

Friday, July 16, 2021

John Stankey  
CEO, AT&T Inc.  
208 South Akard Street  
Dallas, TX 75202

## Re: AT&T's Words in Support of Voting Rights Contradict PAC's Actions

Dear Mr. Stankey,

On behalf of Accountable.US, I write today to urge AT&T Inc. to reconcile the company's public words in support of voting rights with the contradictory actions of its political committees, including actively supporting certain lawmakers and their allies who are working to take away the freedom to vote from eligible people with disabilities and people of color in Texas and around the country.

Earlier this year, in the face of a wave of Jim Crow-style voter suppression bills in state legislatures across the country including Texas, you strongly voiced your support for voting protections with your [public statement](#) of apparent disapproval in April 2021, which received media attention. At the time you claimed "We believe the right to vote is sacred and we support voting laws that make it easier for more Americans to vote in free, fair and secure elections." You added: "We are working [...] to support efforts to enhance every person's ability to vote."

The problem with your principled leadership and statements are that the sentiments run totally counter to the sizable campaign support AT&T affiliated PACs are doling out to those scheming to strip fundamental voting rights from eligible voters.

As you are well aware, the Texas legislature is poised to pass harmful legislation curbing early voting hours and banning 24-hour voting among other undemocratic measures — a thinly disguised effort to disenfranchise eligible voters they believe don't deserve the right. This effort is the very antithesis of your company's purported values defending 'every person's ability to vote.'

And yet, campaign finance records reveal that in June 2021 alone — as the voting restriction proposals were reaching a fever pitch in Texas — AT&T affiliated PACs were busy [funneling](#) at least \$127,500 to the campaigns of Texas state lawmakers who were publicly pushing voter suppression bills in May. This includes a [\\$100,000 contribution](#) to Texas Governor Greg Abbott on the same day Abbott called for a special legislative session to pass a voter suppression bill among other controversial right-wing priorities. These same lawmakers are doing all they can to pass racially targeted restrictions during Texas' July special session.

In addition, AT&T remains affiliated with one of the most prominent and influential organizations working against a healthy democracy: the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Building on its well-documented history of funding voter suppression efforts, the Chamber is currently engaged in a [lobbying blitz](#) against the For the People Act, a historic U.S. House-passed bill that would preserve access to the ballot box for all Americans. The legislation would help counteract some of the worst voting restriction measures being put in place in Texas and other right-wing state legislatures across the country.

By all appearances, AT&T is playing both sides of this issue -- telling your customers, shareholders and employees you embrace voting rights while your affiliated PACs dump hundreds of thousands of dollars

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into the campaigns of those trying to put up even more barriers for voters of color. Money talks, and contributions to the architects behind efforts to suppress the freedom to vote in Texas speak much louder about your company's true corporate values.

If AT&T truly cares about preserving access to the ballot box for all, the time is now to prove it. When corporations don't speak out when they disagree with the actions of people they helped put in power, it's tantamount to an endorsement of their behavior. AT&T can't hide from the public record. If your company's political committees continues to flout AT&T's own stated values, as far of the public is concerned, your corporate logo will forever be stamped on Governor Abbott's Jim Crow revival bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Herrig', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kyle Herrig

President, Accountable.US