



Voting Rights

How we talk about it, what to do about it, and where we're going with it.

Voters have several core opinion concepts that progressives must understand:

- Voters believe the right to vote is sacred and object to policies that make it more difficult.
- The public largely believes that voter fraud is a problem. Acknowledge the importance of protecting the integrity of elections, while fighting against restrictions. Voters are open to arguments that those who want to restrict voting laws should have to prove fraud exists.
- The central values to emphasize are that elections should be free, fair and accessible.

Topline:

“Protecting the right to vote” is a key phrase that works for both general public communication and progressive base voters.

Attacks on the “right to vote” can be a strong progressive turnout motivator, if used correctly.

The public values policies that make it more convenient to vote, like early and absentee voting, and same day registration. These values can also pushback against voter purges, voter ID requirements or inadequate voting machines.

The most persuasive message emphasized convenience and exercising the right to vote. Increasing turnout and disenfranchisement messages were much less powerful.

Communicating on Voting Issues

DO SAY	DON'T SAY
It is our right and responsibility to vote. The right to vote is the basis for our democracy.	
"Making it harder to vote"	<i>"Voter suppression" or "disenfranchisement"</i>
We should be making it easier for eligible Texans to cast their ballot.	<i>Talk about voting problems without offering any solutions</i>
Lead with values like freedom, equality, trust, and responsibility	<i>Lead with fraud, suppression, or fear</i>
Lift up that our nation is better off when more Americans participate, and highlight that powerful special interests are trying to rig our elections.	<i>Don't get bogged down in proving voter fraud doesn't exist.</i>
Connect voting to specific issues tailored to your audience.	<i>Talk about voting as a siloed issue.</i>
We shouldn't tolerate any voter fraud. We should protect the right of all eligible voters to vote without obstacles or intimidation.	<i>Voter fraud doesn't exist. (Most people believe that voter fraud does exist)</i>
It's wrong for politicians to try to influence elections by discouraging voters that don't agree with them.	<i>This is just a ploy to stop Democratic voters from voting.</i>
Your vote is important – and no one can take away your right to vote.	<i>Opponents are creating laws taking away the right to vote.</i>
There are many ways for voters to confirm their identity – but we can't deny eligible voters the right to vote.	<i>There's no need for voter ID laws – it's just a Republican ploy. (Most people support requiring voter ID)</i>
Boost trust in elections administrators, the post office, and county clerks. Support well-funded elections systems.	<i>Forment fears about data security, ballot by mail delivery, hacking, or anything that might make a voter stay home.</i>

Voting rights are human rights. There is nothing more important than the sanctity of the vote. Our voting rights are under attack. Texas Republicans have tried to game the system and erect barriers for rightful, eligible voters every chance they've gotten. From nominating known vote-suppressor David Whitley to discriminatory racial gerrymandering, Texas Republicans have sought every attempt possible to limit voting rights for Texans. Texas Republicans continue to try to make voting more confusing, scary, and difficult.

This is the fight of our generation. Texas Democrats know that our democracy works better when more people vote, not less. We will continue to fight until voting is free, fair, and accessible for all, because our democracy depends on it.

The Problem:

The right to vote remains an essential tenet to our democracy; however, all of the progress that we've made is under unprecedented attack. Republicans have attempted to make voting harder for everyday Texans and Americans.

Across the nation, voting rights have never been under as much attack as they are right now. Republicans know that the only way they continue to win elections is by making it harder for voters who disagree with them to cast their ballot.

Federal judges confirmed that over the past decade, Republicans at the state at local level developed and executed a systematic scheme to keep Texans of color from being heard and represented by their government in congressional, legislative, and municipal maps. Further, Texas Republicans enacted discriminatory voter identification laws that made it harder for people to vote.

The Solution:

Texas Democrats are focused on protecting and expanding the vote, through identifying and registering voters, fighting the Republican Party at the courts, and ensuring that everybody has a fair shot to exercise their democratic right to vote.

Voting Rights in Texas by the numbers:

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Examples

Successful Message #1 [Broadest Appeal for Mass Communication] When our sons and daughters, husbands and wives put aside their safety in order to protect ours by serving in the military, it's our responsibility to ensure that they can exercise their right to vote. This law places hurdles in front of absentee voters serving overseas.

Successful Message #2 [To Motivate Base Voters] We need to vote this year to stand up to the politicians and extremist groups that are manipulating the system by kicking people off the voter rolls. Voting should be free, fair, and accessible. Your vote is important to counter these attempts to reduce voter turnout, and show that no one can take away your right to vote.

Message Box

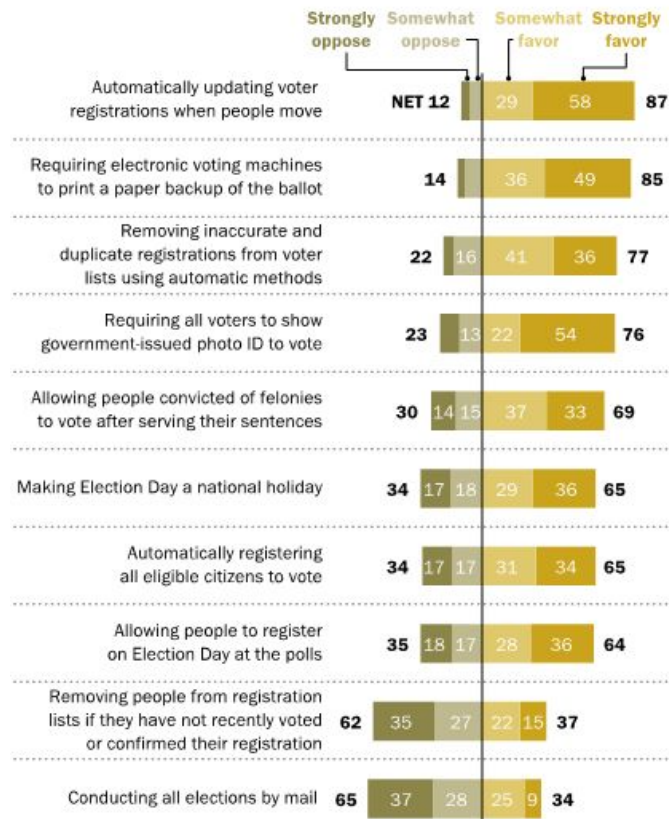
<p>Us on Us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to vote is the biggest challenge facing our democracy today. • We must expand the right to vote, pass universal voter registration, make sure that we are expanding access to poll places, and have a robust, working early voting system that allows for voters to cast a ballot at their easiest convenience. • This is the fight of our generation. Texas Democrats know that our democracy works better when more people vote, not less. We will continue to fight until voting is free, fair, and accessible for all, because our democracy depends on it. • People all over the world have died defending the right to vote. We honor them by ensuring that we are expanding access to voting, not making it more restrictive than it already is. 	<p>Them on Them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Republicans don't care about who votes--we just want to make sure that the only eligible voters are casting ballots. • Voter fraud is real and it is a threat to our democracy. One person one ballot isn't just a mantra, it's a necessity for our country. • We must clean up the voting rolls because if we don't, it increases the risk of voter fraud.
<p>Us on Them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Republicans have consistently stood against expanding the vote and have sought to limit democracy through voter purges, archane voter ID laws, and legislation aimed to suppress minority turnout. • The only way Republicans win elections is by low turnout. Republicans have systematically done everything in their power to limit the vote in order to win elections. • What Republicans have done the last decade is completely criminal. Texas Democrats stand for voters 	<p>Them on Us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democrats only win elections by stealing them. Republicans are still the majority of this country.

and will continue to fight so everybody has a fair shot at exercising their Democratic right to vote.

Polling:

Public favors many election policy proposals, including paper backups for electronic voting

% who ___ each idea about election policy



Note: No answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 24-Oct. 7, 2018.

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