Legislators can increase election security without restricting voter access.

Instead of unnecessary harmful tactics that will intimidate voters and usurp the authority of local elected officials, lawmakers should focus on practical, proactive approaches. Ballot tracking; opportunity to cure; automatic voter registration; and longer record retention are among the options available to protect the sanctity of the ballot through increased accuracy and access.

★ Local elected officials need the flexibility to help ensure eligible voters can legally participate in elections. Texas already has proven, tested safeguards in place to protect against mail-ballot fraud. Proposed bills impose unneeded restrictions on local officials trying to help eligible citizens vote by mail.

★ It is unnecessary and harmful to impose burdensome new requirements on Texans with disabilities who are trying to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

★ Local leaders should have the flexibility to determine the appropriate number of voting machines at a countywide voting site. The state does not need to impose new mandates on the number of voting machines at each site and take away the authority of local officials to distribute voting machines as they see fit.

★ Counties need flexibility to set early-voting hours and locations that work for their communities, as afforded by existing safeguards against fraud and abuse.

★ Proposed legislation would jeopardize long-accepted and legal vote-canvassing practices by imposing an overly broad definition of "ballot harvesting." Texas can prevent illegal ballot harvesting without obstructing legal and widely accepted get-out-the-vote efforts.

★ Judges should maintain the authority to remove poll "watchers" who seek to intimidate citizens practicing their constitutional right to vote. Without proper protections in place, the widespread presence of poll watchers weakens ballot security.

★ Proposed legislation expands the state’s power over the maintenance of local voting lists and creates new burdens on local election administrators, despite the absence of evidence that existing list-maintenance practices are vulnerable to fraud.

★ Locally elected commissioners’ courts should maintain their long-held authority to accept donations of labor, services, and property that help them administer lawful, secure elections.