

OUR VOTE TEXAS

# 2021 Year In Review

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## Introduction

Our Vote Texas is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to advancing voter education and good public policy in Texas through advocacy and outreach.

Our organization came about in January of 2017 and formally incorporated in August of the same year.

Here you will find our 2021 Year In Review Report which includes our mission going forward in the new year.

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## **A Legislative Year That Demanded Full Focus**

Fresh off a truly exhausting 2020, the Texas Legislature gaveled in for the regular legislative session in January of this year.

Even before lawmakers gathered in the Capitol, state leaders and advocates alike were anxious to determine how this legislative session would work amidst an ongoing pandemic and how Texans would be able to safely advocate for their communities before lawmakers.

We are grateful for opportunities to testify before committees virtually as this allowed Texans to keep safe and gave those well outside of Austin a chance to be part of the legislative process and talk to lawmakers about their communities. We hope to see state leaders explore options to continue virtual testimony in the future!

The multiple legislative sessions proved to be a series of relentless fights to protect Texas voters from burdensome, unnecessary legislation that only further complicates voting and impacts vulnerable groups of Texans.

At the time of the passing of one of the most notable vote restrictive bills this year, SB 1, OVT President Valerie Street said, "There can be no doubt that SB 1 worsens the voting process, making it even harder for Texans to vote at a time when we are clamoring to be heard."

Our Vote Texas, as part of the Fair Maps Texas Action Committee, along with others has also filed a lawsuit against Governor Abbott over the unlawful district maps passed in the legislative session. Read more about that [HERE](#).

A major component of our work in 2022 will be continuing efforts to make sure Texas voters understand the voting and elections laws that impact us at the polls.

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## OUR PROCESS IN THE LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS

At the start of the regular legislative session in early 2021, Our Vote Texas (then still Texas Progressive Action Network) was tracking 225 pieces of legislation across eight major issues-

- COVID
- Education
- Gun Sense
- Healthcare
- Criminal Justice and Justice System
- Redistricting
- Voter Rights
- Workers Rights.

In the subsequent special sessions, our group closely followed and took action on bills related to

- Civic Education
- Classroom Censorship
- Voter Rights and Elections
- Redistricting

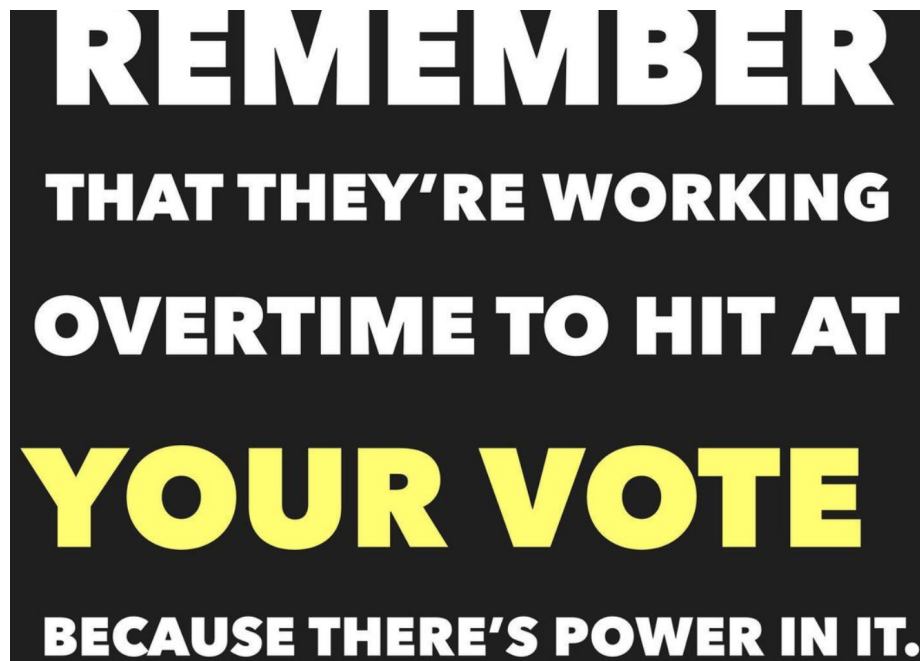
Of the 51 bills we took action on, we developed targeted actions for 15 of them which included

- 2,490 letters sent via letter campaigns,
- in-person visits,
- letters to the editor actions
- and sustained advocacy campaigns for [HB 3112, the Texas Redistricting Transparency Act](#), and against SB 1, which included a [petition signed by Texas voters and members of Our Vote Texas](#).

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Our Vote Texas was also able to grow our network by 36% during the course of all 2021 legislative sessions.

[Our full report on the 87th Legislative Sessions is available HERE.](#)



### **New Name, Same Mission**

In a year that followed a pivotal national election and in preparation to ramp up advocacy efforts for growing Texas civic engagement and voting, we turned to our first core project to lead the way.

Over the last few years we have been so excited to see the Our Vote Texas project take root in various communities throughout this state.

Over 13,000 copies of voter rights resources in 19 counties and growing - our goal to put useful information in the hands of the volunteers doing important voter outreach work in Texas shows no signs of stopping and it is our intention that this become as well tuned to the needs of individual communities as possible.

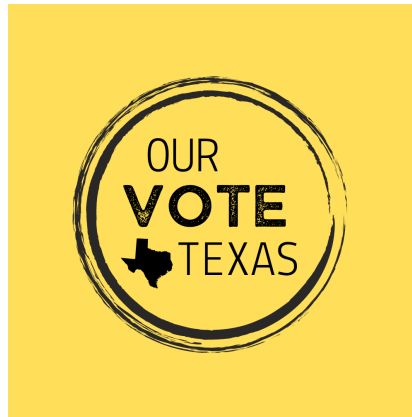
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With voter education and outreach + voter rights advocacy as our mission, we have seen time and time again that there is a place for this effort to carry on and grow in so many areas of Texas, including those often underserved.

It has been a devoted labor of love and our great honor to advocate alongside so many Texans to both protect our vote and advance the rights and needs of Texas voters.

On July 1, 2021, Texas Progressive Action Network relaunched and formally became Our Vote Texas.

Our work continues and we're here to stay.



## **Furthering Civics Education And Whole History**

Project Civic Act has continued to develop into an ever evolving collection of resources for educators and learners. This year, coinciding with the legislative sessions, PCA developed two new lesson modules intended to both benefit focused conversations about voting and barriers to the ballot box, and provide overview of the redistricting process and gerrymandering's effects on communities.

1. [The Impact Of Barriers To The Ballot](#)
2. [The Inequities of Gerrymandering](#)

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PCA will continue striving to put focus on underrepresented texts, writers and communities in the democratic process as well as texts that explore a reimagined framework for the way we hold elections, build political power and engage as citizens.

[Learn more about Project Civic Act!](#)



## **Advocacy In The Community This Year**

### **PLUS - What's Next: 2022**

Our Vote Texas joined other advocacy groups for a Voting Rights Advocacy Day led by Common Cause Texas on July 13, 2021 to prepare Texans for the hard fight ahead as we entered the first special session in the summer of 2021.

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[We were also honored to join the Poor People’s Campaign, Texas Poor People’s Campaign](#) and many others on the Moral March from Georgetown to Austin on July 30, 2021 to raise an alert on the voter suppression happening not just in Texas but in many state houses in the nation.

[YOU CAN READ MORE ABOUT THESE EFFORTS IN OUR 87TH TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS - 2021 REVIEW](#)



## A New Year

As 2022 gets underway we will continue to put voter resources in communities with voter outreach workers and Texas VDRs and we will conduct voter registrations and voter rights clinics in a handful of areas in Texas.

If you are interested in being part of this effort please visit our form here: [The Texas Voter Project](#).

Above image credit: Bob Daemmrch

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“Your path to the vote is my path to the vote. Where our path is blocked, we are called to help clear it. All.”

— Part of the OVT Mission Statement

**Thank You For Your Continued Support!**

**Join The Fight:**

[Calls To Action](#)

[Donate Today!](#)



<https://ourvotetexas.org/>