

Amendment 1 Out-of-State Members of College Boards

**YOU
DECIDE**



A VOTE FOR WOULD

Allow a person who lives out-of-state to serve as a member on the state's public college management boards.

A VOTE AGAINST WOULD

Keep the membership of college boards restricted to Louisiana residents.

BACKGROUND

The Dec. 5 ballot contains one constitutional amendment proposal. This item was adopted by the Legislature on Oct. 21 in the second special session, too late to be included on the Nov. 3 ballot. Dec. 5 is the runoff for congressional and local races around the state. Four parishes – Claiborne, Pointe Coupee, Red River and Sabine – do not have runoffs, so in those parishes this amendment will be the only item on the ballot. The additional estimated cost of having the amendment on a statewide ballot is \$376,000. The state's total cost of the Dec. 5 election is estimated to be \$6 million. The companion statute, known as the Lod Cook Act, is named after one of the most famous alumni and benefactors of Louisiana State University. In his later years, Cook lived out of state and would have been constitutionally prohibited from serving on the LSU Board of Supervisors, a circumstance this amendment would change. Cook passed away in September.

CURRENT SITUATION

The Louisiana Constitution establishes a management board for each of the state's college and university systems: Louisiana Community and Technical College, Louisiana State University, Southern University and University of Louisiana. Each system board has 15 voting members appointed by the governor. The members are comprised of two from each of the state's six congressional districts and three from the state at large.

PROPOSED CHANGE

The amendment would allow up to two of the at-large members to reside out of state. The out-of-state members would still be appointed by the governor with the consent of the Senate but would also require a recommendation of the board. The Board of Regents would not be affected. All four of the college supervisory boards supported this proposal and no one testified against the legislation.

ARGUMENT FOR

Louisiana colleges have a lot of graduates and other supporters who live out of state. Allowing two of 15 members to be from outside the state provides for a bigger pool of candidates. These members could bring a wealth of knowledge, perspective and support to Louisiana's higher education systems. Several other states allow out-of-state members on their college boards.

ARGUMENT AGAINST

There is no requirement that the out-of-state members be graduates of the institutions they will govern. A broader reform might have moved the details of the composition of these boards out of the Constitution and into statute where they can be adjusted as necessary by the Legislature.

Legal Citation: Act 10 (Senate Bill 44) by Sen. Cleo Fields of the 2020 Second Special Session, amending Article VIII, Sections 6(B)(1), 7(B)(1), and 7.1(B)(1)). Act 38, known as the Lod Cook Act, is the companion statute.