

LWVLA Voting Rights, Elections & Democracy Bills/Instruments 2024 Legislative Session (updated 4/1/2024)

Committee	Bill Number	Author, Party & District	Summary	LWVLA Position
House & Governmental Affairs	HB 114	Les Farnum (R-Calcasieu)	<p>VOTING/REGISTRATION: Provides for a supplemental annual canvass of registered voters (OR +\$310,488 GF EX See Note)</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://www.lwv.org/tag/voter-purging https://www.demos.org/research/voter-purge-legislative-resource-guide https://www.demos.org/research/protecting-voter-registration-assessment-voter-purge-policies-ten-states</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>The League has opposed this bill for multiple years. The League was instrumental in passage of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and its provisions against voter purges. Having an additional canvass besides the annual canvass for purposes of voter list is costly and unnecessary and increases the likelihood of unwarranted removal of voters from the rolls.</p> <p>Voters should not be punished with removal from the rolls for not voting or not properly engaging with their ROV. The postal mail notification process that sufficed when the NVRA was past needs updating to reflect that postal mail is not an effective means of confirming residential addresses of mobile populations--especially with Louisiana's many weather disasters and particularly when change of address frequent trigger triggers voter purging.</p>
House & Governmental Affairs	HB261	Matthew Willard (D-Orleans)	<p>ELECTIONS/POLLING PLACES: Provides for permissible acts within the campaign-free zone at polling places</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/electioneering-prohibitions https://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.as</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>Louisiana allows partisan, campaign, and party watchers to be present at polling places, but it has been inhospitable to civil society groups supportive of voting rights and fair elections who wish to monitor polling places, identify barriers to voting, and assist voters who might experience problems. Louisiana should consider</p>

			<p>px?d=81431</p> <p>https://www.cartercenter.org/peace/democracy/nonpartisan-election-observation-u.s.html</p>	<p>allowing nonpartisan civil society organizations to assist voters within reasonable bounds external to polling places and should not penalize or criminalize such work as “electioneering.”</p> <p>Overall, the League supports policies and procedures that support and improve polling place management. The League has supported poll observation programs to answer voters’ questions and troubleshoot voting problems. The goal of these programs is to ensure votes are successfully cast and counted.</p> <p>In Louisiana and around the nation, the League and other nonpartisan civil society organizations play a valuable role, mostly on a volunteer basis, to protect voters, preventing election-day barriers, ensuring safety in the COVID pandemic, monitoring polling places as key structures of democracy, and generally helping to make democracy work on election days.</p>
<p>House & Governmental Affairs</p>	<p>HB412</p>	<p>Denise Marcelle (D-East Baton Rouge)</p>	<p>ELECTIONS: Requires publication of proposed recommendations of the State Board of Election Supervisors</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i></p> <p>https://app.la.state.la.us/lala.nsf/7C469838E7BC1C5186257AC2004F6279/\$FILE/Public%20Records%20Law%20FAQ.pdf</p> <p>https://parlouisiana.org/resources/sunshine-hq/</p> <p>https://www.kplctv.com/2023/10/18/legal-corner-what-is-louisiana-public-</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>In general, the League’s position on Representative Government promotes an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive. The League’s positions on Citizen Rights, the Right to Know, and Public Participation also call upon government to protect these crucial citizen rights by giving adequate notice of proposed actions and making public records accessible. The League supports openness and transparency in all areas of government, including</p>

			records-law/	recommendations, especially regarding elections and voting.
House & Governmental Affairs	HB 595	Julie Emerson (R-Lafayette)	<p>ELECTIONS: Provides that statewide elective offices and legislative offices are party primary offices</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://thecurrentla.com/2019/fix-the-ballot-lafayette</p> <p>https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/opinion/guest-column-theres-more-voter-participation-in-the-jungle/article_555cdda-9883-11eb-8066-2ff1b5f678a9.html</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>While neither the national nor the state League has taken a position for or against closed party primaries, it encourages states and localities to study and adopt the election systems that are best for them. In recent polls, Louisianans have rejected closed party primaries. There is also evidence suggesting that they lead to more partisan candidates, less competitive elections, and less voter participation, particularly by young voters and those who are not affiliated with a political party.</p>
House & Governmental Affairs	HB763	Beau Beaulieu (R-Iberia, Lafayette, St. Martin)	<p>ELECTIONS: Provides relative to federal election guidance and funding</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/lwv-supports-senate-reintroduction-john-lewis-voting-rights-advancement-act</p> <p>https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/lwv-responds-2023-introduction-freedom-vote-act</p> <p>https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/lwv-supports-people-act-senate</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>The League has opposed this bill for multiple years. We support federal voting rights and election legislation, such as the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, and we support national standards and, where appropriate, national funding for elections.</p>
Senate & Governmental Affairs	SB14	Alan Seabaugh (R-Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, DeSoto, Natchitoches, Rapides, Red River, Sabine, Webster, Winn)	<p>CAMPAIGN FINANCE: Allows legislators to receive campaign contributions during a regular session in an election year. (8/1/24)</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/money-politics</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Overall, the League supports campaign finance regulations that enhance political equality for all citizens, ensure transparency, protect representative democracy from distortion by undisclosed contributions and big money, and</p>

				<p>combat corruption and undue influence in government. These can include reasonable restrictions on campaign fundraising and contributions.</p> <p>The League has concerns about money in politics in Louisiana and considers the ban on campaign fundraising during the regular session to be a reasonable limit that allows legislators to avoid appearances of influence and corruption and to focus on the work that they have been elected to do.</p>
<p>House & Governmental Affairs</p>	<p>SB97</p>	<p>Royce Duplessis (D-Orleans)</p>	<p>POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS: Regulates the use of deep fakes and artificial intelligence technology in political advertising. (gov sig)</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://www.lwv.org/blog/your-guide-mis-and-disinformation https://www.lwv.org/blog/fighting-mis-disinformation-democracy-truth-project https://www.lwv.org/blog/artificial-intelligences-impact-election-mis-and-disinformation</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>The League has serious concerns about the potential for mis/disinformation through artificial intelligence, and its effects on voting that would be addressed by this bill.</p> <p>At the federal level, the League has been working to combat deceptive campaign contributions in conjunction with League positions on positions on a citizen’s right to know, citizen participation, and campaign finance. The League believes that voters deserve access to true and complete information about elections and the candidates seeking their votes. The League is particularly concerned by efforts to undermine the role of voters and corrupt the election process by attempting to deceitfully sway voters’ opinions or suppress voter turnout through misinformation about election rules.</p> <p>The League supports preservation of the integrity of our electoral process</p>

				by increasing transparency in our elections. The League seeks to ensure voters have the necessary resources to make informed voting decisions.
Senate & Governmental Affairs	SB101	Blake Miguez (R-Iberia, Lafayette, St. Martin)	<p>VOTERS/VOTING: Provides relative to ranked-choice voting and instant runoff voting. (gov sig)</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://thecurrentla.com/2019/fix-the-ballot-lafayette</p> <p>https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/opinion/guest-column-theres-more-voter-participation-in-the-jungle/article_555cdda-9883-11eb-8066-2ff1b5f678a9.html</p> <p>https://fairvote.org/ranked-choice-voting-legislation/</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Bans ranked choice voting (RCV). The legislature should not enact a blanket prohibition on a form of voting that has been used successfully in some jurisdictions, absent opportunities for education and advocacy so that voters can consider the issue. Some say that ranked-choice voting with Louisiana’s jungle primary could be the gold standard of voting and would also reduce the number of costly elections that we have in Louisiana. Louisianans should have the opportunity to consider implementation of this voting method.</p> <p>While LWVUS has taken no position on RCV nationally or at the federal level, it encourages interested state and local chapters to inform their advocacy around its position on Voter Representation/Electoral systems. Overall, the League promotes an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive. We encourage electoral methods that provide the broadest voter representation possible and are expressive of voter choices. The League supports enabling legislation to allow local jurisdictions to explore alternative electoral methods, as well as supporting state election laws allowing for more options at both the state and local levels.</p>

<p>Senate & Governmental Affairs</p>	<p>SB134</p>	<p>Alan Seabaugh (R-Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, DeSoto, Natchitoches, Rapides, Red River, Sabine, Webster, Winn)</p>	<p>VOTERS/VOTING: Provides relative to registration and voting by a person convicted of a felony. (8/1/24)</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://campaignlegal.org/update/inclusive-democracy-act-step-toward-real-democracy https://campaignlegal.org/update/campaign-legal-center-updates-restore-your-vote-tool-adaptable-use</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>This bill essentially repeals Act 636 and sets up administrative barriers to the restoration of voting rights following a felony conviction and undoes criminal justice reforms affecting voting that were passed in 2019 and 2021. The League supports restoration of voting rights to voters with felony convictions who have met the specified criteria to support rehabilitation, reduce recidivism, and ensure successful reentry of offenders into society.</p>
<p>Senate & Governmental Affairs</p>	<p>SB 167</p>	<p>Valarie Hodges (R-Livingston)</p>	<p>VOTERS/VOTING: Provides relative to the crime of filing or maintaining false public records. (8/1/24)</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://kansasreflector.com/2022/07/17/criminalizing-the-vote-gop-led-states-enacted-102-new-election-penalties-after-2020/ https://www.facingsouth.org/2023/01/criminalizing-voters-in-southern-states</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Those who complete voter registration forms are asked at the beginning of the form to affirm that they are citizens. People who file the registration forms may be volunteers for organizations that are not empowered or equipped to verify a registrant’s citizenship. This bill appears intended to punish voter education volunteers and others for false statements by others with onerous fines and penalties. It is a xenophobic bill that risks suppressing voter registration work and valid registration of citizens entitled to vote.</p>
<p>Senate Judiciary A</p>	<p>SB178</p>	<p>Alan Seabaugh (R-Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, DeSoto, Natchitoches, Rapides, Red River, Sabine, Webster, Winn)</p>	<p>COURTS: Constitutional amendment to provide for statewide districts and election of the chief justice for the Louisiana Supreme Court. (2/3 - CA13s1(A))</p> <p><i>Recommended reading:</i> https://www.nonprofitvote.org/the-bias-of-at-large-elections-how-it-works/</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Statewide districts, like at-large districts for local and municipal offices, have been shown to discourage competition and turnout, as it is more difficult and more expensive to campaign across the entire state. Statewide districts for justices, like at-large elections at lower levels of government particularly risk diluting the voices of</p>

			https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/At-Large-Voting-Frequently-Asked-Questions-1.pdf	communities of color in ways that violate the VRA. Districts offer the possibility to draw districts in ways that ensure fair representation in ways that at-large and statewide systems do not.
Senate & Governmental Affairs	SB217	Blake Miguez (R-Iberia, Lafayette, St. Martin)	ELECTION CODE: Defines "deep fake" in the Election Code. (8/1/24) <i>Recommended reading/viewing:</i> https://www.lwv.org/blog/artificial-intelligences-impact-election-mis-and-disinformation	SUPPORT The use of AI to create fake images is a threat to elections. In its initial hearing the bill appeared to have some bipartisan support from Sen. Gary Carter. Sen. Royce Duplessis has brought a bill on this issue. See note above on SB 97. It does appear to be an emerging problem in need of solution
Senate & Governmental Affairs	SB261	Valarie Hodges (R-Livingston)	ELECTION CODE: Provides for additional poll watchers at polling places for elections. (8/1/24) <i>Recommended reading/viewing:</i> https://lpb.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/poll-watchers-history-of-voter-intimidation-video/retro-report/ https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/misinformation-risks-partisan-poll-watchers https://www.cartercenter.org/peace/democracy/nonpartisan-election-observation-u.s.html	OPPOSE The League has opposed this bill for multiple years. The League supports policies and procedures that support and improve polling place management. Concerns are that poll watchers could create safety and privacy concerns for election workers and voters and otherwise impede the orderly operation of elections. Additional personnel in polling places can create confusion for voters or facilitate voter intimidation.