



Texas

*Holding Power Accountable*

## **ADVISORY: Texas Lawmakers Hold Hearing on SB 1243, Bill that Will Criminalize Voting for Vulnerable Texans**

AUSTIN— **This Thursday at 10:30 a.m. CT**, Texas lawmakers will hear [House Bill 1243](#), a dangerous elections bill that would increase the criminal penalty of voting violations from a misdemeanor to a second-degree felony, which can carry a punishment of two to 20 years in state prison.

Voters of color are most likely to be ensnared in this push to criminalize voting, given how the state's criminal justice systems already disproportionately punish and discriminate against Black and Latino Texans.

Common Cause Texas will provide in-person testimony at the hearing, which will be held at 10:30 a.m. CT at the Texas Capitol Extension in room E2.016. To watch a livestream of House Elections Committee hearing, click [here](#).

In addition, the Texas Senate is slated to vote on several harmful election bills Thursday, including [Senate Bill 260](#) which will enable more voter roll purges, and [Senate Bill 1911](#) which creates new threats and penalties for election administrators – risking being jailed on a felony if they're stuck in traffic and late to deliver election supplies.

“Texas lawmakers are deliberately trying to inject fear into the voting process and suppress the vote, and it will be Black and Brown Texans who end up paying the price,” said **Katya Ehresman, Common Cause Texas’ voting rights program manager**. “This is shameful discrimination in its rawest form. This bill needs to be stopped so that every voter can exercise their constitutional right to vote without intimidation. With less than 50 days left in the regular session, it is disappointing to see lawmakers continue to hear discriminatory and dangerous bills rather than bipartisan, common sense reforms to help the millions of eligible Texans who have missed past elections be empowered to cast their ballot.”

Katya Ehresman will be available for one-on-one interviews following her testimony and can speak to House Bill 1243 and other pieces of election-related legislation.

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