

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Federal voting rights hearing set for March 13 at UH Law Center**

*Testimony will focus on practices that may impede access to polls*

**March 8, 2018 (HOUSTON)** — The University of Houston Law Center will host a public meeting of the Texas Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights on March 13 to hear testimony about potential barriers to the free exercise of voting rights in the state.

The committee will consider discriminatory practices that may impact voters on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability status, or religion in the areas of voter registration, access to polling locations, and language access.

Academics, voters, representatives from advocacy organizations, and elected officials and lawmakers will speak during the day-long meeting. Testimony from the public will be heard in open forums during the morning and afternoon sessions.

The hearing will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 13, in Krost Hall at the University of Houston Law Center, 4604 Calhoun Road.

### **Agenda**

- Opening Remarks and Introductions: (9:00 a.m.-9:15 a.m.)
- Academic: (9:15 a.m.-10:15 a.m.)
  - Rogelio Saenz, Dean of the College of Public Policy, University of Texas at San Antonio
  - Teddy Rave, Assistant Professor of Law, University of Houston Law Center
- Advocacy Groups: (10:25 a.m.-11:40 a.m.)
  - Frank Jackson, Former Mayor of Prairie View
  - Ernest Herrera, Staff Attorney, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund
  - Gary Bledsoe, President, Texas National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
  - Jerry Vattamala, Director of the Democracy Program, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
- Open Public Comment Period: (11:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m.)
- Break: (12:15 p.m.-1:30 p.m.)
- Election Officials & Lawmakers: (1:30 p.m.-2:45 p.m.)
  - Rodney Ellis, Commissioner, Harris County, Precinct 1

- Voters: (3:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. Organization representatives to be confirmed)
  - MOVE San Antonio
  - AAPI Voter
  - Texas Organizing Project
  - League of Women Voters
  - Collin County Democrats Voter
- Open Public Comment Period: (4:15 p.m.- 4:45 p.m.)
- Closing Remarks: (4:45 p.m.-5:00 p.m.)

The event will live-stream:

<https://uh.mediasite.com/mediasite/Play/bd45cbb59c5143daa327a95c3346298f1d>)

The meeting is free and open to the public and the record will remain open for thirty days. Written comments may be submitted to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Western Regional Office, 300 N. Los Angeles St., Suite 2010, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the president and congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. The 51 state advisory committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels.

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### **About the University of Houston**

The [University of Houston](https://www.uh.edu) is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized by The Princeton Review as one of the nation's best colleges for undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation's fourth-largest city, UH serves more than 45,000 students in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region in the country.

## **About the University of Houston Law Center**

The [University of Houston Law Center](#) (UHLC) is a dynamic, top tier law school located in the nation's 4<sup>th</sup> largest city. UHLC's Health Law, Intellectual Property Law, and Part-time programs rank in the U.S. News Top 10. It awards Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees, through its academic branch, the College of Law. The Law Center is more than just a law school. It is a powerful hub of intellectual activity with more than 11 centers and institutes which fuel its educational mission and national reputation. UHLC is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.