

HB272 INTRODUCED



1 HB272
2 XD3CIZ7-1
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

27
28 Relating to voter lists; to amend Section 17-4-1, Code



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

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

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

"§17-4-1

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

(1) Performing all of the following actions:

a. Posting the list for review in conspicuous locations in no less than three public buildings within the county.

b. Making the list available at a reasonable cost from the office of the judge of probate.

c. Posting an alphabetical list of qualified electors from the state voter registration list on the website operated by the county commission or, if the county commission does not operate a website, on the website of the Association of County Commissions of Alabama. The list may be organized by county, precinct, district, or other political subdivision where the elector is registered to vote.

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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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.