

Ex-Governor Wants On Louisiana Ballot

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Former Gov. John McKeithen was a late entry in Louisiana's bogged down U.S. Senate race Wednesday, announcing that he will get on the ballot any way he can.

"Now the fun begins," said McKeithen, 53, who stepped down last May after eight years as governor.

A Democrat all his political career, McKeithen said he would not hesitate to run as an Independent or anything else if the Democratic State Central Committee decides not to reopen the Senate race.

"I would consider anything that is the best vehicle to get on the ballot," he told a news conference. "I want to leave all options open."

THE RACE for Democratic nomination to the Senate has been in confusion since Sen. Allen Ellender, D-La., a candidate for re-election, died of a heart attack in Washington last Thursday. He was 81.

Ellender's death came 24 days before the Aug. 19 first Democratic primary.

State law is clear what happens if a candidate dies

30 days before a primary election, but it is ambiguous about the procedure which must be followed if the time element involved is less than 30 days.

State Atty. Gen. William Guste ruled last weekend that the State Central Committee must reopen the race to new nominees, even if it changes election dates.

The 120-member committee meets in Baton Rouge Monday to decide the issue—with sentiment reportedly against allowing new candidates into the race.

JACK WYLY, Lake Providence member of the committee, said he will introduce a resolution to override Guste and leave the race for Democratic nomination closed. He predicted victory.

McKeithen said he does not expect the committee to reopen the primary to new entries.

The Democratic candidates are J. Bennett Johnson of Shreveport, who was rated as Ellender's major opposition, and Frank "Demp" Allen, a Monroe political novice.