



Opposition to HB 1478

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Chair and Members of the Committee,

Every Texan and the Coalition Against State Interference strongly oppose HB 1478, which represents an alarming overreach of state authority and undermines the democratic process at the local level.

HB 1478 grants the Secretary of State the power to withhold critical funding from voter registrars who fail to perform certain duties within arbitrarily specified timeframes. While election integrity and accountability in voter registration are essential, this bill weaponizes state oversight to coerce local election administrators rather than supporting them. The state's potential ability to withhold resources from underfunded local election offices is not a solution but a manufactured crisis that disrupts the balance of power between state and local governments, undermining the very foundation of democratic elections in Texas.

This bill is a blatant abuse of preemption because it strips local governments of their ability to govern effectively and responsively. Local election officials have an intimate understanding of their communities and the specific challenges they face. By centralizing control and imposing punitive financial measures, HB 1478 forces local offices into compliance with rigid state mandates, disregarding the realities on the ground. This top-down approach is not only inefficient but dangerous, risking widespread voter disenfranchisement under the guise of bureaucratic efficiency.

Texans across the state will feel the consequences of HB 1478. Rural counties, already operating on limited budgets, may struggle to meet state-imposed deadlines due to staffing shortages and logistical challenges. Urban counties, which process thousands of registrations daily, could face funding cuts that slow operations and increase wait times, disproportionately affecting communities of color, young voters, and working-class Texans. Rather than ensuring fair and accessible elections, this bill creates barriers that prevent eligible voters from participating in their government elections.

Withholding funds from voter registrars does not promote election integrity—it undermines it. Financially burdening local election offices only increases the likelihood of administrative failures, ultimately eroding public trust in the electoral process. Texas should be strengthening voter registration infrastructure, not punishing the very officials tasked with carrying it out.

HB 1478's approach is an overextension of state power that contradicts the core values of local governance and free elections. We urge the committee to reject this bill and instead prioritize policies that foster collaboration between state and local election officials—ensuring that all Texans, regardless of where they live, have access to fair, well-resourced, and efficiently run elections.

We urge you to vote no on HB 1478.