

AUSTIN, Texas, Jan. 20, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- The [Texas Civil Justice League](#) (TCJL) has announced a statewide advocacy campaign to increase voter participation in judicial races. The organization, which advocates for a fair and balanced judicial system in Texas, is launching a voter education effort aimed at increasing awareness throughout the state about the importance of electing qualified judges.

"Many Texans don't understand how important it is to educate themselves on the qualifications of those who run in judicial races so that they can vote for the most qualified candidates," John Fainter, chair of the TCJL board of directors, said. "In reality, a judge can have a major, direct influence on a citizen—perhaps more than any other elected official—including making decisions that impact a person's home, family, job and their very freedom."

The campaign will initially focus on the upcoming March primaries and will include efforts to educate Texans about the importance of judicial races in addition to providing information about the various candidates who are running in statewide judicial races.

"I applaud the Texas Civil Justice League for their efforts to raise the profile of statewide judicial races," former Texas Supreme Court Justice Harriet O'Neill said. "Texans are fortunate to be able to elect the best qualified candidates in judicial races, but with that opportunity comes the responsibility of educating themselves about the candidates. This campaign will be a major step toward achieving that goal."

Click [here](#) to view a video interview with former Justice Harriet O'Neill about the importance of

electing qualified judges.

Voter participation drops significantly for judicial races compared to other higher-profile races. For example, in the 2012 general election, 58.6% of registered Texas voters voted for a presidential candidate, but only 44% voted for a candidate in the judicial race for the Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 8. In other words, a significant number of voters did not vote for judicial candidates even though they were already at the polls. Percentages for other statewide judicial races were similarly low.

For more information about judicial races in Texas, visit www.texasjudges.org, a TCJL website that provides information about the state's judicial system and candidates running in judicial races.

About the Texas Civil Justice League Founded in 1986, the Texas Civil Justice League (TCJL) advocates for a fair and balanced judicial system in Texas

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-based group is the oldest and largest state legal reform organization in the nation, with membership comprised of corporate businesses, law firms, professional and trade associations, health care providers and individual citizens.

www.tcjl.com

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