

# [***Texas Independence Switches to Plan B—'Bare-Knuckles Brawling'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B48-H7P1-DY68-1003-00000-00&context=1516831)

Newsweek.com

January 17, 2024 Wednesday 9:59 AM EST

Copyright © 2024 Newsweek Inc. All Rights Reserved



**Length:** 767 words

**Byline:** James Bickerton

**Highlight:** Texan nationalists are pushing a new plan to secure an independence referendum for the state after suffering a legal defeat.

**Body**

A prominent Texan nationalist has outlined a new strategy to secure an independence referendum, which he warned will be "bare-knuckles brawling," after suffering a defeat in state supreme court.

The Texas Nationalist Movement (TNM) claimed it had [*gathered a 139,456-strong petition*](https://www.newsweek.com/texas-independence-leader-vows-war-gop-secession-1859052?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) addressed to the state's Republican Party calling for its primary ballot in March to include a vote on Texan independence, which it dubs TEXIT. It was rejected by Texas GOP Chair Matt Rinaldi, who said "the vast majority of petition signatures were invalid." The requirement to get a vote on the Texas Republican primary ballot was 97,709 valid signatures of registered voters in the state.

In a further blow to the TNM on January 10, the Texas [*Supreme Court*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/supreme-court?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) [*refused to hear a legal challenge*](https://www.newsweek.com/texas-independence-plan-suffers-major-blow-1859834?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) it filed over the petition's rejection. Reacting to the judgment on his *Texas News* podcast, TNM President Daniel Miller said the group will now focus on supporting the election of candidates who have signed its Texas First Pledge, which includes a vow to "vote for legislation and resolutions to call for a vote on Texas reasserting its status as an independent nation."

The TNM runs the Take Texas Back website on which it lists those candidates and elected officials who have signed the Texas First Pledge. The website currently lists 54 people who have signed the pledge, ranging from aspiring Texas [*Senate*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/senate?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and House candidates to precinct chairs, along with 25 who have already been elected.

On his latest podcast edition, "We MUST Elect TEXIT Supporters" released on Monday, Miller said: "You need to support these Texas-first candidates. You need to go to taketexasback.com, you need to find the ones that are nearest to you, you need to donate to as many of them as you can, you need to volunteer, you need to help them knock doors, you need to make phone calls for them and frankly we need you to do it for us too."

In a rallying cry to supporters he added: "It's all-hands-on-deck now folks. This is what the war looks like. Any of you guys who thought that this was a pillow fight, you thought wrong. This is bare-knuckles brawling."

Texas First Pledge signatories vow to "place the interests of Texas and Texans before any other nation, state, political entity, organization, or individual."

They also say that, where possible, "I will vote for legislation and resolutions to call for a vote on Texas reasserting its status as an independent nation in every term that I am elected until such a referendum is held," and that if such a vote is successful they will "work toward a fair and expedient separation of Texas from the federal government placing the interests of Texans first."

During the podcast, Miller specifically targeted the state GOP chair, saying: "The Matt Rinaldis of the world are not going to stop TEXIT. It would be lovely if they could get it through their head that there's not a snowball's chance in hell they will ever stop this thing. It is already well underway.

"Much like Rinaldi said in his letter, the primary has already begun. Guess what, so has TEXIT. The avalanche has already started. It's too late for the pebbles to vote. This is happening and while they may click their heals that they're causing us some inconvenience with this understand what they're celebrating. They're celebrating squelching your voice."

In a statement sent to *Newsweek*, Rinaldi said he welcomed the Texas Supreme Court's decision, saying: "We are thankful the Texas Supreme Court swiftly rejected the Texas Nationalist Movement's petition to allow electronic signatures gathered on the internet to be used for petitions, voter registrations, and mail-in ballots. As we said, and as it took the Supreme Court less than a day to determine, the Republican Party of Texas complied with clear Texas law in rejecting TNM's internet petition."

James Henson, director of the Texas ***Politics*** Project at the University of Texas at Austin, [*told Newsweek that Texan nationalism*](https://www.newsweek.com/what-independent-texas-would-look-like-1854810?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) is more about internal Republican ***politics*** than a serious force in its own right.

"Texas nationalists calling for something akin to a 'Texit' represent some combination of fantasy and symbolic gesture, each divorced from reality," he said...."The GOP party apparatus has become the favored dwelling place of extreme and esoteric elements, where such factions are treated much more seriously than they are among the general public.

"In some areas, they sometimes succeed in moving the center of the party to the right, and in attracting attention to ideas and proposals that have little relation to reality—like the idea of an independent Texas."

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2336920/texas-flag.jpg)

**Graphic**

Texas flag

Tim Warner/GETTY

Stock photo showing the Texas flag before the game between the Houston Cougars and the Texas Longhorns at TDECU Stadium on October 21, 2023 in Houston, Texas. The Texas Nationalist Movement is trying to get sympathetic candidates elected across the state after suffering a legal defeat.

**Load-Date:** January 17, 2024

**End of Document**