

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **ACCELEVATE 2020 LLC WINS RESTRAINING ORDER AGAINST CITY OF HOUSTON FOR FIRST AMENDMENT VIOLATIONS**

HOUSTON – ACCELEVATE 2020 LLC, a ballot access and petition consulting company founded by two brothers from California and Texas, has filed a lawsuit against the City of Houston in Federal District Court for violating the First Amendment rights of would-be petition circulators. The City Charter requires referendum petition circulators to be qualified voters of the City of Houston, effectively silencing millions of Americans.

A hearing for injunctive relief was scheduled for 10:30 AM Monday, July 1<sup>st</sup> before the Honorable Vanessa D. Gilmore of the Southern District of Texas. Plaintiffs are represented by Jerad Najvar of Najvar Law Firm, PLLC and Constitutional Law expert Paul Rossi of Lancaster, PA. Judge Gilmore, a Clinton appointee, held that Accelebrate 2020 LLC is likely to prevail on the merits of the case and entered an order granting an immediate temporary restraining order to forbid Houston from enforcing the challenged circulator residency and voter registration requirements. Citing long established Supreme Court precedent such as *Buckley v. American Constitutional Law Foundation*, Judge Gilmore additionally mandated an alternate jurat to be signed by non-resident circulators.

Trey Pool, CEO of Accelebrate 2020 LLC, notes, “The First Amendment of the Constitution guarantees our sacred right to petition our government. The Supreme Court has made it very clear that restrictions like the one we are challenging in Houston are unconstitutional. We look forward to ultimately prevailing in this suit and applaud Judge Gilmore for granting the TRO upholding our First Amendment rights to petition and redress grievances.”

The Accelebrate 2020 LLC team has collected over a million signatures across the country to ensure ballot access for candidates and causes. Pool adds, “Unfortunately in the course of our work we frequently come across unconstitutional restrictions on our First Amendment rights. All too often, state and local governments seem to want to prevent the people from bringing issues and candidates they care about to a democratic vote. We will continue to fight, because in a democracy, the people should hold the power. We look forward to helping candidates and campaigns let the voters decide the outcome through direct democracy.”

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