



**Secure Democracy**  
USA

## **Testimony in Support of HB 242**

Chairman Shaheen, Vice Chairman Bucy, and Members of the Committee on Elections:

My name is Evan Preston and I am the Senior Director of Advocacy at Secure Democracy USA, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to build stronger elections, state by state.

**I urge this Committee to support HB 242 and ensure ballot privacy for all voters.** In 2023, Texas lawmakers passed HB 5180, which took bold steps to increase election transparency. Under the new law, however, public records could be used to link specific ballots to individual Texas voters, especially those in smaller or rural precincts. This jeopardizes voters' right to a secret ballot.

Last year, the Texas Secretary of State and Attorney General issued emergency guidance to ensure that election officials took necessary steps to protect each voter's privacy. HB 242 will codify that emergency guidance and allow election officials to redact information to protect the privacy of a voter's ballot selections when responding to a public information request. This is a proactive, efficient solution to the existing ballot privacy concerns.

Texas has fair, safe, and secure elections, thanks to the work of Texas lawmakers, the Secretary of State, and local election officials. By passing HB 242's commonsense privacy protections, lawmakers can safeguard voter privacy while maintaining election transparency and security.

### **Evan Preston**

Senior Director of Advocacy  
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