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Early voting points to amendments' future

Democrats turn out in big numbers in advance of primary

BY TYLER BRIDGES
Staff writer

Democratic voters turned out in proportionally large numbers during the early voting period — and that could pose problems for the five constitutional amendments on Saturday's ballot.

Political analysts believe that the five amendments — four of which Gov. Jeff Landry strongly backs — may fall prey to a backlash caused by a recent U.S. Su-



preme Court ruling and moves by Landry and other Republicans to remove Black Democrats from political office.

"There is one very obvious target for the energized Democratic voter base: the amendments," said John Couvillon, a pollster and demographer in

Baton Rouge who closely tracks early voting data. "If you're a Democrat, voting 'no' is a perfect way to express your anger."

The five amendments would give the Legislature power to remove civil service protections for state employees, create a school system in the city of St. George in East Baton Rouge Parish, give teachers a pay raise by dissolving three education

► **Crucial vote on Louisiana's controversial redistricting push scheduled for Tuesday.**
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STAFF PHOTO BY MICHAEL JOHNSON

A sign points the way to vote at the Louisiana State Archives on May 4 in Baton Rouge.

Education trust funds back on the ballots

BY ELYSE CARMOSINO
Staff writer

Voters will head to the polls Saturday to decide whether Louisiana should revise its state constitution to give teachers a permanent pay raise.

One of five constitutional amendments on the ballot, Amendment 3 seeks to dissolve

three constitutionally protected state education trust funds, which have contributed a total of nearly \$2 billion toward various state education programs. If voters approve the change, money from the trust funds will be used to pay down teacher retirement system debt, with the savings going toward permanent raises for teachers and school support

staff.

The amendment comes after teachers have repeatedly asked for lasting raises, but only received one-time stipends. It's being pushed by Gov. Jeff Landry and the state's teachers unions and is a reboot of a ballot measure that failed last year.



Landry

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Comeaux students offered 'hardship' transfers

System eyes closure of high school

BY CLAIRE TAYLOR
Staff writer

The Lafayette Parish school system is offering hardship transfers to Comeaux High students who want to attend out-of-zone high schools if Comeaux High is closed.

The Lafayette Parish School Board voted March 12 to close Comeaux High after the current school year and reassign those students to Lafayette High and Acadiana High.

On April 15, the board rescinded the vote to close the school due to a lawsuit challenging the vote. The school system prevailed in that lawsuit last week with a 3rd Circuit Court of Appeal ruling.

The school system's communications director, Tracy Wirtz, in response to the ruling and what may be next for Comeaux, wrote, "The School Board will advise the superintendent on the appropriate next steps regarding Comeaux High School. Any future actions, including potential hearings or agenda items, will be determined through that process and communicated publicly once finalized."

Schools Superintendent Francis Touchet has received numerous requests from Comeaux High families who want to transfer their students to a certain school for various reasons such as their participation in dance or cheerleading, Wirtz said Monday in response to questions.

Some of the parents want their children's school assignment settled before the start of the 2026-27 school year, she said.

In response to those concerns, Wirtz said, the school system is offering hardship transfers or alternative assignment requests to current Comeaux High students and incoming freshmen zoned for Comeaux.

Letters went out Monday to Comeaux High families with a transfer request form for those who want to attend Northside High, Carencro High, Southside High, Lafayette High or Acadiana High next school year.

The forms are due at 4:30 p.m. May 29.

As with all out-of-zone requests, Wirtz said each application will be reviewed individually and as-

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Trump says Iran ceasefire on 'life support,' proposes gas tax pause



Trump

Strait of Hormuz stays closed

BY JON GAMBRELL,
SAMY MAGDY
and SEUNG MIN KIM
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — President Donald Trump on Monday said the Iran ceasefire is on "life support" after rejecting Tehran's latest proposal, which officials said included some nuclear concessions.

Trump also proposed suspending the federal gas tax to help with higher fuel prices caused by the war.

The stalled diplomacy and recent exchanges of fire could tip the Middle East back into open warfare and prolong the worldwide energy crisis sparked by the conflict. Iran still has a chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway for global oil and gas shipments, and America is blockading Iranian ports.

Asked at the White House

if the ceasefire was still in effect, Trump said it's on "life support."

"I would call it the weakest right now after reading that piece of garbage they sent us," Trump added. "I didn't even finish reading it."

Trump also said he supported a suspension of the federal tax on gasoline — just over 18 cents per gallon and 24 cents for diesel. Congress, which is

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A man waves an Iranian flag for a pro-government campaign under a billboard with a graphic showing the Strait of Hormuz and the sewn lips of President Donald Trump on Wednesday in a square in downtown Tehran, Iran.

ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO BY VAHID SALEMI

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