Texas House approves GOP voting restrictions

Eric Bradner
Dianne Gallagher

The Texas House has approved a raft of new voting restrictions Friday, as the Republican-controlled chamber seeks to hold on to power in a rapidly changing state that has once again become deeply divided along partisan lines.

The House voted 80-41 to approve Senate Bill 1. It now moves back to the state Senate to iron out minor differences with the House version of the bill before it heads to the desk of Republican Gov. Greg Abbott, whose strong arm tactics have helped shape the legislation.

Speaker of the House Dade Phelan, R-Orange, talks with Rep. Tori Rose, R-D- batching Springs, as the House debates the bill in Austin, Texas, on Friday, Aug. 27, 2021.

Many of SB 1 targets the fast-growing minority communities in the state, as well as those with large numbers of residents who are not white.

The bill would prohibit, because "it creates a window of 6 a.m.

To 10 p.m. in which counties are allowed to conduct early voting.

It prohibits local elections officials from sending unsolicited applications to vote by mail, including to voters over the age of 65 who are allowed to cast mail-in ballots.

Texas House Democrats have been fighting for months to halt the GOP’s bill. In the waning days of the legislative session in May, House Democrats bolted from the Capitol in Austin to block the chamber from having a quorum necessary to conduct business – effectively running out the clock and blocking the bills passage.

Democrats spent weeks in Washington organizing a pressure campaign to persuade members of Congress to pass federal voting rights protections, which remain stalled on Capitol Hill.

In a six-week exodus ended after Abbott called a special session, these House Democrats fled to Washington, D.C. to make the case for federal protections to honor their colleagues who helped voters, including those with disabilities, to cast their ballots.

The Republican bill authors have repeatedly said the legislation is designed to make it "easier to vote, harder to cheat." There is no evidence of widespread voter fraud in Texas.

CNN

Barry Elementary honors teacher

Commodore John Barry Elementary School in West Philadelphia hosted a mural dedication ceremony Friday during its 2021 Open House to honor a teacher who lost her life to cancer last December. The Barry Elementary community celebrated the life of digital literacy teacher Mark Maples, who was known for his commitment to students and love for digital learning. 

A ceremony to unveil a mural at Commodore Barry Elementary School at 550 Race St. drew many from the community to honor digital literacy teacher Mark Maples in West Philadelphia.

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