



**Testimony on HB 1725,  
Proposed Legislation relating to prohibiting in-person delivery of ballots by mail.  
By: Emily Eby, Staff Attorney, Texas Civil Rights Project  
Texas House Elections Committee, March 18, 2021**

Good morning Chair Cain, Vice Chair González, and Members of the House Elections Committee,

I am here to testify against HB 1725 because it harms Texas voters.

I've seen in-person drop-off work for voters. TCRP participates in the nonpartisan Texas Election Protection Coalition, which operates a hotline for Texas voters. Last fall, the Coalition received 382 calls from voters who had sent in a timely absentee ballot application, but had still not received a ballot after a significant amount of time. It was the number one issue we saw with absentee ballots. Ballots are often slow in getting to voters because of backlogs in county election offices or because of delays in the Post Office. In-person drop-off of mail ballots is a crucial backstop for voters who receive their ballots a day or two before the election and cannot rely on the Post Office to deliver their marked ballot back to the county in time. The only way they can be sure is to drop it off themselves. This bill would all but ensure that absentee voters can do everything right and still not get counted, punishing the voters for the failures of governmental agencies.

This in-person drop-off process is secure. All voters who drop off an absentee ballot have to sign a poll roster and show ID. These ballots then go through the standard signature verification process. Fraud is extremely unlikely to arise here.

This bill does not distribute harm evenly. The two groups most likely to drop off mail ballots in person are people with disabilities and the elderly. HB 1725 targets those groups. This bill makes it more likely that a young person's vote counts when an older person's does not. This bill makes it more likely that a person without disabilities gets a say, while a person with disabilities doesn't. For these reasons, we encourage the Committee not to approve the bill as currently drafted. Thank you.