

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 94

BY REPRESENTATIVE DANAHAHAY

A RESOLUTION

To create and provide for a subcommittee of the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs to examine and study certain matters relative to registrars of voters.

WHEREAS, Article XI, Section 5 of the Constitution of Louisiana requires the governing authority of each parish to appoint a registrar of voters but prohibits removal of the registrar by the appointing authority; and

WHEREAS, the law does not provide procedures or requirements for appointing the registrar; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 18:53 provides for the removal of a registrar by the State Board of Election Supervisors only for willful misconduct relating to his official duty, willful and persistent failure to perform his duty, persistent public conduct prejudicial to the administration of the laws relative to the registration of voters that brings the office into disrepute, or conviction of a felony; and

WHEREAS, the law provides that the registrar, subject to the direction of the secretary of state, is responsible for the registration of voters in the parish, the administration and enforcement of the laws and rules and regulations of the secretary of state relating to registration of voters, and conducting absentee by mail and early voting in the parish; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 18:55 sets out a pay schedule for registrars that is based on the population of the parish, with 12 salary steps for each population range; and

WHEREAS, the law provides that each registrar shall automatically receive an annual salary increase to the next step on July first until his annual salary equals the highest step of the appropriate population range; and

WHEREAS, each registrar whose salary is at the level of step one or higher is evaluated as to merit in January, and upon a finding of "excellent" on the merit evaluation,

the registrar receives an additional salary increase to the next step until the registrar's salary is equal to the highest step of the appropriate population range; and

WHEREAS, the law provides that the criteria and procedure for the merit evaluation shall be determined by the secretary of state in conjunction with the Registrar of Voters Association; and

WHEREAS, the Election Code also provides for a seven percent raise in the registrar's salary if the registrar satisfies the requirements for the voter registration administrator's certification program; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 18:1400.8 provides that expenses incurred by a registrar of voters and his permanent employees to perform election duties and responsibilities associated with early voting on any day during the week between 4:30 p.m. and the time that early voting terminates that day and on any Saturday on which early voting is conducted shall be paid by the state from funds appropriated to the secretary of state for that purpose; and

WHEREAS, in light of concerns expressed recently regarding a number of issues involving registrars of voters and in light of the importance of the voter registration process, it is desirable to examine the compensation, evaluation, appointment, and placement within the structure of government of registrars of voters and payment of expenses incurred by a registrar of voters for early voting.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby create a subcommittee of the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs to examine and study the compensation, evaluation, appointment, and placement within the structure of government of registrars of voters; payment of expenses incurred by a registrar of voters for early voting; and any related issues that the subcommittee deems appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chairman of the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs shall appoint the members of the subcommittee and designate the chairman and vice chairman of the subcommittee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the subcommittee shall be responsible for examining all matters relating to the compensation, evaluation, appointment, and placement within the structure of government of registrars of voters; payment of expenses incurred by

a registrar of voters for early voting; and any related issues that the subcommittee deems appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the subcommittee shall make such studies as it shall find necessary or appropriate to carry out its purposes; for the purposes of conducting such studies, the subcommittee may call upon the staffs of any department, agency, or official of the state for data and assistance; all such departments, agencies, and officials shall cooperate with the subcommittee; and the subcommittee may request and utilize the assistance of any and all public and private sources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the subcommittee shall solicit input, recommendations, and advice from the following:

- (1) The secretary of state.
- (2) The commissioner of elections.
- (3) The attorney general.
- (4) The Louisiana Clerks of Court Association.
- (5) The Louisiana Registrars of Voters Association.
- (6) The Police Jury Association of Louisiana.
- (7) The Department of State Civil Service.
- (8) The legislative auditor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the subcommittee shall have the power and authority of a standing committee to hold hearings, require the production of books and records, and do all other things necessary to discharge its duties and responsibilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the subcommittee shall make a report of its findings and recommendations, including proposed legislation, to the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs no later than thirty days prior to the 2016 Regular Session.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the subcommittee shall be dissolved upon the adjournment sine die of the 2016 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES