



How To Effectively Advocate For The  
**TEXAS INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM ACT**  
In The Texas Legislature

TNM.ME

Personal legislative advocacy for the **Texas Independence Referendum Act** seems like a no-brainer on the surface. You want legislation filed that will give Texans a vote on independence. They represent you so they should just file the bill.

Unfortunately, it's not that simple.

Every member of the Texas House represents roughly 167,000 Texans and every member of the Texas Senate represents roughly 806,000 Texans. Therefore, each of them weighs every piece of legislation against their own personal goals and passions and how much support that they perceive exists among their constituents.

Here are some guidelines for upping your game and being extremely effective at personally advocating to your representatives for a vote on Texas independence

### **Know Your Reps**

No matter which side of the issues your elected officials usually stand, you can find common ground. That starts with building relationships with them. They need to see you as a person rather than just "another constituent" wearing them out over a specific issue. **One courteous and respectful interaction is worth more than a thousand angry phone calls.**

It's not just your elected representatives that you need to develop relationships with. You will get much farther much faster if you develop relationships with members of their staff. For all of these reps, their staffs serve as gatekeepers. If you cross one or more key members of their staff, you will be stopped dead in your tracks. However, a friend on their staff can "grease the wheels" for you and give you great insight into your representative, issues for which the representative is extremely passionate that can be addressed by TEXIT, as well as insight into specific concerns that they may have about a vote on independence.

While many are motivated by a rigid set of principles, at the end of the day all state-level elected officials are concerned about two things: enough votes to win re-election and enough money to fend off any challenges in the next election. Nearly all state-level elected officials, when contacted by a constituent, will check

that constituent's information against two databases – the voter database and their donor database. They want to know:

- If you voted in the general election
- If you voted in the primary election and for which party
- Did you donate any money to their campaign

None of this information is secret. It is all a matter of public record. If you didn't vote in the general election, didn't vote in the primaries, voted in the primary for the party of which they are not a member, or didn't donate to them or anyone understand that they will find out. Be prepared to deal with any of these issues by heading it off at the pass.

*"Even though we're in different parties, I'm sure we both share some concerns about our district and our State."*

*"I've never been motivated to give money to a candidate's campaign because I haven't found a candidate that shares my views on Texas independence."*

## **Know The Issue**

TEXTIT is a **very** simple solution to a massive number of complex problems that face Texans. The challenge with elected officials is that they seek solutions that are as complex as the problems that they claim they want to address. Because of their singular focus on complexity, a referendum on Texas independence and what follows will cause them to have a massive number of questions and objections.

That means that first of all, you need to be armed with all of the facts. Prepare by consuming as much about the issue as you possibly can. The TNM's website is a great resource for this. Another great resource is the book **TEXTIT: Why and How Texas Will Leave The Union**. It will arm you with answers and their context for nearly every conceivable argument or obstacle that they throw in your way.

At a minimum, you should be able to tell them:

- How being in the union is harmful to Texans

- How Texas independence will benefit Texans
- The amount of support in Texas for a vote on the issue

While this takes care of the rational arguments for Texas independence, you also need to be prepared to connect on an emotional level. You should be prepared to articulate **why** you **personally** support a vote on independence. This means that you need to be ready to tell **your** story.

You tell your story enable others to “get you” – to experience the values that call you to advocate for Texas independence. The key is to focus on choice points: moments when your values counted in choices you made in response to challenge, to uncertainty. When did you first care about being heard on your belief that Texas would be better off as an independent nation? Why? When did you feel you had to take action? Why did you feel you could? What were the circumstances? Your story can be a powerful tool in interacting with your elected representatives by allowing them to see something of yourself: not your deepest secrets, but the key moments that motivated you **personally** to support Texas independence.

Here’s the key point about your story. You should be able to tell your story in less than 3 minutes. Craft it and even practice it with friends and family.

## Understand The Bill

Be sure to thoroughly read the proposed legislation and understand what it does. Here are the key points:

- The actions in the bill are protected by the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article 1 Section 2 of the Texas Constitution
- It is only calling for the issue of independence to be put before Texas voters
- It is not a declaration of independence
- It provides a statutory framework in Texas law that allows this process to happen
- It provides safeguards to protect the integrity of the vote through restrictions on campaign spending for this referendum alone

- In the event of a ‘YES’ vote, it provides guidance for elected officials for the next steps of the process

The bill is ready to file **AS IS** without any additional work having to be done by the Texas Legislative Council. This is important because the “Lege Council” can has been a roadblock to efforts to file this bill in past. In its current format, the bill can be directly filed. This makes the legislators jobs much easier.

### **The Contact Hierarchy**

How you interact with your representatives is just as important as what you say and how you say it. Legislators have a secret hierarchy that helps them evaluate the level of support for an issue.

Legislators weigh different methods of interaction to extrapolate the level of support there is for a particular issue in their district. The more personal the method of interaction, the more support the interaction represents.

In order from the most impact to the least impact:

- **Personal Visits** – Few constituents take the time to actually visit their representatives. If an issue is important enough for you to visit their office, in their minds the importance is shared by a large number of constituents who couldn’t pay them a personal visit.
- **Handwritten Letters** – Very few people actually sit down and write letters anymore. Not to mention exerting the extra effort of putting it in an envelope, buying a stamp, and putting it in the mail box. It is such an uncommon occurrence that when legislators get handwritten letters, they will get read and will be given extra attention.
- **Phone Calls** – Using the telephone to contact legislators is the old standby. When all else fails, pick up the phone and speak your peace. While phone calls are low on the hierarchy, when made in sufficient quantity they can make a difference. This is especially the case if they are made by the same constituent on a **consistent** basis (daily or weekly).



- **Emails** – This is the absolute worst way to interact with your representatives. Legislators get thousands of emails during the normal course of a legislative session. Not only will your email get buried, but with one click all future emails from you can end up in their SPAM folder.

### **The Most Important Tactic**

All of these tactics can help you be more effective, but there is one thing that will guarantee your success.

# **NEVER QUIT!**

No matter how persistent you are, no matter how articulate you are, no matter how right you are, one or both of your representatives may be under the impression that they can outlast you. If they tell you ‘no’ enough times, you may get discouraged and just go away. Don’t fall for it.

You may never get either of your representatives to file or support this legislation. Great! They have to get reelected so replace them with someone who will. You must outlast them and possibly every one of their successors until we get and win a vote on independence.

**Persistence overcomes resistance.**

## **THE TNM CAN HELP**

There is no doubt that the growth of the Texas Nationalist Movement directly impacts the ability to persuade these representatives. Our members have the opportunity to participate in coordinated actions that directly advance the cause of Texas independence.

Becoming a member of the TNM is a great way to connect with others who are advocating for a vote on independence and to be a part of the larger movement for independence. You can find out more at <https://tnm.me/join>.