

Coalition of Texans with Disabilities Urges Court to Safeguard Voter Access in Texas Primary Elections

Closing Primaries Creates an Undue Burden on Voters with Disabilities, All Texans

For Immediate Release

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AUSTIN, Texas (Nov. 12, 2025) — Today, the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD) joined a group of Texans to file an **amicus curiae brief** in *Chip Hunt, Republican Party of Texas v. Nelson*. The brief urges the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas to reject a proposed consent judgment that would force voters to register in advance with a party in order to be able to participate in primary elections.

Alongside CTD, lifelong Republican voters, a Republican former county election official, and Texas Impact, representing the faith community, filed their brief to explain how pre-registration with a political party would create undue and unnecessary barriers to participation. The brief also referenced additional negative impacts, including suppressed turnout and undermining civic engagement.

“The disability community knows better than most how systems can exclude — not through intent, but through design. When voter registration rules are made more complex, when deadlines multiply, when communication about eligibility is unclear, participation plummets,” said **Chase Bearden, Executive Director of the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities**. “That’s not theoretical: national data shows that accessibility barriers already prevent one in six voters with disabilities from casting a ballot independently.”

The amici — **Andrea Gibbud, Melissa Hughes, Neva Kelly, Cathy Roznovsky, Texas Impact**, and the **Coalition of Texans with Disabilities** — filed their brief on **Nov. 10, 2025**.

In *Hunt v. Nelson*, the Republican Party of Texas and a single voter are asking a federal court to upend current Texas law and prohibit same-day party affiliation. The plaintiffs seek to force voters to pre-register with a party before voting in primaries. Texas Secretary of State Jane Nelson, the State's Chief Elections Officer, opposes the motion, arguing the current system is lawful, effective, and reflective of the Texas Legislature's intent in current statute.

"Any change to Texas's primary system should be made by the Texas Legislature, not by a federal court order," said Bearden.

"Closed primaries shrink the electorate, privilege insider voices, and silence those who don't — or can't — fit neatly into political boxes. Voters with disabilities cut across ideology, geography, and race, making this not a small concern. To disenfranchise unaffiliated voters and require pre-registration by political parties is structurally silencing," added Bearden.

Additional Resources

- [Read the amicus brief here.](#)
- [Read Chase Bearden's recent op-ed column here.](#)

About Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD)

The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities is the largest and oldest member-driven cross-disability organization in the state. *Online at txdisabilities.org.*