

From:
To:
Subject: What you can do this week to help our state - Indivisible TX Lege Actions
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2020 8:19:49 PM

Hi y'all,

Hope everyone's been able to stay safe and healthy so far this year. And hopefully you've been able to fit in some activism too! If anything, this coronavirus is really shining a light on how important our local and state governments are in so many aspects of our lives. Here are some actions you can take this week to move progress forward in Texas!

1. Urge state officials to prevent evictions in Texas

The Texas Supreme Court has put a moratorium on evictions through May 18. With little possibility that employment will be even close to recovering by then, we need to urge our elected officials: State Supreme Court Members, the Governor (512-463-2000), and your State Rep and State Senator to extend the moratorium on evictions until there is some semblance of normalcy in the state's unemployment numbers.

For more: [Texas Tribune: Texas Halted Evictions, For Now](#)

Read: [Denton Record Chronicle: Renters, Landlords Navigate Payments and Protections Amid the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)

Say: "Hi, I'm a constituent of _____ and I'm calling to urge them to extend the moratorium on evictions in Texas until the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us and unemployment levels in the state have rebounded to more acceptable levels. In addition, the moratorium should include a waiver for all late fees, so we can prevent Texans from getting into a financial hole that they'll never be able to recover from. My zip code is _____. Thank you."

2. Call Governor Abbott's office at 512-463-2000 to increase access to COVID-19 testing and contact tracing

While the state is generally moving in the right direction on testing and contact tracing, we are still woefully behind where we need to be. To safely and responsibly reopen the state, most experts agree that testing and contact tracing are two vital elements to stop the spread.

For more: [Vox.com: Contact Tracing Explained](#)

Read: [ReformAustin.org: Does Texas Have Enough Testing and Contact Tracing Capability?](#)

Say: "Hi, I'm a constituent of Governor Abbot and I'm calling to urge him to direct more funds to increase both testing for and contact tracing of COVID-19. According to immunology and infectious disease efforts, these are the only proven methods to safely reopen our state without putting lives in danger and overcrowding our emergency rooms. Without these important measures, the Texas economy will take an even bigger hit that we've already seen. My zip code

is _____. Thank you."

3. RSVP to write letters to Texas voters with Swing Left on May 23!

A lot of our usual face to face get out the vote efforts have been put on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic. Swing Left has organized a virtual letter writing party to encourage Texans to get out and vote in November, either in person or by mail. Hope you're able to join and help out, from the comfort of your own home!

RSVP: [Swing Left's Texas Virtual Letter Writing Party - 5/23 4-6pm CST](#)

4. Ask at least 5 friends to fill out their Census form if they haven't yet, and ask each of them to ask 5 more friends

Texas' Census response rate has gone up quite a bit, but we're still barely at the 50% response mark. Please reach out to at least 5 of your friends and check in with them to see if they've filled out their Census form, and if not, if they have any questions on how to do that. Then, ask each of your 5 friends if they can commit to asking 5 more people. Keep the chain going and we can make a real difference in getting Texans properly counted!

For more: indivisibletxlege.org: [The Census](#)

Response Rates so far: [Hard to Count Maps](#)

The official website: my2020census.gov

5. Call Governor Abbott at 512-462-2000, your State Rep and Senator and urge them to protect Public Education Funding

Due to the statewide revenue hit, public education funding will likely be on the chopping block in the 2020 session. At the same time, schools will need added support to respond to the "new normal" of public ed in the time of the coronavirus. The legislature can and should use the Rainy Day fund as well as cutting corporate tax exemptions in order to protect public education for Texas children.

For more: [Houston Chronicle: Texas Schools Could Feel Ill Effects on Budgets Next Year](#)

Say: "Hi, I'm a constituent of _____. I'm calling to urge them to protect public education funding in the next state budget. While the coronavirus pandemic will likely reduce state revenue, cutting education funding will prevent most school districts from aiding and educating most students impacted by the recession and pandemic. I urge you to honor the commitments made in the 2019 legislative session. The Rainy Day fund can be used to help close the revenue gap, and you can close corporate tax exemptions to address the upcoming budget shortfall. My zip code is _____. Thank you."

6. Learn more about COVID-19 rates near you

It can tough to figure out what's best for you and your family, especially given the varying rates of COVID-19 across the state. We've tried to compile some information to help you understand your best plan of action. Please stay safe and stay at home when you can!

Data Explainer: erinbromage.com: [The Risks - Know them - Avoid Them](#)
[Texas Coronavirus Dashboard](#)

Download the data: [Texas Department of State Health Services: Data Sets](#)

Houston area trend: tmc.edu: [COVID-19 Case Growth Trend](#)

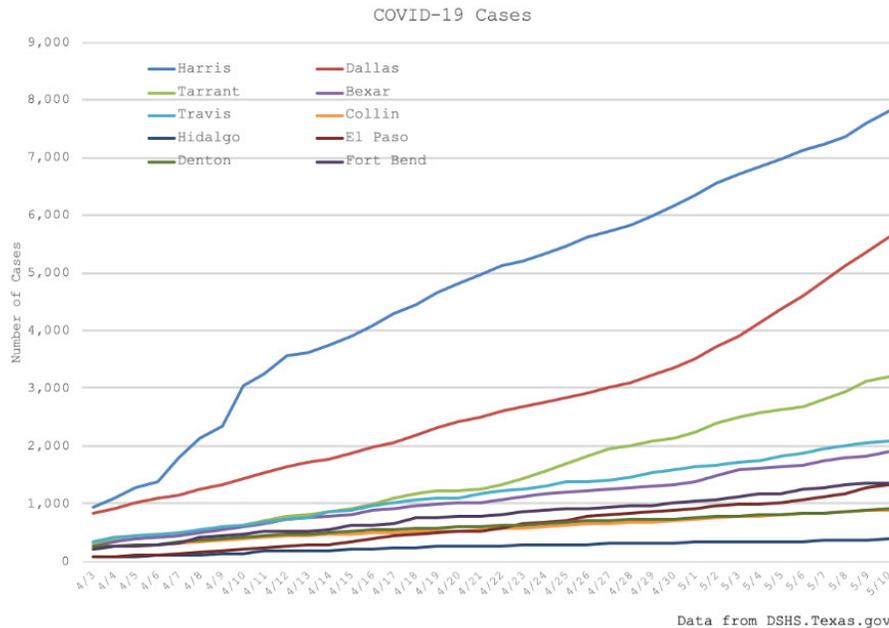
Austin area trends: traviscountytexas.gov: [COVID-19 Information](#)

Dallas/Fort Worth area trends: [Dallas County Updates and Information](#)

Tarrant County trends: [Tarrant County Epidemic Curve](#)

Bexar County trends: expressnews.com: [Coronavirus Map](#)

And here's a trend I made from the DSHS Data Set:



That's it for this week. Keep up the good work and stay safe!

Much love,
Marieke
Indivisible TX Lege



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