

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS: TEXAS VOTER REGISTRATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OPTIONS

COMPLETE OVERVIEW: TEXAS VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Federal and State Mandates

The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) requires states to develop and implement a single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list. Texas created the Texas Election Administration Management (TEAM) system in the early 2000s to meet this requirement, with the original system built by IBM with software from Hart InterCivic.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

Source: <https://www.govtech.com/archive/texas-election-management-system.html>

Cause of America
Critical Requirement for ALL Counties: Even counties that use software from one of two state-approved private vendors to manage their voter rolls are required by state law to sync their data with TEAM daily, and have to use TEAM to verify a voter's identity and their eligibility to cast a ballot.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

CURRENT PRIVATE VENDOR OPTIONS (As of October 2025)

Option 1: VR Systems

Company Profile:

VR Systems is one of two state-approved private vendors currently available to Texas counties. Current clients include Denton County (nearly 650,000 registered voters) and Tarrant County (more than 1 million registered voters).

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

Lori Gallagher, Cause of America Texas Lead Educator

Recent Adoptions:

Nueces County used Votec for voter registration until August 2025 and considered switching to TEAM, but after hearing from counterparts around the state about TEAM problems, the county's tax assessor-collector and voter registrar decided instead to contract with VR Systems.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

Vendor Position on State Oversight:

Ben Martin, chief operating officer of VR Systems, testified at a legislative hearing that private vendors could provide the detailed information the state is seeking, stating "They can just indicate when we get recertified on an annual basis that we have to provide that access and information to the state, so they can have real-time information."

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

Approval Process:

All private voter registration management software must be approved by the state before counties can use it, with the Secretary of State's Office ensuring all such private products can exchange files with TEAM.

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/03/oter-registration-texas-votec/>

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

Option 2: Votec Corporation (Vemacs Software) - HIGH RISK

Company Profile:

California-based Votec Corp. is one of only three companies approved in Texas to manage voter registration data, and has done business in the state for more than two decades. Thirty-two counties in Texas use Votec's voter registration management software, dubbed Vemacs, and the software is also used by counties in Nevada and Illinois.

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/03/oter-registration-texas-votec/>

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2024/04/03/voter-registration-software-vendor-votec-imposes-surchARGE-counties/>

CRITICAL FINANCIAL INSTABILITY (2024):

In March 2024, Votec sent a letter to its Texas clients assessing a 35% surcharge to help the company stay afloat, with election administrators in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant, Bexar, Collin, Williamson, and Hays counties all receiving requests for additional funds.

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/03/oter-registration-texas-votec/>

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2024/04/03/voter-registration-software-vendor-votec-imposes-surchage-counties/>

Surcharge Amounts:

In Dallas County, the election department received an invoice from Votec with a surcharge of \$66,000; in Collin, the surcharge was more than \$40,000; and in Hays County, it was close to \$20,000.

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/03/oter-registration-texas-votec/>

County Response:

The request had election administrators in some of the state's largest counties consulting with county attorneys about their legal options, with Hays County Elections Administrator Jennifer Doinoff stating "Any time that a vendor of one of the most important components of an election indicates financial distress, that's scary."

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2024/04/03/voter-registration-software-vendor-votec-imposes-surchage-counties/>

Current Status:

The financial instability of Votec prompted some counties to switch away, with at least two large counties (Travis and Hays) ditching their contracts with private vendors and adopting TEAM.

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

Option 3: Use TEAM Directly (State System) - CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING MAJOR PROBLEMS

Vendor and Cost:

The current TEAM system was developed by Louisiana-based vendor Civix under a \$17 million contract, paid by a mix of state funds and federal funds allocated under the 2002 Help America Vote Act. Unlike outside software vendors, the state doesn't charge counties to use TEAM.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

BUT - Hidden Costs:

Hays County has spent \$30,000 to store large image files, a feature TEAM currently doesn't offer, and Travis County has spent about \$70,000 for similar services.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2024/08/27/votec-team-voter-roll-registration-management-upgrade/>

MAJOR PROBLEMS WITH JULY 2025 ROLLOUT:

The Texas Secretary of State's Office launched a complete overhaul of TEAM in July 2025, but election officials say it is falling short of promises made to election officials and state lawmakers.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

Specific Technical Failures Reported:

Counties report that "one day it works and we can get stuff done, and the next day it doesn't and nothing gets done," with voters' previous addresses overriding new ones, voting precincts not populating correctly, and sometimes registration information not saving at all.

At least 10 county election officials interviewed by Votebeat said the issues are preventing them from completing essential tasks, with some problems getting corrected only to stop working again a few days later.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

Scale of Impact:

One San Patricio County elections administrator said her staff in the South Texas county, which has roughly 40,000 registered voters, hasn't been able to process about 600 voter registration applications initially submitted in July and August 2025.

With the October 6 deadline to register to vote in the November constitutional amendment election approaching, tens of thousands of Texans are waiting in suspense for their applications to be processed.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

County Communications:

At least two dozen messages from 15 county officials regarding concerns about TEAM were sent to an email list of county election officials between July and September 2025, with Harrison County elections administrator asking "Would it help if everyone just logged off until they fix everything?"

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

State Response:

The Secretary of State's Office has assigned 30 employees to work directly with counties to train them and answer technical questions about the new system, three times as many as in the previous TEAM update, and stated "As we are in the middle of a once-in-a-decade upgrade of the state's voter registration system, our focus right now is on supporting counties in preparation for the upcoming election. Any verdict on the new system is far too premature at the moment."

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

Counties Deterred from Switching:

The struggles county election officials are having with TEAM have deterred others from making the switch away from outside vendors, with Nueces County's tax assessor-collector and voter registrar saying "There were enough issues that I heard about from a bunch of other counties that made me think, 'Nope, we're not going to do that.'"

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: TEAM'S PERSISTENT PROBLEMS

2007 State Audit Findings

A 2007 State Auditor's Office audit found that nearly half of Texas's 254 counties reported TEAM was slow and did not allow them to "perform their jobs effectively." When asked "Does the TEAM system allow you to do your job effectively?" the answer from 106 counties was "no."

Source: <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/08-012.html>

Source: <https://www.govtech.com/archive/texas-election-management-system.html>

Data Integrity Issues:

Auditors identified nearly 50,000 voters, out of 12.4 million in the state, who were in the database but may have been ineligible—about half were possibly felons and half may have remained on the rolls after death—though auditors couldn't confirm any of the ineligibles had actually voted.

Source: <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/08-012.html>

Security Vulnerabilities:

The Secretary of State's Office did not have a process to ensure that user accounts were authorized by appropriate personnel, including administrative accounts that allow access to and control of confidential information within the TEAM system, and did not have appropriate tools necessary to adequately monitor TEAM user activity.

The Secretary of State's Office had not reviewed existing accounts for validity, nor did it have a process to do so in the future, and could not confirm whether county or contractor users were actual employees, increasing the risk of unauthorized access.

Weaknesses within data backup and change management procedures increased the risk that the Secretary of State's Office would be unable to promptly and fully recover from a disaster, and specific weaknesses within application and database security increased the risk that TEAM data was not adequately protected.

Source: <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/08-012.html>

Performance Issues:

For 6 (60 percent) of 10 benchmarks required by the Secretary of State's Office's contract for the development of the TEAM system, the TEAM system was slower than the system used previously by the Secretary of State's Office.

Source: <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/08-012.html>

Ongoing Problems Through 2024

More than a decade after the 2007 audit, election officials say TEAM remains inconsistent, with TEAM taking anywhere from minutes to hours to produce a standard report using election data, such as a list of voters in the county who have requested an absentee ballot.

These persistent flaws drove dozens of counties, including the largest ones, to maintain their own voter registration databases using private vendors and sync their data daily with TEAM as required by law.

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/03/oter-registration-texas-votec/>

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2024/04/03/voter-registration-software-vendor-votec-imposes-surchage-counties/>

PENDING LEGISLATION: Options May Be Eliminated

Senate Bill 2382 - Mandatory TEAM Usage

Senate Bill 2382, filed by Sen. Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) after many counties faced the surprise Votec surcharge in 2024, would require counties to exclusively use the state's TEAM system, eliminating the option to use private vendors.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2025/04/18/texas-voter-registration-software-team/>

Stated Rationale:

Proponents say the bill would give state officials a more detailed picture of how counties manage voter registration, with TEAM allowing close monitoring of steps that election officials take to remove ineligible voters from their lists.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

State's Position:

Christina Adkins, the elections division director for the Texas Secretary of State's office, told lawmakers that the upgraded system coming could eliminate the need for any county to use an outside vendor, stating "The vendors did a good thing for Texas because of the capacity issues that we used to have, but our system doesn't have those limitations now."

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2024/08/27/votec-team-voter-roll-registration-management-upgrade/>

County Concerns:

Frank Phillips, the elections administrator in Denton County (one of the 32 counties that currently use third-party systems), testified that relying on a single system would be risky.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

WHAT PRIVATE VENDORS PROVIDE

Private vendor software helps counties manage information including voters' addresses, voting history, registration applications, images of signatures for verification, images of mail-ballot envelopes, and other personal data.

Approval and Integration Requirements:

The Secretary of State's Office approves vendors after ensuring their systems can exchange files with TEAM, with all private voter registration management software requiring state approval before counties can use it.

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/03/oter-registration-texas-votec/>

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

SUMMARY: CURRENT SITUATION FOR COUNTY CLERKS

Available Options (October 2025):

1. VR Systems (Private Vendor - appears stable)
 - Successfully serving large counties like Tarrant and Denton
 - Counties actively switching TO this vendor from Votec and from TEAM

- Requires county funding
- Must sync with TEAM daily

2. Votec/Vemacs (Private Vendor - HIGH RISK)

- Company demonstrated financial instability in 2024
- Imposed surprise 35% surcharges
- Counties actively switching AWAY from this vendor
- Requires county funding
- Must sync with TEAM daily

3. TEAM Direct (State System - FREE but CURRENTLY BROKEN)

- Major technical failures since July 2025 rollout
- Counties unable to process voter registrations
- "One day it works, the next day it doesn't"
- Free to use, but requires additional spending for image storage (\$30,000-\$70,000)
- State assigning 30 staff to help counties, calling criticism "premature"

The Dilemma:

Counties face an impossible choice:

- Only 3 approved vendors total in the entire state
- 1 vendor (Votec) is financially unstable and imposed surprise costs
- 1 vendor (VR Systems) appears viable but requires county budget
- State system (TEAM) is currently failing to perform basic functions despite being "free"
- ALL systems must interface with TEAM regardless of which option chosen
- Pending legislation may eliminate private vendor options entirely, forcing all counties onto the currently-failing TEAM system

The state's contract with Civix requires the Texas Secretary of State's Office to address any poor performance, and by law, it must report information about the vendor's performance to a state tracking system.

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNTY CLERK:

Given the critical nature of voter registration processing and the approaching election deadlines, the County Clerk should:

1. Contact VR Systems immediately for pricing and implementation timeline - this is currently the only stable private vendor option
2. Document all TEAM failures if currently using that system - screenshots, dates, specific voter registrations that cannot be processed
3. Consult with county attorney about contractual obligations and liabilities for unprocessed voter registrations
4. Connect with other county clerks - particularly those in Tarrant, Denton, and Nueces counties who recently chose VR Systems
5. Budget planning - Prepare cost analysis comparing VR Systems contract costs vs. risk of voter registration failures
6. Monitor SB 2382 - If this passes, private vendor option will be eliminated

The current situation represents a systemic crisis in Texas election administration infrastructure, with no good options available to counties.

KEY SOURCES:

Primary Reporting:

- Votebeat Texas:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

- Texas Tribune:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

- Texas Tribune (Votec Crisis):

<https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/03/oter-registration-texas-votec/>

Government Sources:

- Texas State Auditor Report 08-012 (2007): <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/08-012.html>

- Texas Secretary of State Elections Division: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/>

Legislative Information:

- Senate Bill 2382 Coverage:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

Historical Context:

- Government Technology Archive:
<https://www.govtech.com/archive/texas-election-management-system.html>

TEXAS VOTER REGISTRATION HISTORY: THE DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM BEFORE HAVA AND THE DANGERS OF CENTRALIZATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Before the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002, Texas operated with 254 independent county voter registration systems. Each county maintained its own voter rolls locally, providing redundancy, local control, and distributed risk. The federal mandate to centralize voter registration created a single point of failure that cybersecurity experts warn makes the entire state vulnerable to catastrophic system failures, ransomware attacks, and security breaches.

TEXAS VOTER REGISTRATION BEFORE HAVA (Pre-2002)

The Decentralized System: TVRS

Before TEAM, Texas used the Texas Voter Registration System (TVRS), and the 2007 State Audit found that for 6 (60 percent) of 10 performance benchmarks, the new TEAM system was actually slower than the previous TVRS system.

Source: <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/08-012.html>

Historically, routine voter registration has been a county function, and registration lists were maintained at the county level, with the Texas State Archives noting that "Routine voter registration is a county function, and such registration lists may also be found at the county level."

Source: <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/arc/votersreg.html>

How the County-Based System Worked

Before HAVA mandated centralization in 2002, Texas operated with 254 independent county voter registration systems. Each county maintained its own voter rolls locally. The county voter registrar in each county was responsible for:

- Processing voter registration applications
- Maintaining local voter rolls
- Conducting list maintenance

- Managing their own records and systems

The transition from 254 separate voter registration lists at the county level to one statewide list was described by the Texas Secretary of State's office as "a huge undertaking."

Source: <https://www.govtech.com/archive/texas-election-management-system.html>

THE DANGERS OF CENTRALIZATION: EXPERT WARNINGS

Single Point of Failure - Current Election Officials' Concerns

Frank Phillips, the elections administrator in Denton County (one of the 32 counties that currently use third-party systems representing collectively roughly 75% of registered voters in the state), testified about relying on a single centralized system: "If something catastrophic were to happen — ransomware, software failure — at least 75% of the voters in Texas would be fine. If all counties are on the state system and something goes wrong, the whole state is paralyzed. That's dangerous."

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2025/04/18/texas-voter-registration-software-team/>

Real-World Ransomware Attacks on Centralized Voter Databases

In October 2020, Hall County, Georgia experienced a ransomware attack that targeted a database used to verify voter signatures, with the DoppelPaymer gang taking credit for the attack, and the database was still not fully functional weeks later, representing what may have been the first successful ransomware attack that affected part of election infrastructure.

Christopher Krebs, CISA's director, stated that because state districts' voter databases are stored in highly centralized networks, these repositories are vulnerable to hacking and ransomware attacks by nation-state actors as well as cybercrime gangs.

Source:

<https://www.bankinfosecurity.com/ransomware-knocks-out-voter-database-in-georgia-a-15235>

Centralized Systems Create Catastrophic Risk

According to CISA's cybersecurity toolkit, for elections, a ransomware attack could leak or deny access to voter registration data, unofficial results reporting, and other sensitive information, and could also inhibit access to important election systems during critical operational periods, such as registration and candidate filing deadlines.

Source: <https://www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-toolkit-and-resources-protect-elections>

Breaches of voter registration databases and systems represent the biggest challenges in election security, including attacks targeting the IT infrastructure used to manage election processes, storage systems that contain voting data, and polling locations.

Source: <https://www.fortinet.com/resources/cyberglossary/election-security>

Historical Security Breaches of Centralized Systems

In August 2016, a security failure in the Georgia voter registration database left the records of more than 6.7 million people vulnerable to cyberattacks and data breaches, and in 2016, hackers gained access to voter registration data in California and changed voters' party affiliations, leaving people unable to vote in the California primary.

Source: <https://www.fortinet.com/resources/cyberglossary/election-security>

THE CURRENT MANDATE: ALL COUNTIES MUST CONNECT TO CENTRALIZED SYSTEM

Even counties that use software from one of two state-approved private vendors to manage their voter rolls are required by state law to sync their data with TEAM daily, and have to use TEAM to verify a voter's identity and their eligibility to cast a ballot.

Source:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

Source:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

This means that even counties with functioning private vendor systems are still dependent on the centralized TEAM system's availability and security. A failure at the state level affects all 254 counties regardless of their local systems.

KEY RISKS OF CENTRALIZED VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEMS

1. Single Point of Failure

All 254 counties now required to sync with TEAM. One catastrophic event at the state level could take down voter registration statewide, as warned by Denton County's election administrator.

2. Increased Attack Surface

A centralized database creates one high-value target for nation-state actors and cybercriminals instead of 254 separate, smaller targets that would require distributed attacks.

3. Cascading Failures

When the centralized system fails, it affects all counties simultaneously. The July 2025 TEAM rollout demonstrated this with counties across the state unable to process voter registrations, leaving tens of thousands of applications in limbo.

4. Loss of Local Control

County election officials who best know their communities lose autonomy and must depend on state-level systems and vendors over which they have no control.

5. Vendor Dependency

The entire state becomes dependent on a single vendor (currently Civix with a \$17 million contract). If that vendor fails or experiences financial difficulties, all 254 counties are affected simultaneously.

6. Proven Vulnerability

Historical precedent from multiple states shows that centralized voter databases have been successfully breached, compromised by ransomware, or rendered non-functional by cyberattacks.

THE PRE-HAVA DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM ADVANTAGES

The county-based system that existed before HAVA provided critical safeguards:

Redundancy

Failure in one county didn't affect the other 253 counties. Each county maintained independent systems and backups.

Local Control

County officials who knew their communities were directly responsible for voter registration without depending on state-level systems or remote vendors.

Distributed Risk

254 separate systems meant no single point of catastrophic failure. An attacker would need to compromise 254 separate systems to affect the entire state.

Resilience

Local backups and local management meant counties could continue operations even if other counties experienced problems.

Accountability

Local officials were directly responsible to local voters and could be held accountable by their communities.

Performance

The 2007 audit showed that the previous TVRS system actually performed better than the new centralized TEAM system on 60% of benchmarks tested.

CURRENT CRISIS: CENTRALIZED SYSTEM FAILURE IN ACTION

The July 2025 TEAM rollout provides a real-world example of centralization dangers:

Statewide Impact

Counties across Texas simultaneously affected, unable to process voter registrations, with some counties reporting 600+ applications in backlog.

No Local Alternatives

Counties dependent on the centralized system had no backup options when it failed. Even counties with private vendors must sync with TEAM daily.

Systemic Vulnerability

Problems described as "one day it works and we can get stuff done, and the next day it doesn't and nothing gets done" - the unreliability affects all users simultaneously.

Critical Timing

Failures occurring during voter registration deadline periods, with tens of thousands of Texans waiting to have their applications processed.

Sources:

<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>

<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>

CYBERSECURITY EXPERTS' WARNINGS ABOUT CENTRALIZATION

CISA (Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency) identifies voter registration databases as critical election infrastructure vulnerable to:

- Ransomware attacks that deny access to voter data
- Data breaches that expose millions of voter records
- System failures during critical registration periods
- Insider threats with access to centralized systems
- Nation-state actors targeting high-value centralized databases

Source: <https://www.cisa.gov/topics/election-security>

Source: <https://www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-toolkit-and-resources-protect-elections>

The FBI and CISA have warned that centralized voter registration systems are prime targets for cyberattacks and have issued multiple advisories about protecting these systems.

Source: <https://www.ic3.gov/PSA/2024/PSA240912>

CONCLUSION: THE CASE FOR DECENTRALIZATION

The pre-HAVA county-based system provided inherent security through decentralization. While HAVA was enacted with good intentions to prevent voters from being "erroneously omitted from voter registration rolls," the federal mandate for centralization created a cure worse than the disease.

Current Texas law requires all 254 counties to connect daily to a single centralized system that:

- Has a documented history of performance problems since 2007
- Currently experiencing catastrophic failures preventing voter registration processing
- Creates a single point of failure that could paralyze the entire state
- Provides a high-value target for nation-state actors and cybercriminals
- Eliminates local control and accountability
- Depends on a single vendor with a \$17 million contract

Pending legislation (Senate Bill 2382) would eliminate even the limited redundancy of private vendor systems, forcing all 254 counties onto the failing centralized system exclusively.

Election security experts, county election administrators, and cybersecurity professionals all warn that this centralization creates dangerous vulnerabilities. The decentralized county-based system that existed before HAVA provided superior resilience, security, and accountability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Restore County Autonomy

Allow counties to maintain independent voter registration systems with voluntary data sharing rather than mandatory centralization.

2. Reject Mandatory Centralization

Oppose Senate Bill 2382 and similar legislation that would force all counties onto a single system.

3. Maintain Redundancy

Preserve the option for counties to use certified private vendors as backup systems.

4. Implement True Backups

Require that counties maintain complete local backups independent of the state system.

5. Learn from History

Recognize that the pre-HAVA decentralized system provided better security through distributed architecture.

6. Prioritize Resilience Over Control

Security and resilience should take priority over centralized state control and monitoring.

KEY SOURCES

Historical Context:

- Texas State Auditor Report 08-012 (2007): <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/08-012.html>
- Texas State Library Archives: <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/arc/votersreg.html>
- Government Technology Archive:
<https://www.govtech.com/archive/texas-election-management-system.html>

Current TEAM System Problems:

- Votebeat Texas (September 2025):
<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/>
- Texas Tribune (September 2025):
<https://www.texastribune.org/2025/09/25/texas-voter-registration-system-TEAM-county-election-officials/>
- Votebeat on SB 2382 (April 2025):
<https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/04/18/team-voter-registration-software-senate-bill-2382/>

Cybersecurity Warnings:

- CISA Election Security: <https://www.cisa.gov/topics/election-security>
- CISA Cybersecurity Toolkit:
<https://www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-toolkit-and-resources-protect-elections>
- FBI/CISA Joint Alert: <https://www.ic3.gov/PSA/2024/PSA240912>
- Georgia Ransomware Case:
<https://www.bankinfosecurity.com/ransomware-knocks-out-voter-database-in-georgia-a-15235>
- Fortinet Election Security Analysis:
<https://www.fortinet.com/resources/cyberglossary/election-security>

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