



Written by [James Murphy](#) on August 6, 2021

Texas Governor Abbott Calls for New Special Session to Begin on Saturday

On Thursday, Texas Governor Greg Abbott called for yet another special session as state Democrats continue to dodge their responsibility by hiding out in Washington, D.C.. The current special session expires today while the new session is scheduled to begin at noon on Saturday.

Nearly 60 Democrats from the Texas House of Representatives [fled the state](#) on July 12 to deny a quorum to the legislature and thereby avoid voting on a range of issues that Abbott deemed necessary. Among those items was election integrity [legislation](#) designed to make it harder to commit voter fraud in the state.



Gov. Greg Abbott (AP Images)

Unsurprisingly, that same election integrity bill remains on the agenda for the new session along with other agenda items such as the teaching of Critical Race Theory, social-media censorship, transgender participation in school athletics, and bail reform.

Also remaining on the agenda is the matter of pay for 2,100 legislative staff members. Abbott vetoed the pay for those staff members after the Democrats first staged a [walk-out](#) at the end of the legislature's regular session, which ended in May.

And for good measure, the Texas governor has added a few new agenda items that include how to spend federal COVID-19 funds, public education during a pandemic, and amending legislative rules regarding quorums in the state.

The new quorum rules would require only a simple majority of each chamber for a quorum to exist rather than the two-thirds that must exist currently. The addition of the new quorum rule was suggested by Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick and would require amending the state constitution. Two-thirds of each chamber would need to approve of the change in order to amend the state constitution.

"Passing these Special Session agenda items will chart a course towards a stronger and brighter future for the Lone Star State," Abbott said.

With the announcement of the new special session, Abbott fulfilled a promise he made after the Democrats fled to Washington — that a new special session would begin the day after the initial one ended. The second special session will force the Texas lawmakers to start over, including the filing of bills and holding new committee hearings.

"The #txlege must finish the work that was started," Abbott tweeted. "I'll call special session after special session to reform our broken bail system, uphold election integrity, & pass other items Texans demand & deserve."

Meanwhile, Texas Democrats are claiming victory for their running away stunt as the first special



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session comes to an end today.

“On the 56th anniversary of the #VotingRightsAct, Greg Abbott’s suppression session comes to a close,” the Texas Democrats proclaimed on Twitter.

“With the second special legislative session looming, Texas Democrats remain fervently committed to protecting the freedom to vote.”

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi also lauded the fugitive Texas Democrats: “The Texas State Democrats captured the country’s attention with their devotion to our most sacred democratic right: the vote,” Pelosi tweeted.

“Not only did their actions stop the TX GOP’s anti-voter bill, their advocacy has moved us closer to passing federal voting rights legislation,” the House speaker said.

Officially, the Texas Democrats who remain in Washington, D.C. are fugitives, though it’s unlikely any will face jail time. It’s more likely that, once they arrive in the state - and they’ll have to go back to Texas eventually - police will take them to the House Chamber where they’ll be required to do their job.

And their Republican colleagues are hopping mad at them.

“Members, the sergeant-at-arms and the officers appointed by him are directed to send for all absentees whose attendance is not excused for the purpose of securing and maintaining their attendance — under warrant of arrest, if necessary,” House Speaker Dade Phelan (R) said from the floor. “Any member who wishes to leave the hall must have the written permission of the Speaker of the House.”

It’s been a long and trying month for the Texas Democrats who decided to flee their home state to find solace and like-minded individuals in Washington. At least six of them tested positive for COVID-19 on the trip, even though all were said to have been vaccinated. Can they all last another month as fugitives, on the road and far away from home?



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