



Jeff Landry
Attorney General

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
P.O. BOX 94005
BATON ROUGE
70804-9005

March 8, 2019

The Honorable John Bel Edwards
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

VIA Email and US MAIL

RE: Incorporation Petition for the City of St. George

Dear Governor Edwards:

I was contacted this afternoon by Senator Bodi White in regards to the incorporation petition for St. George. He previously met with your staff at the request of his constituents. He left confused as to the responsibility under the law that you have in regards to the petition for incorporation for the proposed City of St. George. As such, I felt compelled to clarify the process for you.

The Registrar of Voters (“ROV”) validates and certifies the signatures on the petition for incorporation pursuant to La. R.S. 33:1, *et seq.* This has been done. The ROV reviewed the signatures and provided a certification to your office via certified mail on February 25, 2019. A meeting with your staff and mine yesterday confirmed that you are in possession of the ROV’s certification.

Your role as Governor is spelled out in La. R.S. 33:3 which states, “Upon receipt of the certificate from the registrar of voters, the governor shall determine if the petition complies with the provisions of this Subpart” This provision simply requires that you review the following:

- *A legal description of the area proposed for incorporation and the statement that all lands included in the area constitute a contiguous area.* This is on the face of the petition.
- *The total population in the unincorporated area based on the latest federal decennial census.* This is on the face of the petition.
- *A statement of the assessed value of the real property located in the unincorporated area.* This is on the face of the petition.
- *A listing of the public services the municipal corporation proposes to render to the area and a plan for the provision of these services.* This is on the face of the petition.
- *A statement of the corporate name desired for the new municipality. As you are aware, the name desired is the City of St. George.* This is on the face of the petition.
- *The names of two or more chairpersons for the petition for incorporation who shall serve as agents for the petitioners.* This is on the face of the petition.

See La. R.S. 33:1.

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As you can ascertain from the above, any competent lawyer should be able to complete this review in no more than 90 minutes.

There is nothing in the applicable law that requires you to review the petition with the signatures, as the signatures and the requisite number have been certified by the ROV. The roughly 6,000 pages of the petition that contain the signatures of electors itself has no value to you because you possess the certification of those signatures by the ROV.

I hope that you find this information helpful in fulfilling your statutory duty to the people of this great state.

Sincerely,



Jeff Landry
Attorney General

cc: Senator Bodi White
Registrar of Voters Steve Raborn