



COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Human Rights Commission

Recommendation Number 20240923-002: Recommendation to protect voting rights in Texas and Travis County

Whereas: The single most important right in a democracy is the right to vote.

Whereas: Whereas, over the course of history, various voter suppression laws in the United States have hindered, and even prohibited, certain individuals and groups from exercising the right to vote. Texas has a long history of voter suppression that included literacy tests and poll taxes.

Whereas: On August 20, 2024, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton ordered raids with armed officers in an ongoing investigation of voter fraud. One warrant targeted LULAC volunteer Lidia Martinez, 87, of San Antonio.

Whereas: Early September Attorney General Ken Paxton sued Travis and Bexar County in an effort to block local voter registration efforts.

Whereas: August 6, 2024, Governor Greg Abbott announced that 1,150,000 have been taken off Texas' voter rolls since 2021.

Whereas: Only 42% of eligible Texans voted in 2022 – 40th in the nation, 4 points below the national average.

Now, Therefore, be it resolved: The right to vote should be free of harassment, discrimination, and fear of retaliation.

1: The Commission calls on Council to pass a resolution calling on Congress to support the Freedom to Vote Act (H. R. 11, S. 1, 118th Congress), to set basic national standards to make sure all people in the United States can cast their ballots in the way that works best for them, regardless of what ZIP Code they live in, improve access to the ballot for people in the United States, advance commonsense election integrity reforms.

2: The Commission urges City Council to leverage its resources, where appropriate, to support the Travis County Commissioners Court's efforts to get out the vote.

Date of Approval: September 23, 2024

Record of the vote: The recommendation was approved on Commissioner Weigel's motion, Commissioner Clemmons' second a 7-0 vote. Commissioners Bryant, Kirsh Pozen, Raghavan, and Stevenson were absent.

Attest: 
Eric Anderson, Staff Liaison, Office of the City Clerk