

TEXAS

SUMMARY

A state with a long tradition of restrictive voting laws, Texas has passed some of the most aggressive anti-voter laws since 2020. It also continues to have overall weak campaign finance regulations and lacks enforcement of corruption issues.



Overall:



Rank: #45 / 50

GRADES

VOTING RIGHTS LAWS

F

TIED-43 OF 50

CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND ANTI-CORRUPTION LAWS

D

35 OF 50

DEMOCRACY SUBVERSION PROTECTIONS

F

42 OF 50

TOTAL SCORE: 108.8 / 300

BEHIND THE GRADES



Voting Rights Laws

- Texas already had among the nation's strictest laws around voter registration options and absentee voting, and that was before Gov. Greg Abbott signed SB1 into law last year; this legislation severely restricts how and when voters cast ballots, particularly with voting methods disproportionately used by voters of color.



Campaign Finance and Anti-Corruption Laws

- Texas allows unlimited contributions by individuals and PACs to candidates for state and local office.
- A recent law aimed at cracking down on the revolving door of lobbyists has been found to have several loopholes, and a recent investigation found that action is rarely ever taken against public officials for corruption and crime.



Democracy Subversion Protections

- From Attorney General Ken Paxton's failed efforts to block certification of the 2020 election results, to SB1's new harsh criminal penalties threatening election officials for minor technical infractions, to a congressional redistricting map labeled as perhaps "the worst gerrymander in the country," the last few years have seen Texas public officials take among the most dramatic efforts in the nation to undermine democracy.

LOOKING FORWARD

Warning Signs

SB1's negative impacts have already been felt by Texas voters and are likely to only increase in the November election. The state rejected 12% of mail-ballots in its March primary - compared to less than 1% in the 2020 November election.

At least 27 Texas Republican candidates now vying for statewide and federal office continue to repeat misinformation that the 2020 election was rigged - more than any other state in the country - and are running on platforms of tightening voting rules.

Bright Spot

While they serve in the extreme minority, Democratic state legislators have taken dramatic steps in opposition to the anti-voting laws, including breaking quorum outside the state to delay passage of SB1.