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*Please Join*

## **PROMOTE TEXAS VOTING**

### **A Nonpartisan Coalition Committed to Improving Voter Participation in Texas**

For the last decade, Texas has been among the states with the lowest voter turnout and for the 2010 General Election had the lowest turnout of any state at 32.3%. Voter registration in Texas also lags national averages.

All sides fear that confusion about changes in primary election dates and redistricting will decrease voter turnout. The Texas Association of Counties said it succinctly: “Voter confusion leads to voter disenfranchisement.” Poorly understood voter photo ID requirements which still require federal approval may further impede voter participation. With the lowest voter turnout of any state in 2010, Texas simply can’t afford a decrease in voter participation in 2012.

A Texas-sized solution is needed to address this Texas-sized problem. The nonpartisan League of Women Voters-Texas (LWV-TX), which has encouraged all those eligible to vote since women gained voting rights, is spearheading formation of a coalition of diverse partners committed to efforts to Promote Texas Voting (PTXV). Organizations, both nonprofit and for profit, and individuals are invited to join the nonpartisan endeavor. Coalition efforts to improve voter participation will build on the factors affecting voter registration and turnout: knowing what is at stake on the ballot, understanding what to expect at the polls, and personal encouragement particularly from family and friends and in a context where voting is a cultural tradition.

### **PTXV Coalition Goals and Actions**

The goals of the PTXV campaign are as follows:

- To improve voter registration of all groups including those currently underrepresented on voter registration lists;
- To significantly increase voter turnout;
- To ensure that voting-eligible individuals have access to accurate, nonpartisan information about voter registration, election procedures including voter identification requirements, and what is on the ballot; and
- To work toward a culture in Texas that encourages voting as important to representative democracy and the future of our state.

While LWV-TX will serve as the point organization for administrative and other purposes, this is not a LWV-TX campaign but a statewide collaborative effort of many partners who share the PTXV goals. Many nonpartisan organizations as well as individuals in Texas agree with concerns for voter participation and PTXV goals. By collaborating as part of PTXV, these groups will be able to share information, expertise, and strategies and avoid duplicating efforts.

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Together PTXV partners have a variety of resources and outreach capabilities that can Promote Texas Voting. Some PTXV partners are already experienced in conducting voter registration and turnout campaigns, to the extent their resources allow. Other PTXV partners may be membership organizations best positioned to provide members with the encouragement and information needed to register and vote from a trusted source. Diverse actions of PTXV partners each working in ways appropriate to their organization will move Texas toward a culture that values and encourages voter participation.

The PTXV project will involve an extensive marketing campaign to ensure that every voting-age Texan connected to any communication source is aware of why it is important to vote. Of course, the marketing efforts will also address how to register, how to vote, and how to become educated about specific elections. PTXV will work with the marketing experts to ensure effective messaging for varied markets, populations, and media, including social media.

A PTXV website will be an important source of visibility for the importance of voting, nonpartisan information on voter registration and elections, and the coalition effort.

### **PTXV Structure and Organization**

LWV-Texas Education Fund (LWV-TEF) will serve as lead organization for Promote Texas Voting. As such it will be responsible for administration, oversight and maintenance of the PTXV website (with considerable partner input), coordination of fund-raising activities, and development of partner relations. The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, NAACP (Texas), Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, and Texas State Teachers Association together with LWV-TEF form the initial steering committee which will review and facilitate partnerships, fundraising, tactics and strategy.

PTXV will enlist as many partner organizations as possible, including nonprofits, employers, media, individuals, etc. Partner membership will be open to individuals, groups, and organizations, both nonprofit and for-profit. However, to insure that the coalition remains nonpartisan, individuals and groups active in partisan politics are not eligible to become PTXV partners, including candidates running for elected office, political parties, and associated organizations/groups.

### **Become a Partner in PTXV or Request Additional Information**

Please join us in nonpartisan efforts to increase voter participation! Contact Julie Oliver, [joliver@lwvtexas.org](mailto:joliver@lwvtexas.org) or 512-791-3397, to become a partner in PTXV, ask questions, or receive additional information.

Membership is available at no cost although contributions and sponsorships to support activities of the coalition are welcome.