

HB272 INTRODUCED



1 HB272
2 XD3C1Z7-1
3 By Representative Carns
4 RFD: Constitution, Campaigns and Elections
5 First Read: 15-Jan-26



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4 SYNOPSIS:

5 Under existing law, a judge of probate is
6 required to publish the list of voters in a newspaper
7 with general circulation in the county.

8 This bill would, if the cost of publication
9 exceeds a certain threshold amount, authorize a judge
10 of probate to publish the list of voters by alternative
11 means.

12 This bill would establish the threshold amount
13 that would authorize the judge of probate to
14 disseminate the voter list by alternative means.

15 This bill would require that, beginning in 2030,
16 the threshold amount would increase with the change in
17 the Consumer Price Index.

18 This bill would also prohibit a newspaper
19 publisher, until 2030, from charging more to publish
20 the voter list than the publisher charged in relation
21 to the 2024 General Election.

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24 A BILL

25 TO BE ENTITLED

26 AN ACT

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28 Relating to voter lists; to amend Section 17-4-1, Code

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29 of Alabama 1975; to authorize a judge of probate to publish
30 the list of voters by alternative means; to establish the
31 threshold amount that would authorize the judge of probate to
32 disseminate the voter list by alternative means; to require
33 the threshold amount to increase with the change in the
34 Consumer Price Index; and to prohibit a newspaper publisher,
35 until 2030, from charging more to publish the voter list than
36 the publisher charged in relation to the 2024 General
37 Election.

38 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

39 Section 1. Section 17-4-1, Code of Alabama 1975, is
40 amended to read as follows:

41 "§17-4-1

42 (a) The judge of probate shall publish from the state
43 voter registration list a correct alphabetical list of
44 qualified electors either by county, precinct, district, or
45 subdivision wherein each elector is registered to vote, in
46 ~~some~~a newspaper with general circulation in the county, on or
47 before the ~~twentieth~~20th day preceding the regularly scheduled
48 primary election.

49 (b) The list shall ~~be accompanied by~~include the
50 following information:

51 (1) A printed certification generated by the state
52 voter registration system verifying that the list contains the
53 names of all qualified electors registered as of the specified
54 time and date when it was printed.

55 (2) ~~The list shall further state~~ A statement advising
56 that any elector whose name was inadvertently omitted from the



57 list shall have 10 days in which to have his or her name
58 entered upon the list of qualified voters. If within 10 days
59 any voter shall reasonably satisfy the board of registrars by
60 proper proof that any name should be added to the list, the
61 board shall add ~~such~~the name to the list.

62 (c) The supplemental list of registered voters
63 inadvertently omitted from the original list shall be
64 published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the
65 county on or before the seventh day preceding the date of the
66 primary election.

67 (d) If the cost to publish any individual list required
68 by this section exceeds the threshold amount provided in
69 subsection (e), the judge of probate may fulfill the
70 requirements of this section by:

71 (1) Performing all of the following actions:
72 a. Posting the list for review in conspicuous locations
73 in no less than three public buildings within the county.
74 b. Making the list available at a reasonable cost from
75 the office of the judge of probate.
76 c. Posting an alphabetical list of qualified electors
77 from the state voter registration list on the website operated
78 by the county commission or, if the county commission does not
79 operate a website, on the website of the Association of County
80 Commissions of Alabama. The list may be organized by county,
81 precinct, district, or other political subdivision where the
82 elector is registered to vote.

83 d. Placing a display advertisement at least one-half
84 page in size once a week for two consecutive weeks in a



85 newspaper with general circulation in the county which meets
86 the requirements of Section 6-8-60 and at a rate that complies
87 with Section 6-8-64.

88 (2) The lists required to be published pursuant to this
89 section may be published, atAt the discretion of the county
90 commission, publishing the lists as a preprinted or inserted
91 advertising supplement at a cost no greater than the selected
92 newspaper's lowest applicable ~~national insertion~~ rates charged
93 for comparably sized preprinted supplements. If the list is
94 published as a preprinted supplement in the selected
95 newspaper, the supplement size shall conform to the size
96 requirements set by the selected newspaper and shall be
97 printed on standard newsprint paper. The type size shall be no
98 smaller than nine point standard type. The list shall also be
99 delivered to the newspaper for insertion in a manner required
100 for other advertising supplements. The supplement may not
101 contain any other advertising. Any newspaper accepting a
102 preprinted insertion that is not prepared by the newspaper
103 shall not be responsible for the content of ~~such~~the insertion.

104 (e) (1) Before December 31, 2029, the threshold amount
105 under subsection (d) shall be forty thousand dollars
106 (\$40,000).

107 (2) a. Beginning January 1, 2030, and annually
108 thereafter, the Secretary of State shall increase the
109 threshold amount under subsection (d) by the same percentage
110 increase as the change in the Consumer Price Index, or its
111 successor, as published by the United States Department of
112 Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Each adjustment shall be



113 calculated based on the change in the Consumer Price Index for
114 the preceding 12-month period ending on December 31.

115 b. Any increase in the threshold amount shall be
116 rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$1000). Any amount in
117 excess of the rounded dollar amount shall be considered when
118 calculating the increase in the threshold amount for the
119 subsequent year.

120 (f) (1) Before December 31, 2029, no newspaper publisher
121 may charge more for publishing the lists required under this
122 section than the amount that the publisher charged for
123 publishing the lists for the 2024 General Election.

124 (2)a. Beginning January 1, 2030, a newspaper publisher
125 may increase the cost of publication, on January 1 of each
126 year, by the same percentage increase as the change in the
127 Consumer Price Index, or its successor, as published by the
128 United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
129 Each adjustment shall be calculated based on the change in the
130 Consumer Price Index for the preceding 12-month period ending
131 on December 31.

132 b. Any increase in the threshold amount shall be
133 rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$1000). Any amount in
134 excess of the rounded dollar amount shall be considered when
135 calculating the increase in the threshold amount for the
136 subsequent year.

137 (g) (1) Nothing in this section shall prohibit newspaper
138 publishers from decreasing the cost charged to publish the
139 lists required under this section.

140 (2) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a judge of



141 probate from negotiating with a newspaper publisher to publish
142 the lists at a rate lower than the amounts set forth in this
143 section.

144 (3) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a judge of
145 probate or county commission from publishing the list of
146 voters, preprinted insert, or display advertisement in more
147 than one newspaper within the county at the county
148 commission's discretion."

149 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October
150 1, 2026.