



children's defense fund texas

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New report by Children's Defense Fund – Texas shows how state suppresses youth vote and offers resources for those who seek to support and expand youth civic participation

Today, on the filing deadline to run in Texas' 2020 primary election, Children's Defense Fund – Texas released a new report detailing the state's historic and systemic suppression of young voters – especially those of color – that continues to create barriers to democratic participation.

Texas is just one of four states that has failed to implement any of the pro-voter reforms used throughout the United States that let eligible citizens register to vote either online, automatically during interactions with state agencies, or on the same day they go to the polls, the CDF-TX report found.

Instead, the state and its representatives have stood before the U.S. Supreme Court at least 15 times in the past century in cases involving voter suppression. The state Legislature in 2011 passed one of the most restrictive voter ID laws in the country – one that doesn't accept student IDs at the ballot box.

"This report shows how low youth voter turnout is not inevitable or accidental," said Patrick Bresette, Executive Director of CDF-Texas. "It's the result of policy choices by the state that passively discourage and actively bar young Texans from shaping the future of our state. This is a deeply troubling history that's landed hardest on young voters of color, who make up an increasing share of our population."

After a historic midterm election last year, when youth voter turnout in Texas tripled from 2014 rates, the Texas Legislature in 2019 continued supporting policies that make it harder for enthusiastic young voters to participate in upcoming elections. CDF-Texas remains committed to ending the image of Texas as a symbol for voter suppression with this report, which also provides a guide for educators, activists, and young Texans eager to join civic engagement efforts.

"The Children's Defense Fund has a long history of helping young people develop the tools they need to be active members of their communities," Bresette said. "While Texans shouldn't have to fight their state to exercise their right to vote, we are proud to have worked so far to overcome the roadblocks to voting created by the state. We will continue working to remove barriers to civic participation."

The report was written by CDF-TX staff Maggie Stern and Jo DePrang, and intern Irene Gómez.

Click [here](#) to view the report and discover resources to support youth civic engagement in Texas.