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**DIGEST**

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HB 490 Original

2023 Regular Session

Lyons

**Abstract:** Prohibits requiring parental consent for high school seniors of at least 17 years of age to participate in the opportunity to register to vote offered at school, requires related policies and guidance to conform with the La. Election Code, and provides for those who may or may not assist in the opportunity.

Present law requires public school governing authorities to provide high school seniors who are at least 17 the opportunity to register to vote by using a school computer to fill out an electronic voter registration application or by using the state mail voter registration application form. Proposed law specifies that parental consent shall not be required.

With respect to this required opportunity:

- (1) Present law prohibits the involvement of any political or partisan group or organization in the registration process. Proposed law further prohibits a candidate for elected public office from involvement and authorizes a public school governing authority to allow any nonpartisan group or organization to assist in providing the opportunity to register to vote to high school seniors.
- (2) Present law requires each public school governing authority to adopt policies therefor and to review them at least every five years. Proposed law requires the public school governing authority to ensure the policy conforms to the La. Election Code.
- (3) Present law authorizes each public school governing authority to follow the secretary of state's guidance in implementation. Proposed law requires the secretary of state to ensure that his guidance conforms to the La. Election Code.

Present law provides that the secretary of state shall administer the laws relating to custody of voting machines and voter registration, and for this purpose he shall specifically perform many functions and duties including providing for the voluntary registration of individuals or entities that conduct voter registration drives.

Proposed law further requires the secretary of state to develop guidance for public school governing authorities providing opportunities for high school seniors to register to vote as required by present law (R.S. 17:2121). Specifies that in developing the guidance, the secretary shall conform to the election code and shall not state or imply that parental consent is required or that any person or organization is prohibited from assisting public school governing authorities in providing the opportunity to register to vote, unless the person or organization or type of person or organization is expressly prohibited by law from assisting or from being on or near a school campus.

(Amends R.S. 17:2121 and R.S. 18:18(A)(9))