

Legislative Priority Progress Report: Election Integrity

Updated 5-11-21 (20 days left in 87th Texas Legislative Session)

House Bills

[House Bill 6](#)* by State Rep. [Briscoe Cain](#) (R–Deer Park) and [71 additional authors](#) is a comprehensive omnibus bill with [multiple election reform provisions](#). The bill targets paid vote harvesting, stops officials from distributing unsolicited mail-ballot applications and adds protections for poll watchers. HB 6 also deters coerced voter assistance, prevents officials from altering or suspending election rules, and expedites court actions on election-related cases.

HB 6 was approved by the House Elections Committee on a party-line vote April 8. On April 29, the committee [replaced the language of SB 7 with the contents of HB 6](#), making the two bills identical. The House considered the substitute SB 7, which was amended on the House floor.

→**Status:** SB 7 (HB 6 language as amended) [passed the House May 7](#). The Senate must now concur with the [House-passed version of SB 7](#), or House and Senate members will form a conference committee to hammer out a mutually acceptable version that both chambers must approve.

[House Bill 574](#)* by State Rep. [Greg Bonnen](#) (R–Friendswood) and [30 additional authors](#) makes election fraud a second-degree felony and adds two new offenses, intentionally counting invalid votes and failing to count valid votes.

→**Status:** HB 574 **passed the House** April 16 and on May 5 was placed on the Senate intent calendar for May 10.

[House Bill 611](#) by Swanson adds to the oath for voter assistants that the assistant did not pressure or intimidate the voter. *A similar provision is included in HB 6/SB 7.*

→**Status:** HB 611 was placed on the House General State Calendar for May 12**.

[House Bill 2283](#) by State Rep. [Phil King](#) (R–Weatherford) aims to [keep outside money from influencing how Texas elections are run](#). The bill bans county election offices from taking private third-party contributions, like the huge amounts of cash Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg funneled to select local election administrators in 2020.

→**Status:** HB 2283 [passed the House with bipartisan support](#) April 29 and was referred to the Senate State Affairs Committee May 10.

[House Bill 2321](#)* by Jetton directs ballot boards to compare mail-ballot signatures with others on file to verify they are valid.

→**Status:** HB 2321 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 22 and was placed on the House General State Calendar for May 12**.

[House Bill 2339](#)* by State Rep. [Stephanie Klick](#) (R–Fort Worth) and [10 coauthors](#) directs the attorney general to regularly compare voter rolls to lists of self-identified noncitizens and nonresidents excused from jury duty. *Companion [SB 155](#) passed the Senate April 6. A committee substitute was reported out of House Elections April 27 and was sent to Calendars May 10.*

→**Status:** HB 2339 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 28 and was placed on the House General State Calendar for May 11.

[House Bill 2546](#)* by Jetton, Cain, and [10 coauthors directs](#) the secretary of state to enforce local registrars' voter roll maintenance duties and adds a criminal penalty for local officials who repeatedly fail to comply.

→**Status:** HB 2546 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 22 and was placed on the House General State Calendar for May 12**.

[House Bill 3276](#)* by State Rep. [Tan Parker](#) (R–Flower Mound) would secure voted ballots being tabulated at central counting stations with live-streamed video surveillance systems. House floor amendments removed a requirement for licensed peace officers, added a funding mechanism, and made surveillance optional if funding is not available.

→**Status:** HB 3276 (as amended) passed second reading in the House May 10.

[House Bill 3303](#) by State Rep. [Mike Schofield](#) (R–Katy) prohibits any state or local election official from creating, altering, or suspending any voting standard, practice, or procedure.

→**Status:** HB 3303 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 28 and was placed on the House General State Calendar for May 12**.

[House Bill 4507](#) by Schofield is a “trigger” bill to [separate state and federal elections](#) in the event [Congress passes H.R. 1](#).

→**Status:** HB 4507 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 30 and was placed on the House General State Calendar for May 12**.

*House bills that meet the RPT's election integrity goals are **HB 6**, HB 329, HB 335, **HB 574**, *HB 1368 [HB 6/HB 574]*, **HB 1708**, **HB 2321**, **HB 2339**, **HB 2478**, **HB 2546**, **HB 3276**, **HB 3281**, **HB 3297**, **HB 4044**, **HB 4331**, and **HB 4369**. Most received a committee hearing. Two have passed the House; none have passed the Senate in the form passed by the House.

**House bills placed on the May 12 House General State Calendar are unlikely to receive consideration before the May 13 midnight deadline for second reading of House bills.

The following RPT-priority election integrity bills were not moved out of the House Calendars Committee for consideration by the full House:

[House Bill 1708](#)* by State Rep. [James White](#) (R–Hillister) requires voting systems to include auditable paper trails by September 2030. A committee substitute joint-authored by [Michelle Beckley](#) (D–Carrollton) also allows counties using “hybrid” electronic voting systems with hand-marked paper ballots to use countywide vote centers. Beckley sought this provision on behalf of Denton County, which is partially within her district and uses this type of system so cannot currently use countywide voting. *Similar paper-trail provisions are included in [SB 598](#), reported out of House Elections Committee May 4. A similar countywide voting provision, contained in [HB 661](#) by Beckley/Cain, was amended onto HB6/SB7.*

→**Status:** HB 1708 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 23.

[House Bill 2478](#)* by State Rep. [Cody Harris](#) (R–Palestine) requires voters to include a voter ID number on their vote-by-mail applications and ballots, in line with ID required to vote in person. *Similar [SB 1509](#) passed the Senate April 28. A committee substitute was reported out of House Elections May 7.*

→**Status:** HB 2478 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 20.

[House Bill 3281](#)* by State Rep. [Dennis Paul](#) (R–Houston) requires mail ballots sent from within the U.S to arrive by the fourth day before Election Day, and counting to start no earlier than 3 p.m. and be completed by 7 p.m. on Election Day.

→**Status:** HB 3281 was sent to the House Calendars Committee May 5.

[House Bill 3297](#)* by State Rep. [Steve Allison](#) (R–San Antonio) adds new election fraud offenses, including voting more than once in the same election and intentionally counting invalid votes or failing to count valid votes. A committee substitute removes a provision that increased election fraud to a second-degree felony, and instead makes it a state jail felony to commit election fraud while acting as an election official or commit perjury on an election document.

→**Status:** HB 3297 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 29.

[House Bill 4044](#)* by Cain authorizes the secretary of state’s office to withhold state funding from county election officials who fail to follow rules for canceling registrations of ineligible voters. *Similar RPT-priority bill [SB 1113](#) passed the Senate April 12 and was reported out of House Elections Committee April 27.*

→**Status:** HB 4044 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 29.

[House Bill 4331](#)* by Jetton makes paid vote harvesting a third-degree felony and adds a civil right of action for candidates harmed by competitors’ vote-harvesting schemes. *A similar vote-harvesting provision is included in HB 6/SB 7.*

→**Status:** HB 4331 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 23.

[House Bill 4369](#)* by State Rep. [Candy Noble](#) (R–Lucas) directs mail-ballot review boards to verify ballot application signatures with others on file from the past six years, using software to display all electronically available signatures together.

→**Status:** HB 4369 was sent to House Calendars Committee April 30.

Details about bills, along with resources to help citizens participate in the legislative process, are available at [Texas Legislature Online](#).