

Suspicious Ayes in Texas House By Bill Hobby

Fraudulent voting in the Texas House of Representatives has been going on for a long time. It reached a new low last year when the House passed the “voter ID” bill to prevent fraudulent voting at the polls, of which there is little evidence.

Of fraudulent voting in the House there is ample evidence. It’s called “button-pushing”. Channel 42 in Austin filmed House members voting fraudulently to keep other people from voting fraudulently. Google “YouTube-Texas Legislation” and see the action.

Each member’s desk in the House has a set of buttons on which a member can vote Aye, No, or Present Not Voting. When a member is away from his or her desk the member can lock the buttons to prevent fraudulent voting but almost never does.



The fraudulent voting to prevent fraudulent voting has become so notorious that Speaker Craddick last November 29 asked the House Administration Committee to “study and make recommendations for alternative voting devices in the Texas House Chamber and make recommendations before the next session.”

That study can be quickly done by looking at the electronic voting system in the U.S. House of Representatives and Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) all over the country. Rule XI of the U.S. House on electronic voting says:

“A number of vote stations are attached to selected chairs in the Chamber. Each station is equipped with a vote card slot and four indicators, marked "yea", "nay", "present", and "open" that are lit when a vote is in progress and the system is ready to accept votes. Each Member is provided with an encrypted Vote-ID Card. A Member votes by inserting the voting card into any one of the vote stations and depressing the appropriate button to indicate the Member's choice.”

There have been no complaints of fraudulent voting in the U.S. House.

The Texas House should use an electronic voting machine similar to the one in the U.S. House and pass a similar rule. The U.S. House and all the banks in the country know how to prevent fraud. Maybe the Texas House can learn, too.

What's to be done in the meantime to restore the integrity of the Texas House? Once again, the answer is simple. Every state official takes the oath prescribed by the state Constitution (Section XVI, Article 1).

The official swears to “faithfully execute the duties of the office ...and ... to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this State, so help me God.”

A member who pushes another member's button votes fraudulently and violates the oath. Under the Constitution the House is the judge of its members (III-8). To regain and maintain its integrity the Texas House should expel its faithless members.

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