



April 23, 2025

Senator Bryan Hughes  
Chair, Senate Committee on State Affairs  
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Capitol Station  
Austin, TX 78711  
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Representative Matt Shaheen  
Chair, House Committee on Elections  
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PO Box 2910  
Austin, TX 78769  
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**Re: NOTIFICATION AND RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS FOR PEOPLE WITH A FELONY CONVICTION**

Dear Chair Hughes and Chair Shaheen,

We, the undersigned advocacy and civil and human rights organizations, urge your support for [SB 631/HB 4594](#) to restore voting rights to Texans on felony probation and parole and [SB 2227/HB 590](#) to notify people with felony convictions when their voting rights are restored.

Over 479,000 Texans cannot vote due to a felony conviction—the second largest disenfranchised population in the country, behind only Florida.<sup>1</sup> Texas laws are particularly restrictive, prohibiting individuals from voting who are on felony probation, parole, or incarcerated for a felony-level conviction. Driving Texas's high disenfranchisement rate is its ban on voting for over 327,000 people completing their sentence on felony probation or parole.

People of color in particular are more likely to be prohibited from voting because of the stark racial disparities in the Texas criminal legal system. Texas's voting ban results in stark racial injustices in ballot access. Voting-eligible Black Texans are roughly 2.5 times as likely as non-Black Texans to lose their right to vote due to a felony-level conviction. Latino Texans are 1.2 times as likely as non-Latino Texans to lose their right to vote due to a felony-level conviction.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Uggen, C., Larson, R., Shannon, S., & Stewart, R., & Hauf, M. (2024). [Locked out 2024: Four million denied voting rights due to a felony conviction](#). The Sentencing Project.

<sup>2</sup> See note 1.

By allowing those on felony parole and probation to vote and notifying eligible voters of their rights, Texas can improve public safety while also promoting reintegrative prosocial behaviors. Research shows that an opportunity to participate in democracy has the potential to reduce one's perceived status as an "outsider." The act of voting can have a meaningful and sustaining positive influence on justice-impacted citizens by making them feel they belong to a community.<sup>3</sup>

Research also suggests that having the right to vote immediately after incarceration matters for public safety. Individuals in states that continued to restrict the right to vote after incarceration were found to have a higher likelihood of experiencing a subsequent arrest compared to individuals in states that had their voting rights restored post-incarceration.<sup>4</sup>

Reenfranchising its entire voting-eligible population would ensure Texas lives up its own constitutional provision that "all political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their benefit."<sup>5</sup> We urge you to schedule hearings for and support [SB 631/HB 4594](#) to restore voting rights to Texans on felony probation and parole and [SB 2227/HB 590](#) to notify people with felony convictions when their voting rights have been restored.

Sincerely,

ACLU of Texas  
All of Us or None Texas  
Grassroots Leadership  
Ground Game Texas  
Human Rights Watch  
Just Future Project  
League of Women Voters of Texas  
League of Women Voters, Galveston County  
League of Women Voters, Williamson County  
Lioness Justice Impacted Women's Alliance  
MOVE Texas Civic Fund  
NAACP Legal Defense Fund  
Pure Justice Action Fund  
The Sentencing Project  
Texas Advocates for Justice  
Texas Civil Rights Project  
The Wright Cause Urban Youth Conservation

cc: Members of the Texas House Committee on Elections

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<sup>3</sup> Budd, K. M., & Monazzam, N. (2023). [Increasing public safety by restoring voting rights](#). The Sentencing Project; Aviram, H., Bragg, A., & Lewis, C. (2017). Felon disenfranchisement. Annual Review of Law and Social Science, 13, 295-311. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-110316-113558>

<sup>4</sup> See note 3.

<sup>5</sup> [TX Const. Art. 1 § 2](#).

Members of the Texas Senate Committee on State Affairs