

FACT SHEET: Texas Republicans Spent Six Years Making It Harder to Vote, But Texans Are Showing Up Anyway

Early voting is underway in Texas, and the first day broke midterm turnout records in Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, Denton, and McKinney. Texans are breaking records in defiance of a years-long effort by state Republicans to make it harder to vote. Texas Republicans asked the Supreme Court to throw out four other states' results in December 2020, closed all but one mail ballot drop-off site per county in the final weeks of 2020, then wrote a 2021 law that threw out roughly 30,000 mail ballots and applications in a single primary, and in 2023 stripped the state's largest county of the right to run its own elections. The men who did it are on this year's ballot for U.S. Senate, governor and lieutenant governor.

Last December, Texas voters watched their GOP state officials hand their personal records to Trump's Justice Department, months after the same officials had run every voter through a Trump administration database that wrongly flagged 578 U.S. citizens as suspected noncitizens, an error the state conceded only weeks before this election. Every move follows the same logic: when they can't win a fair fight, they try to shrink the electorate. **Here's the record:**

TEXAS REPUBLICANS HAVE SPENT SIX YEARS TRYING TO SHRINK THE ELECTORATE

October 2020: Texas Republicans Ordered Every County to Shutter All but One Ballot Drop-Off Site. A month before the presidential election, Governor Abbott [ordered](#) every Texas county down to a single mail ballot drop-off location, in the name of "ballot security." Harris County, home to more people than 25 states, had opened about a dozen across roughly 1,700 square miles; Travis County had four. A federal appeals court [let](#) the order stand eleven days later.

December 2020: Texas Republicans Led the Lawsuit to Throw Out Four States' Elections. Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton [asked](#) the U.S. Supreme Court to invalidate the results in Pennsylvania, Georgia, Wisconsin and Michigan, the four states that had decided the presidency, and 17 Republican attorneys general and 126 Republican members of Congress signed on. The Court turned it away on December 11 in a single paragraph, finding that Texas had shown no "judicially cognizable interest" in how another state runs its elections. Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick had already [offered](#) \$1 million of campaign money for tips leading to voter fraud convictions; the one payout on record, \$25,000, went to a Pennsylvania poll worker who reported a registered Republican for voting twice.

2021: Texas Republicans Passed An Anti-Voter Law That Rejected 30,000 Mail Ballots and Applications and Kept Voters Home for Years. Senate Bill 1 [ended](#) 24-hour and drive-through voting and required an ID number on every mail ballot application and envelope that matched the voter's registration record. In the 2022 primary, about 30,000 of

215,000 Texans who requested a mail ballot [had](#) an application or ballot rejected, and nearly 90 percent of them never voted in that election. Black, Latino and Asian voters were [rejected](#) at higher rates than white voters. A rejected application cut a voter's chance of turning out that November by about 16 points, and the effect was still measurable in the March 2024 primary. More than 85 percent of the rejected voters had cast ballots in each of the three previous general elections.

2023: The GOP Legislature Seized Control of Elections in the State's Largest County, and Only There. Republicans [abolished](#) the Harris County elections administrator's office on a party-line House vote and wrote a second law letting the Secretary of State seek the removal of the county's election officials over a “recurring pattern of problems,” after amending it on the House floor to apply to Harris County alone. The same session [pulled](#) Texas out of the multistate ERIC data cooperative that catches voters who have died or moved, raised illegal voting back to a felony, and added a wet-signature requirement to mail ballot envelopes.

2026: Tarrant County's Republican Commissioners Cut 92 Polling Sites After Weeks of Public Outcry. On September 1, the three Republicans on the Tarrant County Commissioners Court [voted](#) over both Democrats to cut Election Day polling locations from 316 in the 2022 midterm to 224 this year, a year after voting to cut nearly half the county's early voting sites for the 2025 election, before restoring nine of them. By a Democratic commissioner's analysis of the adopted map, the quarter of ZIP codes with the highest poverty rates [lose](#) about 41 percent of their Election Day sites, against 15 percent in the lowest-poverty quarter, and the polling place at the University of Texas at Arlington is gone. The county judge's defense was that the plan leaves the county 54 sites above the statutory minimum. Another Democratic commissioner, to ABC News: “Our population hasn't shrunk. Our electorate hasn't shrunk.”

2026: Texans Have Answered With Record Midterm First-Day Turnout in the State's Biggest Counties. Harris County [recorded](#) more than 104,600 in-person voters on October 19, against a prior midterm first-day record of 63,188 set in 2018. Dallas County [cast](#) 76,079 ballots, more than double its 2022 first day and above its first-day total in the 2024 presidential election; Tarrant, Denton and Collin each [beat](#) their 2022 first day by 15,000 to more than 21,000 votes.

TEXAS REPUBLICANS HANDED TRUMP 18 MILLION VOTERS' RECORDS, THEN LET A BROKEN DATABASE FLAG CITIZENS

Texas Gave Trump's DOJ the State's Full Voter File, Social Security Digits Included. While dozens of states refused the Justice Department's demand for their voter rolls in court, Texas's Republican Secretary of State [shipped](#) the full file on about 18.4 million registered voters to Washington on December 23, 2025, including dates of birth, driver's license numbers and the last four digits of Social Security numbers. Texas was one of roughly a dozen states that volunteered while the Justice Department [sued](#) at least 29 others and the District of Columbia for refusing.

The State Ran Every Voter Through Trump's Rebuilt SAVE Tool, and 578 Citizens Came Back as Suspects. After a Trump executive order, Homeland Security [rebuilt](#) its SAVE citizenship database on a 30-day deadline and loaded it with Social Security data that is often outdated for people who got a number before they naturalized. Texas uploaded all 18 million records, and in October 2025 the Secretary of State sent counties a list of 2,724 so-called potential noncitizens without reviewing a single determination itself, instructing clerks to demand proof of citizenship and remove anyone who did not respond. Hundreds of the people on that list had registered through the Department of Public Safety, where they had already [proven](#) their citizenship or lawful presence to get a license or ID, records the state did not ask DPS to [check](#) until May. By September the state [conceded](#) that 578 of the people on that list were U.S. citizens, 506 of them flagged only because their passport records reached the database after Texas ran its check. In September, federal prosecutors working with the Attorney General charged seven people in Tarrant County over voting in 2024.

TEXAS ELECTION DENIERS ARE ON THE BALLOT

Ken Paxton, for U.S. Senate: The Man Who Sued to Overturn 2020, Then Spoke to the Crowd on January 6. The attorney general who asked the Supreme Court to erase four states' votes [told](#) the rally crowd outside the White House on the morning of January 6, 2021, that “we will not quit fighting,” then withheld his emails and texts from that week as privileged. Sixteen lawyers filed an ethics complaint over the lawsuit, and the State Bar of Texas [sued](#) him for professional misconduct in 2022, alleging that he and his top deputy had made “dishonest” representations to the Court, a case the bar dropped in 2025 after the Texas Supreme Court ruled it could not discipline the attorney general's office. In August 2024, his office [sent](#) officers into homes in San Antonio and South Texas belonging, by the group's count, to at least six members of a Latino voting rights organization, among them a volunteer in her 80s, in a vote-harvesting probe that began in 2022. A grand jury indicted nine people the following summer, including two whose homes were searched; the elderly volunteer was never charged. He [won](#) the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate in May, defeating the four-term incumbent in a runoff.

Greg Abbott, for Governor: The Man Who Closed the Drop Boxes, Signed SB 1 and Inflated the Noncitizen Count. The governor who limited every county to one drop-off site in 2020 and signed the 2021 law that rejected 30,000 mail ballots and applications [announced](#) in August 2024 that Texas had removed “6,500 noncitizens” from its rolls. The Secretary of State's own report to him counted 581; the rest were voters who had not answered a letter, and reporters found U.S. citizens removed under the same process. The press release was quietly changed to “potential noncitizens” within two days.

Dan Patrick, for Lieutenant Governor: The Man Who Called the Election Stolen Before It Was Held. Five days before Election Day 2020, the lieutenant governor [said](#) on Dallas radio that if Trump lost Pennsylvania, North Carolina or Florida, “they'll lose it because they stole it.” A week after the election he put up as much as \$1 million of campaign money for fraud tips, with one payout ever reported, and he presided over the Texas Senate that wrote SB 1 and the Harris County takeover.

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Try And Stop Us is an organization fighting to defend elections in 2026 and beyond. As Donald Trump and his allies work to rig the game and sow distrust in our elections because they can't win a fair fight, Try And Stop Us moves quickly to amplify the work of organizers and local leaders — helping their voices reach further, faster, as one unified story. For more information, please reach out to info@tryandstopus.org.