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**Mistreated Petitioners from Around the State Coming to Senate Committee
Hearing to Present Information about Home-Rule City Councils' Wrongdoings**
Dozens of taxpayers from San Antonio, Houston, San Marcos, Brady, and Plano to tell their stories

AUSTIN – Dozens of frustrated citizens who have spent their own money to sue home-rule cities that denied their constitutional rights will be in Austin Monday to share their stories with the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations. Business leaders from cities statewide including San Antonio, Houston, San Marcos, Brady, and Plano will testify about personally incurring legal expenses to enact petitions when home-rule city councils ignore state guidelines regarding ballot initiatives.

“Home-rule cities should respect the language authored by the citizens in initiative and referendum issues,” said Sen. Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston), who vice-chairs the committee. **“Home-rule cities need to stop changing ballot language for their political benefit. The city of Houston has been overturned three times by the Texas Supreme Court in the last year alone, and it is time for that to stop.”**

The city of Houston, has now been overturned in court a total of four times for putting misleading language on the ballot and errantly handling petitions that were lawfully submitted by the citizens of Houston. Three major defeats for the city came in opinions from the Texas Supreme Court with a fourth coming from a state district judge, and there is currently a fifth case pending. Court cases of additional cities ignoring election law continue to surface statewide, making it a widespread issue for the Senate committee to address.

“We know one group of petitioners was actually sued by the city of San Marcos, apparently just because they were trying to use their right to initiative and referendum, and we’ll hear their story Monday,” Sen. Bettencourt added.

Sen. Bettencourt is the vice-chairman of the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations. The committee will meet Monday at 9 a.m. in Capitol Extension, Room E1.012. A live broadcast of the hearing will be available on the [Senate website](#).

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