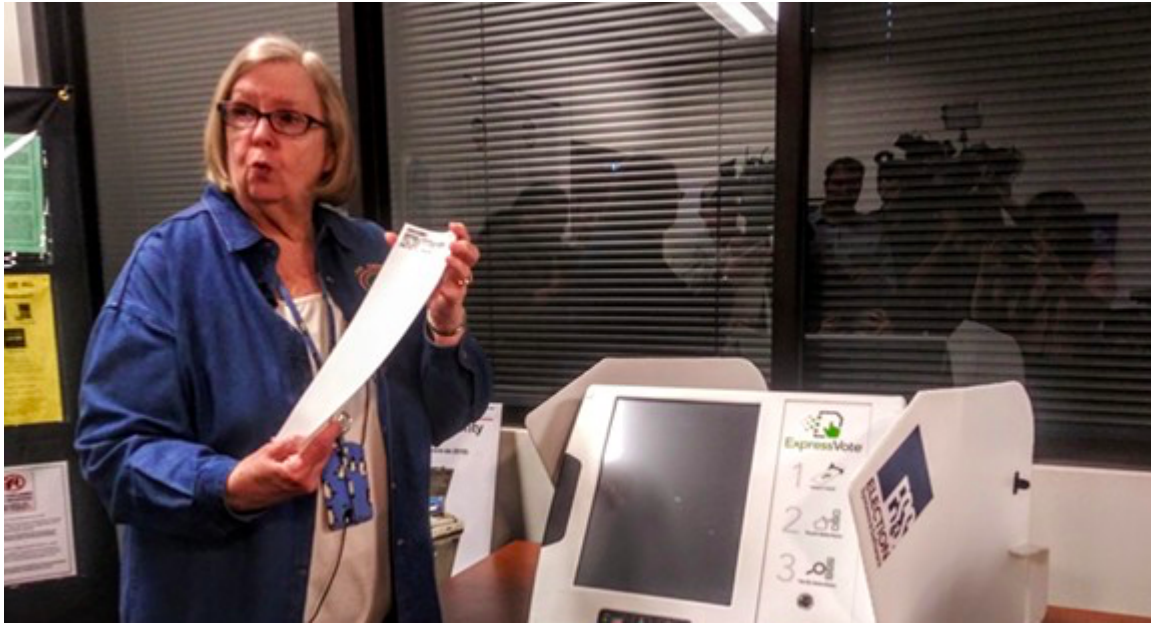


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## Texas rejecting hundreds of vote-by-mail applications under restrictive GOP-backed law



- Rhyma Castillo
- Bexar County Elections Administrator Jacque Callanen demonstrates a voting machine.

Texas election officials have rejected hundreds of mail-in ballot applications ahead of the March 1 primary as they follow new procedures in the state's restrictive Republican-backed voting law, [Reuters reports](#).

"My friends, this is what voter suppression looks like," Travis County Clerk Dana DeBeauvoir said at a Tuesday news conference after her office was forced to invalidate some 300 applications because of stricter and potentially confusing ID requirements.

Closer to home, Bexar County officials were forced to reject 300 of the 1,200 applications they handled through last week, Elections Administrator Jacque Callanen told Reuters. In four out of five cases, those rejections came down to the new ID requirements.

Meanwhile, Harris County rejected 409 out of 1,373 applications it received as of last Friday due to the ID concerns, according to officials there.

At issue is language in the new law requiring voters who apply for mail-in ballots to provide either a driver's license or Social Security number that matches the number they gave when first registering to vote.

Since many voters have been on the state's rolls for years or even decades, many can't remember which of the two numbers they originally provided, voting-rights advocates argue. What's more, the state

Texas rejecting hundreds of vote-by-mail applications under restrictive GOP-backed law of the two numbers they originally provided, voting-rights advocates argue. What's more, the state offers no simple way for them to check.

Bexar County's Callanen told Reuters the new law is also making it harder for voters by barring residents from obtaining applications to give to other people, including their own relatives and spouses. Under the new rules, spouses must request theirs separately.

"It's sort of thwarting us at every turn," she said.

The new law, [championed by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott](#), was one of several passed in GOP-controlled states in the wake of former President Donald Trump's [repeated lies](#) that deep-rooted fraud cost him the 2020 election. Abbott and other backers argued the new restrictions were necessary to protect "election integrity."

Republicans in the U.S. Senate have [blocked voting-rights legislation](#) that would halt provisions in the Texas law. Even so, the U.S. Justice Department [has sued the Lone Star State](#) over the measure, saying the new restrictions are meant to keep Blacks, Latinos and others likely to cast Democratic ballots away from the polls.

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