

West and Huffines Best Abbott and Patrick on CRT and Civics



Texas Governor Greg Abbott speaks at the National Rifle Association convention in Dallas, Texas, May 4, 2018. *(Lucas Jackson/Reuters)*

Texas governor Greg Abbott and Lieutenant governor Dan Patrick deserve praise from conservatives on a number of issues. Unfortunately, their stand on the battle over critical race theory (CRT) and leftist indoctrination in Texas schools isn't one of them. The Texas special session is considering [dueling bills](#) on civics and CRT. Representative Steve Toth's House Bill 178 puts real teeth into the state's new anti-CRT law by forcing public disclosure of what Texas schools actually teach. A rival bill, S.B. 3, in contrast, lacks those transparency provisions. Worse, S.B. 3 forces leftist "protest civics" and so-called media literacy programs (which push students toward liberal-leaning mainstream media sources) into the Texas school curriculum. The conservative choice is clear. Toth's H.B. 178 will strengthen the [groundbreaking new Texas law](#) against indoctrination via CRT and protest civics. On the other hand, S.B. 3 will at least partially gut the new law's protections against indoctrination. So why aren't Abbott and Patrick on board with Toth's H.B. 178?

Abbott faces two Republican rivals in his bid for re-election, each running to his right: former Congressman and Texas Republican Party chairman Allen West, and former Texas State senator, Don Huffines. West has enthusiastically endorsed H.B. 178, and so has Huffines. **Texas Eagle Forum**, an influential grassroots conservative group with a strong focus on education, is also pushing hard for H.B. 178. Not only have Abbott and Patrick failed to endorse H.B. 178, it is almost inconceivable that S.B. 3 could be advancing through the Texas Senate without their support. When it comes to the battle against critical race theory and leftist indoctrination in the classroom, Allen West and Don Huffines are taking a far tougher and more conservative stance than are Abbott and Patrick.

There's still time for Abbott and Patrick to turn around on this issue. If they don't, and especially if S.B. 3 becomes law, then West and Huffines will have powerful evidence to make their case that Abbott and Patrick are a lot less conservative than advertised.

When teachers start defying the new Texas law on CRT, as many have pledged to do, this battle will turn a whole lot tougher and messier. Many enforcement problems could be avoided or simplified, however, if Toth's transparency provisions are turned into law. If that doesn't happen, blame for an unnecessary enforcement mess in the wake of teacher defiance will fall squarely on the shoulders of Abbott and Patrick.

Let's hope that Abbott and Patrick come around on this issue before the special session ends. With two full years until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Texas legislature, Texas schools, parents, and students will have to live with the results of this special session for quite some time. To say the least, that makes the choice between these dueling CRT/civics bills fair game in the coming gubernatorial campaign.