



*Via email to [Secretary@sos.texas.gov](mailto:Secretary@sos.texas.gov); [LWolf@sos.texas.gov](mailto:LWolf@sos.texas.gov); and [APierce@sos.texas.gov](mailto:APierce@sos.texas.gov)*

August 11, 2016

The Honorable Carlos H. Cascos  
Secretary of State  
Executive Division, Office of the Secretary of State  
P.O. Box 12697  
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Secretary Cascos:

We are writing to follow up on our call with members of your staff on July 18, 2016 concerning compliance with Texas's high school voter registration law.<sup>1</sup> As you know, the Texas Civil Rights Project ("TCRP") has been studying compliance with the state's high school voter registration law for nearly three years, producing detailed reports outlining widespread non-compliance and ignorance of the statute, and communicating those findings to your office. The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law ("Lawyers' Committee") began collaborating with TCRP on this issue this year.

We first held an in person meeting with you and your staff on June 2, 2016 to discuss ways to better implement and promote the statute. In our recent follow up call with your staff, we discussed several items, including (1) simplifying the way in which the law is described to high school principals; (2) the development of a specific timeline for communicating the details of the high school voter registration law with principals ahead of the October 11, 2016 voter registration deadline (including scheduling a number of follow up emails and reminders as the semester unfolds); and (3) development of a communications strategy to promote this effort publicly.

As for #1 above, the State was amenable to sharing the initial notice with our organizations for input and feedback prior to sending it to principals. We would appreciate that opportunity and would respond expeditiously. Please confirm when your office would be able to share that with us. As we discussed, TCRP is also creating its own supplementary guide for principals pursuant to this law and will share that guide with your office for feedback as well.

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<sup>1</sup> The following individuals participated in the phone call: Lindsey Wolf, General Counsel, Secretary of State's Office; Alicia Pierce, Communications Director, Secretary of State's Office; Mimi Marziani, Executive Director, Texas Civil Rights Project; Brendan Downes, Associate Counsel, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; Antonio Pelt, Director of Civic Engagement, Texas Organizing Project; DeShawn Bunton, Texas Organizing Project; and Andy Dewey, Houston Federation of Teachers.

As for #2, we propose the following timeline for communications with high school principals this semester:

- **Tuesday, August 30** – Initial notice goes out to principals.
- **Tuesday, September 6** – Reminder goes out to principals about both requesting voter registration applications (if they have not done so) and administering the actual registration process as the deadline approaches.
- **Tuesday, September 13** – As we discussed, TCRP and the Lawyers’ Committee will submit an open records request to your office requesting the list of high schools that have, and have not, requested voter registration applications (complete with the number of applications requested per school for those that have done so and contact information for all schools). The two organizations will then work with partners to reach out to the remaining schools and encourage them to submit timely requests.
- **Tuesday, September 27** - Reminder goes out to high school principals that the voter registration deadline is in two week’s time, encouraging principals to complete their efforts expeditiously.
- **Tuesday, October 4** – Final reminder goes out to high school principals that the voter registration deadline is in one week’s time, encouraging principals to complete their efforts expeditiously.
- **Wednesday, October 12** – TCRP and the Lawyers’ Committee will submit an open records request to your office requesting updated lists and numbers as described above.

Please let us know if your office is amenable to this timeline. We strongly believe that a steady stream of communication from your office will maximize the effectiveness of the law. We also hope that our supplementary efforts bolster compliance rates and the number of applications submitted.

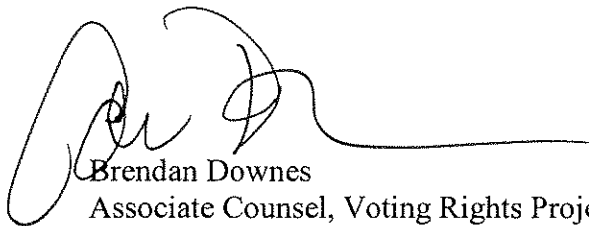
As for #3, your office was amenable to issuing a press statement at the outset of the semester announcing the effort to promote and encourage compliance with the law. Please let us know if your office will be issuing that statement and, if so, when it would be issued. We would, of course, welcome such a statement and would offer supportive quotes from our organizations.

We respectfully request a response to the three items above by **Wednesday, August 17**. We look forward to continuing our partnership as the voter registration deadline approaches.

Sincerely,



Mimi Marziani  
Executive Director, Texas Civil Rights Project



Brendan Downes  
Associate Counsel, Voting Rights Project  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

cc: Keith Ingram, Director, Elections Division, Office of the Secretary of State  
Kristen Clarke, President and Executive Director, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights  
Under Law  
Antonio Pelt, Director of Civic Engagement, Texas Organizing Project;  
Andy Dewey, Houston Federation of Teachers