

Regular Session, 2010

SENATE BILL NO. 652

BY SENATOR HEBERT

VOTERS/VOTING. Requires that propositions placed on a ballot be worded in plain simple grammar in the form of a question. (8/15/10)

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:1299.1, relative to elections; to provide that any question or
3 proposition to be voted on must also include a question in simple language directed
4 to the voter with regard to the passage or rejection of the proposition; and to provide
5 for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 18:1299.1 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

8 §1299.1. Statement of question or proposition to be voted on; **question directed to**
9 **voter;** statement length

10 A. The preparation of the statement of any question or proposition to be
11 submitted to the voters at an election shall be the responsibility of the governing
12 authority or other entity calling the election or submitting the question or
13 proposition. The statement of the proposition shall ~~also~~ include a simple and
14 unbiased concise summary in easily understood language which sets forth the
15 substance of the proposition. ~~The statement of the proposition, including the~~
16 ~~summary, shall not exceed four hundred words in length. Such summary **and** shall~~
17 be placed at the beginning of the statement of the proposition. **The statement of the**

1 **proposition shall also contain a question directed to the voter with regard to the**
 2 **passage or rejection of the proposition in easily understood language; for**
 3 **example, "Do you wish to legalize gambling in this state? Yes or No." The**
 4 **statement of the proposition, including the summary and question to the voter,**
 5 **shall not exceed four hundred words in length. The question directed to the**
 6 **voter shall not exceed twenty words in length, and shall appear last in the**
 7 **statement of the proposition.**

8 B. The secretary of state shall be responsible for ensuring that the statement
 9 of the proposition contains the summary **and the question directed to the voter** as
 10 provided in Subsection A of this Section.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
 of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Alden A. Clement, Jr.

DIGEST

Hebert (SB 652)

Present law provides that the preparation of the statement of any question or proposition to be submitted to the voters at an election is the responsibility of the governing authority or other entity calling the election or submitting the question or proposition. Present law provides that the statement of the proposition is to include a simple and unbiased concise summary in easily understood language which sets forth the substance of the proposition. Present law further provides that the statement of the proposition, including the summary, cannot exceed 400 words in length. Present law provides that this summary is to be placed at the beginning of the statement of the proposition.

Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law further provides that the statement of the proposition must also include a question directed to the voter with regard to the passage or rejection of the proposition, phrased in easily understood language, an example of which would be, "Do you wish to legalize gambling in this state? Yes or No." Proposed law provides that the question directed to the voter cannot exceed 20 words in length.

Present law provides that the secretary of state is responsible for ensuring that the statement of the proposition contains the summary provided for by present law.

Proposed law retains present law and further provides that the secretary of state is also responsible for ensuring that the question directed to the voter as provided for by proposed law is also contained in the statement of the proposition.

Effective August 15, 2010.

(Amends R.S. 18:1299.1)