

OpenVoiceNews U.S.

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

FBI to Assist in Locating Texas Democrats Who Fled State Over Redistricting Dispute

August 8, 2025

Categories: Breaking News



Download IPFS

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Kash Patel has agreed to assist in locating Texas Democratic lawmakers who left the state to block a vote on new congressional

maps, Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) confirmed Thursday. The lawmakers' departure has stalled proceedings in the Texas House of Representatives, where two-thirds of members, 100 out of 150, are required for a quorum.

The new maps, ordered during a special legislative session by President Donald Trump, are expected to increase the Republican Party's advantage in Texas by as many as five congressional seats. Texas currently has 38 congressional districts, 25 represented by Republicans and 13 by Democrats.

Governor Greg Abbott (R-TX) has called for civil arrest of the absent lawmakers and instructed the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to return them to the state. However, DPS lacks jurisdiction beyond Texas borders. Cornyn and Abbott have also raised questions about whether the lawmakers' actions, funded in part by former U.S. Representative Beto O'Rourke's political action committee (PAC) and other Democratic groups, could constitute bribery. The Democrats face fines of \$500 per day in addition to their travel expenses.

"I thank President Trump and Director Patel for supporting and swiftly acting on my call for the federal government to hold these supposed lawmakers accountable for fleeing Texas," Cornyn said. "We cannot allow these rogue legislators to avoid their constitutional responsibilities."

Democratic lawmakers have pushed back, framing the move as an act of protest. State Representative John Bucy (D-TX), one of those who left the state, described the FBI's involvement as "the kind of authoritarian overreach we condemn in other countries." Minority Leader Gene Wu (D-TX) accused Abbott and Trump of pushing through "a racist gerrymandered map" and said his duty was to refuse participation.

This is not the first time Texas Democrats have left the state to prevent a quorum, nor the first time such a move has been used to protest mid-decade redistricting. Abbott has filed a lawsuit with the Texas Supreme Court seeking to remove Wu from office if he does not return. Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton has also announced an investigation into O'Rourke's PAC for financing the lawmakers' travel and fines.

Paxton, who is running against Cornyn in the Republican primary for the U.S. Senate, faces his political challenges. Meanwhile, Democratic contenders, including U.S. Representative Colin Allred, O'Rourke, and State Representative James Talarico, are being floated as possible challengers in the upcoming election.

The standoff highlights a long-standing partisan battle in Texas over redistricting, legislative procedure, and the limits of political protest.