

From:
To:
Subject: Indivisible TX Lege Actions for the Week
Date: Monday, July 13, 2020 8:19:30 PM

Hi y'all,

Hoping you've all been able to keep yourselves and your families safe and healthy, and that you're getting access to quality and affordable medical care if you need it. The Coronavirus pandemic is shining a spotlight on how lacking our state government is when it comes to providing adequate healthcare to Texans. Let's make sure we translate that into pressure on our elected leaders to do better, or face the consequences at the ballot box.

1. Vote!

Tomorrow is the last day to vote in the primary runoff in Texas. Check your county clerk's website to see if they have any special provisions set up to keep you safe. Some counties are offering curbside voting, additional PPE, and adjusted hours. Remember, whoever wins the primary runoff will be one of your options on the November ballot, so this vote matters! And don't forget to mask-up and pack hand sanitizer.

Who's on the ballot? [Texas Tribune - Your Texas 2020 July Runoff Ballot](#)

TX Lege races in the runoff include:

- *Democratic Railroad Commissioner Candidates*
- *State Board of Education Candidates*
- *Texas Senate District 19 (may be flippable in the general)*
- *Texas Senate District 27 - where anti-abortion Democrat Eddie Lucio Jr will face challenger Sara Stapleton Barrera*

NOTE: this election includes a [Special Election to fill Senate District 14](#)

2. Call Governor Abbott at 512-463-2000 and push him to do more to slow the spread of COVID-19 in Texas

Our governor has started to change his messaging on COVID-19, thankfully, but he still has room to grow and needs to take further action to slow the rampant spread of the virus in our state.

For more: [Texas Tribune: Greg Abbott Warns of Potential Lockdown](#)

Say: "Hi, I'm a constituent of Governor Abbott's. I'm calling today to applaud his recent actions on requiring masks around the state, and respectfully encourage him to take more action to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus in our state. Many of our hospitals are at or beyond capacity already, and our economy will be devastated if we continue to see high infection rates. The current lack of state-

wide responsibility is nullifying the shutdowns we had just a few months ago. Stop the virus now by issuing a mandatory stay at home order. That is the only way we'll get past this spike in cases. My zip code is ____."

3. Call Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath and tell him that requiring students and teachers back into the classroom is dangerous

In order for schools to maintain state funding, Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath is requiring them to reopen in August - regardless of the number of active coronavirus cases in a given district. Meanwhile, TEA staff continues to work remotely for their safety. Why the double standard? Our teachers and children are not guinea pigs, nor are they martyrs. We need to push our state leaders to do the right thing.

For more: [Houston Chronicle - TEA: Public Schools Must Reopen](#)

Read: [WLRN: Pediatricians Walk Back Support of In-Person School](#)

Call or email: 512-463-8985 commissioner@tea.texas.gov

Say: "Hi, I'm a constituent living in Texas, and I'm calling to share my shock at Commissioner Morath's requirement for schools to open in August. What data is he using to make that a requirement? What scientific guidance is he following, and what precautions is he funding to help schools adequately prepare for in-person classes? Is he willing to put our teachers' and children's lives at risk? If he feels like it's safe to have hundreds of people in a single building, why aren't TEA staffers required to work in their offices? I find it disgusting that Mike is using a pandemic and health crisis to play party politics. Please encourage him to change course and protect our kids and teachers. My zip code is ____."

Sign: [Change.org: Tell the TEA to Allow Students and Teachers to Work from Home](#)

4. Contact your State Rep, the Health and Human Services Commission, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor to urge them not to cut healthcare funding in the middle of a pandemic

Most common logic would suggest that more healthcare funding is needed during a pandemic, not less. The state is struggling to cut spending in the current economic climate. Send a strong message that healthcare funding is not up for debate.

Read: [Austin American Statesman: Proposal Cuts \\$130M from Texas Health Agency](#)

Say: "Hi, I'm a constituent of _____. I'm calling today to urge them to reject a proposal to cut \$130 Million in funding for child abuse protections, women's health, and Texans with disabilities. We're in the middle of a health crisis in our state. We should be prioritizing the health and welfare of Texans first and foremost by adding to healthcare funding, not reducing it. Our neighbors in [Oklahoma recently expanded Medicaid](#). Texas should do that too! Let's start taking care of our neighbors instead of leaving them to die. My zip code is _____."

Call: Governor Greg Abbot 512-463-2000

Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick 512-463-0001
Texas Health and Human Services Commission 512-424-5000

5. Enjoy this excellent play about the late Governor, Ann Richards

We all need some stress relief these days. Escape our current reality for an hour or two, and watch Ann, a play that looks at larger than life Ann Richards. You may notice some common themes for the challenges our state faces today!

Watch: [PBS Great Performances: Ann](#)

Don't forget to take some time to rest and take care of yourselves. We have a lot of work to do between now and November, and then the 2021 legislative session will be right around the corner!

Much love,
Marieke
Indivisible TX Lege

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