



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

COMMITTEES:
HOMELAND SECURITY
HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

September 24, 2026

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Office of the Texas Governor
1100 Congress Ave.
Austin, TX 78701

The Honorable Robert Howden
Office of the Texas Secretary of State
1019 Brazos St.
Austin, TX 78701

The Honorable Freeman Martin
Texas Department of Public Safety
5805 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78752

Dear Governor Abbott, Secretary Howden, and Director Martin,

As the U.S. Representative for Texas' 32nd Congressional District and a member of the Committee on House Administration's Subcommittee on Elections, I write to seek clarity on the Texas Department of Public Safety's (DPS) failure to process voter registration applications. As the Texas Secretary of State has publicly documented the use of federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) grants for "the state to purchase and maintain a compliant electronic voter registration database," Congress, and specifically the Committee on House Administration, has clear oversight authority on this matter.¹

According to DPS public testimony, from 2020 to 2024, nearly 6 million Texans used the online DPS portal to register to vote. DPS's failure to transmit these applications to county officials could prevent tens of thousands of eligible voters from casting a ballot in upcoming Midterm elections. While Secretary Howden's office has said affected voters can cast provisional ballots, this solution is wholly insufficient, especially given repeated attempts to restrict or complicate voting across Texas over the past several months.² After spontaneous mid-decade redistricting, attempts at a myriad of voter identification and system changes at the state and local level, and the back-and-forth changes to polling sites in Dallas County, voters are increasingly concerned about whether they will be turned away at the polls or whether their vote will even count.

¹ Help America Vote Act (HAVA). https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/hava/hava_act.shtml

² <https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2026/09/23/dps-error-backlogged-voter-registration-applications-county-election-officials/>

This week, Travis County has reported 32,000 applications sent to their elections office overnight; Bexar County reported 45,000 backlogged applications; Collin County reported 40,000; Dallas County also reported 40,000, and other counties across the state are reporting thousands more.³ The administrative burden on our county officials to process these documents in under two weeks is unacceptable for small and large counties alike. Additionally, I am deeply concerned by reporting from the Dallas Morning News that the backlogged applications date back to October 2025, meaning thousands of voters may have been prevented from casting ballots in the March primary and other local elections across the state.⁴

At a time when voter confidence is already fragile, and when election administrators are working diligently to prepare for one of the busiest periods in the election calendar, this failure threatens to undermine the integrity of Texas's electoral process. As the October 5th deadline for voter registration approaches, I believe the state should conduct a thorough investigation, take quick action to process applications, and extend the registration deadline to accommodate. Please respond to this letter in a timely manner with the actions you are taking to address this issue and provide answers to the following questions.

1. How many voters across Texas have been affected and are part of this backlog?
2. Besides allowing provisional ballots, what steps has each of your offices taken to reassure voters that their ballot will be counted?
3. Is any state agency or department providing written or verbal notice to voters so they can independently verify their registration?
 - a. Will you direct state agencies to ensure that eligible voters affected by the DPS error receive clear information about their registration status and voting options?
 - b. Are state or federal resources available to hire staff to sort through these applications?
4. What exactly caused the DPS system failure that prevented voter registration applications from being transmitted to county election officials?
5. What information was missing from the affected records that prevented transmission?
6. Why did it take until September 2026 for the issue to be identified, given that some affected applications date back to October 2025?
7. Has DPS conducted, or will it conduct, an independent review of the failure?
8. Will DPS provide Congress, the Texas legislature, and the public with a written report identifying the cause, duration, number of affected voters, and corrective actions?
9. What is DPS doing to ensure that every affected application is transmitted to the appropriate county before the October 5 registration deadline?
10. What safeguards are now in place to ensure that no additional voter registration applications are lost, delayed, or improperly altered?

³<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2026/09/23/dps-error-backlogged-voter-registration-applications-county-election-officials/>

⁴ <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/elections/article/voter-registration-texas-backlog-22446020.php>

11. Will DPS or the State provide counties with additional personnel, technical assistance, or funding to process the backlog?

a. Will the state reimburse counties for overtime, temporary employees, technology, and other costs associated with processing this backlog?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie E. Johnson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Julie E. Johnson
Member of Congress

CC: Texas Association of County Election Officials