

HB 553

Sponsored by Representative Cedric Glover



Provides For Appointment of a Voter With Disabilities to the State Board Of Election Supervisors

The state of Louisiana has a State Board of Election Supervisors that is overseen by the Department of State and coordinates on election matters in the state. The Board is currently comprised of 8 seats:

1. The lieutenant governor.
2. The secretary of state.
3. The attorney general.
4. The commissioner of elections or a designee of the secretary of state
5. One member of the Clerks of Court Association
6. One member of the Registrars of Voters Association
7. One member, nominated by Universities
8. One member of the Police Jury Association of Louisiana

This legislation would add a ninth seat to the State Board of Election Supervisors for a voter with a disability. This is a recommendation that came out of the Voter Disability Task Force to support best practices, protocols, and policies that ensure accessibility through all elements of election administration. The newly appointed member representing people with disabilities would be chosen by the Governor from a list of names provided by executives of Disability Rights Louisiana,

the Split Second Foundation, the Louisiana Statewide Independent Living Council, the Louisiana Association for the Blind, the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, and Arc of Louisiana.

Disabilities look different for all people and can include a range of things including vision, hearing, cognition, and mobility challenges. Because there is an array of disabilities, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to make voting more accessible. The new person appointed to this Board will be able to ensure accessibility is considered in important details of election administration and the Board's recommended policies.

One in three Louisiana adults have a disability, according to the CDC. Syracuse and Rutgers University found that in the 2012 election:

- ✓ Almost 1/3 of people with disabilities reported difficulties voting
- ✓ Turnout among voters with disabilities was 6% lower than voters without disabilities

For more info
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