

Legislative Priority Progress Report: Election Integrity

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

Senate Bills

[Senate Bill 7](#)* by State Sen. [Bryan Hughes](#) (R–Mineola) contained dozens of reforms intended to make voting more secure, accurate, and transparent. The omnibus bill beefed up prohibitions on paid vote harvesting and revised procedures to verify mail ballots are legitimate. It allowed voter registrars to use more citizenship data to maintain voter rolls and added penalties for registration officials who don't follow rules to keep rolls clean.

SB 7 also required electronic voting systems to include auditable paper trails by 2026, banned most private funding of election offices, and clearly disallowed drive-thru and 24-hour voting and mass distribution of unsolicited mail-ballot applications—makeshift procedures implemented temporarily during the Chinese coronavirus outbreak that Democrats hoped to make permanent. A controversial provision let poll watchers record election officials' activities.

SB 7 **passed the Senate** April 1 on a party-line vote. On April 29, the House Elections Committee [substituted SB 7 language with the language in HB 6](#).

→**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.

[Senate Bill 155](#)* by State Sen. [Charles Perry](#) (R–Lubbock) is a voter roll cleanup bill that adds the attorney general to the list of officials who review noncitizens and nonresidents excused from jury service [to identify and remove ineligible people from voter rolls](#). *Companion [HB 2339](#), another RPT-priority bill, is on the House General State Calendar for May 11.*

→**Status:** SB 155 **passed the Senate** April 6. A committee substitute was reported out of the House Elections Committee April 27 and referred to House Calendars May 10.

[Senate Bill 598](#)* by State Sen. [Lois Kolkhorst](#) (R–Brenham) requires voting systems that produce auditable paper trails be phased in by September 2026, initiates risk-limiting audits, and offers state funds to help counties buy or upgrade equipment. It also bars the SOS from waiving any requirements of SB 598. *Similar provisions are included in SB 1234.*

→**Status:** SB 598 unanimously **passed the Senate** April 12 and was reported out of the House Elections Committee May 4.

Several election integrity bills moving through the Senate were filed by State Sen. [Paul Bettencourt](#) (R–Houston), who formerly served as Harris County's voter registrar, as part of his "[Integrity Seven](#)" package of reforms:

[Senate Bill 1111](#) clarifies voters must register in a place they actually inhabit—not at a post office box or commercial address—and may not establish residency to influence the outcome of an election. *Companion [HB 3974](#) was sent to House Calendars Committee April 27.*

→**Status:** SB 1111 **passed the Senate** April 28 and was reported out of the House Elections Committee May 7.

[Senate Bill 1112](#) adds a misdemeanor penalty for local election officials who suspend the law requiring ballot boards to verify voters' signatures on mail ballots or applications.

→**Status:** SB 1112 **passed the Senate** April 12 and received a public hearing in the House Elections Committee May 4.

[Senate Bill 1113](#)* 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 [HB 4044](#) was sent to House Calendars Committee April 29.*

→**Status:** SB 1113 **passed the Senate** April 12 and was reported out of the House Elections Committee April 27.

[Senate Bill 1114](#) codifies current voter roll maintenance practices implemented in accordance with a settlement agreement regarding how the SOS will use DPS citizenship data.

→**Status:** SB 1114 **passed the Senate** April 12 and was reported out of the House Elections Committee May 4.

[Senate Bill 1234](#)* by Hughes requires all Texas elections to use voting systems that produce auditable paper trails by September 2026, and offers state funds to help counties buy or upgrade equipment. *Similar provisions are included in SB 598.*

→**Status:** SB 1234 unanimously **passed the Senate** April 12 and was referred to the House Elections Committee April 15.

[Senate Bill 1235](#)* by Hughes establishes a process for the SOS and DPS to regularly compare data to verify the accuracy of voter rolls. *Similar provisions are included in SB 1340.*

→**Status:** SB 1235 was reported out of Senate committee April 1.

[Senate Bill 1340](#) by State Sen. [Dawn Buckingham](#) (R–Lakeway) proposes a major overhaul of the state's voter registration system, putting the secretary of state in charge and adding online registration; implements procedures for verifying voter data, including citizenship, and for maintaining accurate voter rolls; and authorizes the SOS to withhold state funding from county election officials who fail to comply with list maintenance rules (*similar to SB 1113*).

→**Status:** SB 1340 **passed the Senate** April 14 and received a public hearing in the House Elections Committee April 29.

[Senate Bill 1508](#) by State Sen. [Brandon Creighton](#) (R–Conroe) establishes an election integrity division within the Texas attorney general's office to work with local law enforcement on election fraud investigations.

→**Status:** SB 1508 **passed the Senate** April 28 and was referred to the House Elections Committee May 4.

[Senate Bill 1509](#) by Creighton adds a voter ID requirement for voting by mail that is in line with identification rules for in-person voting. A committee substitute calls for voters to include an ID number on vote-by-mail applications and ballots (an earlier version required a photocopy of the voter's ID). *Similar RPT-priority [HB 2478](#) was sent to House Calendars Committee April 20.*

→**Status:** SB 1509 **passed the Senate** April 28. A committee substitute was reported out of the House Elections Committee May 7.

[Senate Bill 1589](#) by Bettencourt establishes trained election marshals to investigate alleged election code violations and intervene to prevent ongoing criminal offenses, and sets a process for expedited court action in election-related cases filed during the voting period.

→**Status:** SB 1589 **passed the Senate** April 28 and was referred to the House Elections Committee May 4.

[Senate Bill 1675](#) by State Sen. [Donna Campbell](#) (R–New Braunfels) prohibits changing state vote-by-mail laws other than by the legislature. *Related [SJR 61](#) was placed on the Senate intent calendar April 22.*

→**Status:** SB 1675 **passed the Senate** April 26 and is scheduled for a public hearing in the House Elections Committee May 12.

*All six Senate bills that meet [the RPT’s election integrity goals](#)—**SB 7, SB 155, SB 598, SB 1113, SB 1234, and SB 1235**—moved through the Senate committee process. Five passed the Senate. One has passed the House, but not in the form passed by the Senate.

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