Twitter Thread by David Becker



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We're understandably focused on bills/laws being proposed/passed to restrict voting and which hurt election integrity in several states, but we should be paying particular attention to what is happening in TX, right now. /1

In a late night vote, the TX senate just passed SB7, which puts significant restrictions on voting, in a state where it's already harder to vote than almost anywhere else. /2

https://t.co/QQKWD56Yer

> The Texas Senate just voted to limit Texans' voting options. Senate Bill 7, a GOP priority, would limit early voting hours, prohibit drive-thru voting and bar local election officials from proactively sending vote-by-mail applications. https://t.co/TVMHYE3yOD
>
> — Texas Tribune (@TexasTribune) April 1, 2021

TX SB7 prohibits efforts by election officials to encourage or educate voters about early and mail voting options. It even requires those who need to vote by mail due to disability to provide a gov't document or a doctor's attestation that they are "disabled." /3

TX SB7 outlaws drop boxes and further limits early voting, and disenfranchises any voter whose ballot is delivered by anyone other than herself or by mail. If an elderly voter's spouse delivers the ballot by hand to election officials, that ballot "may not be counted." /4

TX SB7 allows ONLY partisan "watchers" the ability to roam anywhere they want in polling places, regardless of the work poll workers are doing, and use wireless devices in voting locations. No one else would have this power. /5

And perhaps most troubling, TX SB7 gives ONLY these partisans the power to video and record voters while they are casting a ballot. I honestly cannot recall a recent state law expressly encouraging partisans to engage in such potentially intimidating conduct. /6

Even when SB7 tries to do something good, it seems to be written to fail. For instance, TX is one of only a handful of states that currently allows voting to be conducted with unauditable electronic ballots. TX is way behind on election security on this

point. /7

95% of US voters vote on auditable paper ballots, incl. voters in all of the battleground states, incl. GA, FL, OH, AZ, NV, PA, etc. But not in TX, where they cannot effectively audit or recount ballots in much of the state. /8

SB7 says TX finally has to move to auditable paper ballots, but for some reason delays that until 2026, even though the rest of the country is already there, or in those few remaining places without paper ballots, will be there by 2022. /9

This means that TX is likely to be the only state without auditable, recountable, secure paper ballots for the 2024 presidential election. SB7 enshrines that in law. /10

Let's be clear - the entirety of TX SB7 is built upon a lie - that the election of 2020 was insecure or rife with fraud - when we know the opposite is true. 2020 was the most secure and transparent election in history, and in 2020, that led to large GOP victories in TX. /11

TX's and the nation's success in the 2020 election was thanks to the tireless work of election off'ls of both parties, who made sure that voters had convenient options, while maintaining a transparent and secure process. /12

The ingenuity and diligence of election off'ls at the state and local level in TX and elsewhere not only led to record high turnout in 2020, but also unprecedented transparency, security, and integrity. SB7 would outlaw such local control and ingenuity. /13

TX SB7 significantly increases barriers for eligible voters who have disabilities, or might need assistance, or might need to work multiple jobs and find a convenient time to vote at night or on a day off. That's bad enough, but that's not all it does. /14

TX SB7 also has a disastrous effect on election integrity by allowing use of wireless devices in polls, delaying a move to paper ballots, and concentrating more voting into a single day, reducing the early warning system that mail/early voting provides against fraud or hacks. /15

I don't think it's going too far to say that TX SB7 cements TX's status as not only the state that restricts voting more than any other, but also as the least secure state for elections, with the most concerns about integrity. TX was improving, but this is a step back. /16

This is the reason many of TX's outstanding election off'ls have been outspoken in their opposition to SB7, and to the restrictions on their ability to run accessible and secure elections for eligible voters. /17

As the TX legislature considers this, and other, bills, one hopes that they and their colleagues in other states will listen to the professional election administrators, who know best how to run secure elections. /END