

While The U.S. Chamber Claimed Opposition To “Partisan” Voting Laws, It Remained Silent As Texas Republicans Nearly Passed “Expansive” Voter Suppression Bill SB 7 And As Republicans In 13 Other States Enacted Restrictions

Texas Republicans’ “Expansive” Voting Restriction Bill SB 7 Was Nearly Passed Into Law, Only Blocked By A “Surprise” Last-Minute Move By State Democrats Who Pleaded For Federal Voting Protections—Gov. Abbott Vowed To Revive The Bill In A Special Session Later This Year.

Texas’ SB 7, An “Expansive” Republican Voting Restriction Bill That Sought To Limit Early Voting, Restrict Local Voting Options, And Increase Barriers On Mail-In Voting, Failed After Democratic State Lawmakers Staged A “Surprise” Walkout, Blocked The Bill’s Passage, And Pleaded For Federal Election Protections.

Texas’ Senate Bill (SB) 7—A “Priority” Of Republican State Lawmakers—Was An “Expansive Bill That Would Touch Nearly The Entire Voting Process.” “Senate Bill 7, the GOP’s priority voting bill, emerged Saturday from a conference committee as an expansive bill that would touch nearly the entire voting process, including provisions to limit early voting hours, curtail local voting options and further tighten voting by mail, among several other provisions.” [The Texas Tribune, [05/30/21](#)]

SB 7 Was “One Of The Most Stringent” Voting Restriction Bills In The Country. “The surprise move by roughly 60 Democratic lawmakers headed off the expected passage of S.B. 7, a voting measure that would have been one of the most stringent in the nation, by denying Republicans a required quorum and forcing them to abruptly adjourn without taking a vote.” [The Washington Post, [05/31/21](#)]

Among Its Many Provisions, SB 7 Would Have Limited Early Voting Hours, Limited Local Voting Options, And Increase Restrictions On Mail-In Voting. “Senate Bill 7, the GOP’s priority voting bill, emerged Saturday from a conference committee as an expansive bill that would touch nearly the entire voting process, including provisions to limit early voting hours, curtail local voting options and further tighten voting by mail, among several other provisions.” [The Texas Tribune, [05/30/21](#)]

Lawmakers Added New Voting Restrictions To SB 7, Including Voter ID Requirements For Mail-In Ballots, As They Reconciled The State House And Senate Versions Of The Bill. “It was negotiated behind closed doors over the last week after the House and Senate passed significantly different versions of the legislation and pulled from each chamber’s version of the bill. The bill also came back with a series of additional voting rule changes, including a new ID requirement for mail-in ballots, that weren’t part of previous debates on the bill.” [The Texas Tribune, [05/30/21](#)]

May 30, 2021: Democratic State Lawmakers Defeated SB 7 By Staging A “Surprise” Walkout And Denying Republicans The Quorum They Needed To Pass The Bill In Time. “Texas Democrats who defeated a Republican effort to pass a suite of new voting restrictions with a dramatic late-night walkout from the state House chamber on Sunday have a message for President Biden and his allies in Congress: If we can protect voting rights, you can, too. The surprise move by roughly 60 Democratic lawmakers headed off the expected passage of S.B. 7, a voting measure that would have been one of the most stringent in the nation, by denying Republicans a required quorum and forcing them to abruptly adjourn without taking a vote.” [The Washington Post, [05/31/21](#)]

One Democratic Lawmaker Who Participated In The Walkout Demanded Federal Protections For Voting Rights, Saying, “Mr. President, We Need A National Response To Federal Voting Rights.” “We knew today, with the eyes of the nation watching action in Austin, that we needed to send a message,’ state Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer, a San Antonio Democrat, said at a news conference held at a historically Black church in Austin early Monday, shortly after he and other lawmakers left the state Capitol. ‘And that message is very, very clear: Mr. President, we need a national response to federal voting rights.’ [The Washington Post, [05/31/21](#)]

Texas’ Republican Governor Greg Abbott “Vowed” To Revive SB 7 In A Special Session Later In 2021 And Threatened To Defund The Legislature As Retaliation.

Republican Texas Governor Greg Abbott “Vowed” To Revive SB 7’s Provisions In A Special Legislative Session Later In 2021 And Threatened To Defund The State Legislature As Retaliation For Democrats’ Walkout. “Republicans control every branch of Texas government and hold firm majorities in both the House and Senate. While Gov. Greg Abbott (R) vowed late Sunday to bring the voting measure back at a special legislative session for redistricting later this year — and threatened to defund the legislature in a tweet on Monday — the walkout represented an unmistakable and shocking defeat for Republican leaders who had assumed the bill would pass ahead of the House’s midnight deadline to finish its 2021 business.” [The Washington Post, [05/31/21](#)]

The U.S. Chamber Has Claimed That Federal And State Voting Laws Shouldn’t Be “Partisan” As It Fought Against *The For The People Act*, Which Includes “Sweeping” Federal Protections Aimed At Preventing Voting Restrictions.

The U.S. Chamber Of Commerce, The “World’s Largest Business Organization,” Expressed “Fierce” Opposition To The For The People Act, A “Sweeping” Federal Anti-Voting Suppression Bill As It Claimed That Any Changes To Voting Laws Shouldn’t Be “Partisan.”

The U.S. Chamber Of Commerce Has Claimed, “Changes To Voting Laws Shouldn’t Be Partisan – Whether At The State Or Federal Level.” “Changes to voting laws shouldn’t be partisan. The Chamber does not support partisan changes to voting laws – whether at the state or federal level.” [U.S. Chamber of Commerce, [05/20/21](#)]

In A Letter Opposing The For The People Act, The U.S. Chamber Claimed That ““Partisan” Voting Changes “Erode Access And Security And Undermine Public Confidence.” “We oppose H.R.1/S.1 because the Chamber is a long-time defender of the First Amendment. In a letter sent to Senators in April we explained [...] ‘Changes enacted on a partisan basis are the most likely to erode access and security and undermine public confidence and the willingness of the American people to trust and accept future election outcomes,’ we said in our letter to Senators.” [U.S. Chamber of Commerce, [05/20/21](#)]

The U.S. Chamber Stated, “Democrats And Republicans Should Make Voting Law Changes On A Bipartisan Basis.” “Bottom line: The Chamber wants all segments of society to have a voice in the political process and will continue to defend fundamental First Amendment rights. Democrats and Republicans should make voting law changes on a bipartisan basis and find common ground to ensure Americans have trust in our election system.” [U.S. Chamber of Commerce, [05/20/21](#)]

April 2021: The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Expressed “Fierce Opposition” To The For The People Act, An Anti-Voting Suppression Bill Passed In The U.S. House Of Representatives That The Chamber Called ““Extremely Problematic.” “At issue is the Chamber of Commerce’s fierce opposition to the Democrats’ sweeping voting bill known as the For the People Act, which advocates say would counter

efforts by Georgia and other states to impose new voting restrictions. The Chamber of Commerce has slammed the legislation, which last month was approved by the US House of Representatives, as ‘extremely problematic’ in part because of new curbs on political advocacy by companies and associations.” [CNN, [04/21/21](#)]

- **H.R. 1, The For The People Act of 2021, Was Introduced By Rep. John Sarbanes (D-MD) In The 117th Congress On January 4, 2021 And Passed The House On March 3, 2021 By A Vote Of 220-210.** [Congress.gov, [01/04/21](#)]

The U.S. Chamber Issued A Key Vote Alert Against The For The People Act’s Senate Companion, S.1. [U.S. Chamber of Commerce, [04/13/21](#)]

The U.S. Chamber Didn’t Issue Any Press Releases About Election Laws As Texas Republicans “Hurtled” To Pass SB 7 And As Republicans In 14 States Enacted 22 Voter Restriction Laws After The 2020 Election—And The Chamber Only Used Its “Chamber On The Record” Blog To Defend Its Opposition To *The For The People Act*.

As Texas Lawmakers “Hurtled” To Pass SB 7 As Part Of A Wave Of Republican Voter Restrictions In 14 States, The U.S. Chamber Of Commerce Didn’t Issue Any Press Releases On Election Laws And Only Used Its “Chamber On The Record” Outlet To Repeatedly Defend Its Opposition To The For The People Act.

The U.S. Chamber Did Not Issue Any Press Releases About Election Laws Since The November 2020 Election. [U.S. Chamber of Commerce, accessed [06/01/21](#)]

The U.S. Chamber’s Only “Chamber On The Record” Articles About Election Laws Since The 2020 Election Were About Why It Opposed The For The People Act.



[U.S. Chamber of Commerce, accessed [06/01/21](#)]

- **The Article Explained Why The U.S. Chamber Opposed What It Called “‘The Disingenuously Named The 'For The People Act.'”** “As a long-time defender of free speech, the Chamber has opposed bills like H.R.1/S.1, the disingenuously named the 'For The People Act,' that would limit fundamental First Amendment rights. In a letter to Senators earlier this month, we explained: [...]” [U.S. Chamber of Commerce, [04/27/21](#)]



CNN Creates False Narrative about 'Rift' Between Chamber and GOP

The Chamber advocates for its members by working with members of both parties to advance policies that are good for job creators.

FREE SPEECH

[U.S. Chamber of Commerce, accessed [06/01/21](#)]

- **The Article Claimed The U.S. Chamber Opposed The For The People Act As A “Long-Time Defender Of Free Speech.”** “Misleading: CNN has to maintain the narrative that the Chamber is ‘seeking to get back on the same page as the GOP.’ Being a long-time defender of free speech, the Chamber has long opposed H.R. 1/S. 1, the election law bill CNN notes.” [U.S. Chamber of Commerce, [04/20/21](#)]

Texas Republican Lawmakers “Hurtled” To Advance SB 7 In The Last Week Of May 2021 Before State Democrats Blocked The Bill On May 30, 2021. “In the course of several hours Saturday and early Sunday, Senate Republicans hurtled to move forward on a sweeping voting bill negotiated behind closed doors, where it doubled in length and grew to include voting law changes that weren’t previously considered. Over Democrats’ objections, they suspended the chamber’s own rules to narrow the window lawmakers had to review the new massive piece of legislation before giving it final approval ahead of Monday’s end to the legislative session. This culminated in an overnight debate and party line vote early Sunday to sign off on a raft of new voting restrictions and changes to elections — and get it one step closer to the governor’s desk.” [The Texas Tribune, [05/30/21](#)]

- **May 30, 2021: Democratic State Lawmakers Defeated SB 7 By Staging A Walkout And Denying Republicans The Quorum They Needed To Pass The Bill In Time.** “Texas Democrats who defeated a Republican effort to pass a suite of new voting restrictions with a dramatic late-night walkout from the state House chamber on Sunday have a message for President Biden and his allies in Congress: If we can protect voting rights, you can, too. The surprise move by roughly 60 Democratic lawmakers headed off the expected passage of S.B. 7, a voting measure that would have been one of the most stringent in the nation, by denying Republicans a required quorum and forcing them to abruptly adjourn without taking a vote.” [The Washington Post, [05/31/21](#)]

As Of May 28, 2020, 14 States Enacted 22 Voting Restrictions Since The 2020 Election As “Part Of A National Republican Effort.” “State lawmakers have enacted nearly two dozen laws since the 2020 election that restrict ballot access, according to a new tally by the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law. These 22 laws in 14 states mark a new record for restrictive voting laws since 2011, when the Brennan Center recorded 19 laws enacted in 14 state legislatures. Most of the new laws make it harder to vote absentee and by mail, after a record number of Americans voted by mail in November. [...] The legislative push is part of a national Republican effort to restrict access to the ballot box following record turnout in the 2020 election. Republicans currently control both chambers of 30 state legislatures, including in Texas, Georgia and Arizona.” [CNN, [05/28/21](#)]

Even As The U.S. Chamber Remained Silent About SB 7, Two Major Business Coalitions Stood Up Against Texas’ Restrictions, With One Calling The Bill “Voter Suppression.”

As The U.S. Chamber Remained Silent About SB 7 And Other States' Voting Restrictions, Two Major Business Coalitions Issued Letters Demanding Expanded Voting Access, With One Calling SB 7 "Voter Suppression."

Early May 2021: In Response To Texas' Voter Suppression Efforts, Two Coalitions Of Companies And Executives Issued Letters Demanding Expanded Voting Access "After Weeks Of Relative Silence From The Business Community." "Two broad coalitions of companies and executives released letters on Tuesday calling for expanded voting access in Texas, wading into the contentious debate over Republican legislators' proposed new restrictions on balloting after weeks of relative silence from the business community in the state." [The New York Times, [05/04/21](#)]

One Coalition—including Major Corporations Like HP And Unilever, As Well As Local Chambers Of Commerce—Opposed "Any Changes That Would Restrict Eligible Voters' Access To The Ballot." "One letter comes from a group of large corporations, including HP, Microsoft, Unilever, Salesforce, Patagonia and Sodexo, as well as local companies and chambers of commerce, and represents the first major coordinated effort among businesses in Texas to take action against the voting proposals. The letter, under the banner of a new group called Fair Elections Texas, stops short of criticizing the two voting bills that are now advancing through the state's Republican-controlled Legislature, but opposes 'any changes that would restrict eligible voters' access to the ballot.'" [The New York Times, [05/04/21](#)]

The Other Coalition, Consisting Of Over 100 Houston Business Executives, Directly Criticized SB 7 As "Voter Suppression." "A separate letter, also released on Tuesday and signed by more than 100 Houston executives, goes further. It directly criticizes the proposed legislation and equates the efforts with 'voter suppression.'" [The New York Times, [05/04/21](#)]