected. Provides the same time of election regarding a party with which 30% or less of registered voters are affiliated.

Proposed law retains present law and provides that each member of a parish executive committee or state central committee of a recognized political party serving on the effective date of proposed law shall serve until his successor is elected and takes office.

Present law provides that the qualifying period for candidates in a primary election for municipal and ward officers who are not elected at the same time as the governor or members of congress in municipalities with a population of less than 475,000, and those in any special primary election to be held at the same time, opens on the second Wednesday in February of the year of the election, unless the primary election is held on the second or third Saturday in February, in which case the qualifying period for candidates in such primary election opens on the second Wednesday in December of the year prior to the election.

Proposed law provides that the qualifying period for those candidates described in present law opens on the second Wednesday in February of the year of the election unless the primary election is held on the third Saturday after the first Tuesday in March, in which case the qualifying period opens on the first Wednesday in December of the year prior to the election.

Effective August 15, 2011.

(Amends R.S. 18:402(C)(1) and (2), (E)(1)(c) and (2)(c), and (F)(3), 467(3), 1280.21(A), and 1280.22(B)(1))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Removes proposed changes to the qualifying dates for certain candidates for municipal and ward officers.

2. Removes proposed changes to the qualifying dates for presidential candidates.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Senate and Governmental Affairs to the engrossed bill.

1. Changes election date in proposed law from the first Saturday after the first Tuesday in March to the third Saturday after the first Tuesday in March.

2. Adds provision that the qualifying period for candidates in a primary election for municipal and ward officers who are not elected at the same time as the governor or members of congress in municipalities with a population of less than 475,000, and those in any special primary election to be held at the same time, opens on the second Wednesday in February of the year of the election, unless the primary election is held on the third Saturday (proposed law), rather than the second or third Saturday (present law), after the first Tuesday in March (proposed law), rather than February (present law), in which case the qualifying period opens on the first (proposed law) rather than the second (present law) Wednesday in December of the year prior to the election.

3. Adds provision changing the opening of the qualifying period for presidential candidates from the second Wednesday in December to the first Wednesday in December.