Anti-Voter bill SB 9 turns the clock back on Democracy

What is SB 9?

SB 9 seeks to make voting much more difficult, confusing, and scary for voters, all while creating more red-tape and bureaucracy for county election administrators. In 2018, a record number of Texans showed up to the polls to participate in our midterm elections. Instead of encouraging more democratic participation, SB 9 seeks to keep more and more Texans from voting in the future.

What does SB 9 do?

- **Threatens voters with jail time and enormous fines:** Voters could be punished for innocent mistakes, such as filling out their voter registration form wrong.

- **Creates new red tape for those who need assistance while voting, in particular elderly voters, voters with disabilities, and non-English speaking voters:** Those who drive voters to the polls and assist them while voting will have to fill out burdensome and unnecessary new forms just to help people vote.

- **Expands dangerous new powers to law enforcement:** It gives law enforcement expansive legal immunity from prosecution for committing election-related crimes, allowing law enforcement to conduct undercover sting operations against community organizations and disrupt the operation of polling places.

- **Exposes innocent people to arrest for vaguely defined conduct:** People will face new, confusing penalties for “impeding a walkway, sidewalk, parking lot, or roadway” around polling places.

- **Gives state officials more access to voters’ private information:** Attorney General Ken Paxton would be given direct access to the electronic voter registration database, which includes Social Security Numbers, Driver License Numbers, and other personal information.

- **Alters the formula for distributing countywide polling places to favor white-majority districts over non-white areas.** It would tie the locations of countywide polling places to the number of registered voters in a given area, but generations of official, systemic discrimination have predictably led to lower voter registration rates in communities of color. This bill would double down on the effects of that historic disenfranchisement by using those lower registration rates as a reason to close polling places in minority neighborhoods and shift them to white neighborhoods.

What can I do to stop SB 9?

SB 9 would make voting harder and scarier for thousands of our fellow Texans who just want to have a voice in their democracy. We must reject SB 9, and focus instead on holding our leaders accountable in making it easier for more communities to participate in our democracy.

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