

# News Release

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## TPJ Serves Houston Tea Party Groups With Election-Law Complaints

### Watchdog Alleges King Street Patriots & True the Vote Illegally Engaged In Corporate Campaigning

(Austin, TX) Texan for Public Justice (TPJ) today filed a formal complaint with the Texas Ethics Commission alleging that the King Street Patriots and KSP/True the Vote have violated the state's prohibition on corporate contributions to political parties and candidates. The complaint says the groups appear to have made repeated in-kind corporate contributions to the Harris County Republican Party and a slate of Republican candidates for legislative, judicial and county offices. Because the alleged violations constitute felony criminal behavior, TPJ also referred the complaint to the Public Integrity Unit of the Travis County District Attorney's Office.

The King Street Patriots and KSP/True the Vote are Houston-based non-profit corporations affiliated with the "tea party" movement. TPJ alleges the corporations have used their corporate resources to coordinate and recruit poll watchers on behalf of the Harris County Republican Party. The King Street Patriots sponsored a number of "get to know the candidates" events where just one Republican candidate was invited to attend and promote his or her election. Texas law requires that all candidates for an office be invited to participate in such corporate sponsored candidate events. The Patriots website has promoted block-walking activities to "spread the word on great conservative candidates." Clarifying who these candidates are, the website listed a number of Houston-area candidates, all of them Republicans.

The KSP/True the Vote group is organizing to stop "widespread voter fraud" in Harris County. A controversial, hyperbolic, 8-minute video on its website features white speakers bemoaning alleged voter fraud. The speakers' proclaim: "Our voting system is under attack! Voter fraud is helping the Democratic Party! Elections are being manipulated by the radical left! It's all very, very scary. The fraud is very widespread. This is war!" As a narrator on the video says, "It's people who want to vote twice," the video shows what appears to be an electoral queue of mostly minority voters. True the Vote leader, Catherine Englebrecht says in the video that the group wants to recruit five poll watchers for every precinct in the county. (The True the Vote video is here: <http://www.truesthevote.org/>).

"The Patriots are breaking the law," said Texans for Public Justice Director Craig McDonald. "A non-profit cannot legally spend its corporate resources to be an arm of the Republican Party. Sadly, you can use racial fear to recruit white voters to try to suppress minority voting. But a non-profit corporation cannot do so on behalf of a political party and its candidates."

The Texans for Public Justice formal complaint is [located here](#).

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