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**Sierra Club Decries Failure of the Texas Legislature to Protect Voting Rights**  
*SB 1 Could Still Get Worse in Conference Committee*

**Austin, TX --** On Friday, following more than 12 hours of debate on Thursday and an additional two hours on Friday, the Texas House of Representatives voted to approve SB 1 on a largely straight party-line vote, the notorious attack on voting rights that was the central aim of the second special session called by Governor Greg Abbott.

On a vote of 80-41, the bill passed on full passage today. The bill now is expected to be sent to a conference committee to iron out differences between the Senate and House versions of the bill. If the Texas Legislature passes SB 1 and it is signed by the Governor it will create new obstacles to vote by mail, prohibit county officials sending out mail-in voting applications unless requested, prohibit drive-through and 24-early voting, limit the number of hours for early voting, increase the likelihood of voter intimidation through expanded rights of poll watchers, criminalize “mistakes” by voters and election officials -- intentional or not -- and incentivize substance-free election challenges which could lead to many court cases. While some improvements were made on the House floor that make the bill slightly less draconian, Sierra Club remains opposed to the bill.

**In response, Lone Star Interim Chapter Director Cyrus Reed released the following statement:**

“Last night, proposed amendments that would have actually expanded voting rights for Texans were all roundly defeated, removing any hope that Democrats can fundamentally improve or stop this bill without another quorum break.

“Time and time again Governor Abbott has shown contempt for Texans and the real issues facing the state. He is intentionally choosing to focus on making it harder to vote rather than expanding Medicaid, fixing the energy grid, tackling the climate crisis, or addressing the ongoing surge of COVID-19 cases.

“If SB 1 passes, Governor Abbott will seek to divert attention away from his failed leadership and frame this voter suppression bill as a victory. We applaud the Democrats who continue to fight for the rights of all Texans by staying in DC to pressure Congress to adopt the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the For The People Act. The Sierra Club calls upon the U.S. Senate to pass both of these bills and take federal action to protect our access to the ballot box in Texas.”

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