



VOTE

National Voter Day

National Voter Registration Day was first observed in advance of the 2012 presidential election.

It is now an annual occasion for celebrating the right to vote and for making sure that our family, friends, and neighbors are registered.

Don't let yourself be one of those people who are turned away from the polls for lack of voter registration.

Check to see if, and where, you are registered to vote, at this link: <http://bit.ly/1iKyPqT>. If you need to get registered, go to <http://www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/>.

Please forward this message to co-workers, friends, family, and every Texan you know who is an American citizen and eligible to vote.

VOTING IS IMPORTANT

YOU NEED TO BE INTERESTED IN THE CANDIDATES THAT REPRESENT YOU.

YOU NEED TO CARE ABOUT THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS THAT AFFECT YOUR POCKET BOOK.

YOU NEED TO CARE ABOUT YOUR FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR NATION, STATE, AND COMMUNITIES.

Register To Vote

To vote in Texas, you must be registered. Simply pick up a voter registration application, fill it out, and mail it at least 30 days before the election date.

You are eligible to register to vote if you are a United States citizen:

- You are a resident of the county where you submit the application;
- You are at least 18 years old on Election Day;
- You are not a convicted felon (you may be eligible to vote if you have completed your sentence, probation, and parole); and
- You have not been declared by a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be either totally men-tally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote.

Are you already registered?

To confirm your voter registration status, you may select one of three methods to perform a search—your Texas driver's license number, if you provided it when you applied for voter registration;

- Your Voter Unique Identifier (VUID), which appears on your voter registration certificate;
- Your first and last name.

Find out if you are already registered.



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CONTINUED

BUS CRASH IN HOUSTON

A deadly school-bus crash in Houston several weeks ago has prompted calls to rethink and retool both state and local bus-safety policies. The accident reportedly occurred when another vehicle veered into the Houston ISD school bus on an elevated roadway and caused it to plunge through a guardrail to the ground below. Two students were killed, while the driver and two others were injured but survived. The bus was equipped with lap belts, but it is not known whether the students who died were using them.

Wretha Thomas, president of our local affiliate for support professionals in HISD, the Houston Educational Support Personnel Union, held a press conference Thursday morning to call for action by the school district, the city of Houston, and the state to help protect students from harm on the road. She said, "We need help to enforce a rule that children should wear seatbelts when they ride our school buses." Thomas also asked for new efforts to teach parents to encourage their children to wear seatbelts when they're on a school bus. She added: "We need help to ensure that school buses are treated with the same respect as emergency and law-enforcement vehicles."

Current state law does require districts to establish a policy mandating the use of seatbelts on school buses that are equipped with them (Texas Education Code Section 34.013). The same statute authorizes school districts to establish discipline policies to enforce seatbelt use.

But not all school buses are required to have seatbelts. Under another statute (Texas Transportation Code Section 547.701, Subsections (e) and (f)), school buses purchased since September 2010 are required to have three-point seatbelts (shoulder and lap belts) only if the state provides the funding for them, and that funding has not been provided.

HIGH STAKES TESTING

NEEDS TO END

The results of the latest PDK/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools show in no uncertain terms that the public is calling for an end to the fixation on and misuse of testing, AFT President Randi Weingarten says. "Americans are fed up with the overemphasis and high-stakes consequences of standardized tests.

They've seen those consequences and effects firsthand and now oppose the Common Core State Standards and using test scores in teacher evaluations.

What's infuriating is that parents and teachers have repeatedly raised the red flag over high-stakes testing, but policymakers routinely dismissed them."

CLASS SIZE

Compelling evidence demonstrates that reducing class size, particularly for younger children, has a positive effect on student achievement overall and an especially significant impact on the education of disadvantaged children. The American Federation of Teachers is a strong advocate for reducing class size to help raise student achievement, especially in high-poverty, at-risk schools. - See more at: <http://www.aft.org/position/class-size#sthash.BXtPGLoH.dpuf>

