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CLIENT ALERT

Texas Lobbying and Government Affairs
Nov. 5, 2026

2026 TEXAS GENERAL ELECTION: UPDATED ANALYSIS

A New Texas: What Tuesday's Results Mean for Your 2027 Agenda

Texas voters elected Democrats to every statewide executive office on Tuesday, ending a Republican winning streak that began in 1994. In one night, the state chose a Democratic U.S. senator, governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, comptroller, land commissioner, agriculture commissioner, and railroad commissioner, along with all four Texas Supreme Court justices on the ballot. Democrats also flipped the Texas House and will control both chambers of Congress. Every political or regulatory relationship your organization relies on in Austin and Washington is about to change dramatically.

THE BOTTOM LINE

- **A 32-year streak ends in one night.** Republicans had won every statewide race in Texas since 1994. On Tuesday, Democrats won all eight statewide executive races and all four Texas Supreme Court seats on the ballot.
- **A new governor sets the agenda.** Gov.-elect Gina Hinojosa will be the first Democratic governor since Ann Richards and the first Latina governor in Texas history. She will set emergency items, appoint agency leaders, and hold the line-item veto.
- **A new presiding officer in the Senate.** Lt. Gov.-elect Vikki Goodwin defeated Dan Patrick, who has run the Texas Senate since 2015. She will preside over a chamber where Republicans still hold 19 of 31 seats.
- **Democrats flip the Texas House.** Democrats flipped 21 Republican-held seats and will hold 83 of 150, their first majority since 2003 and enough to elect a speaker without a single Republican vote. Rep. Senfronia Thompson has launched her campaign for speaker.
- **A Democratic senator in a Democratic Congress.** U.S. Senator-elect James Talarico is the first Democrat elected to the U.S. Senate from Texas since 1988. By our count, Democrats will hold 56 Senate seats and about 259 House seats, giving him more power than the senior senator from Texas.

01. RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Office	Result	Status	What changed
U.S. Senate	James Talarico (D)	AP call	First Democratic senator since 1988
Governor	Gina Hinojosa (D)	Conceded	First Democrat since 1995; first Latina
Lt. governor	Vikki Goodwin (D)	Won	Defeated Dan Patrick (R)
Attorney general	Nathan Johnson (D)	Won	Defeated Mayes Middleton (R)
Comptroller	Sarah Eckhardt (D)	Won	Unseated Don Huffines (R)
Land	Benjamin Flores (D)	Won	Defeated Dawn Buckingham (R)
Agriculture	Clayton Tucker (D)	Won	First Democrat elected in 40 years
Railroad Commission	Jon Rosenthal (D)	Won	First Democrat in seat in 32 years
Texas Supreme Court	Democrats, 4 of 4	Won	All four seats on the ballot
Texas House	83 D, 67 R	Flipped	21 seats flipped; first D majority since 2003
Texas Senate	19 R, 12 D	Held	R keep majority; a Democrat presides
U.S. House (Texas)	24 R, 14 D	Called	D flipped TX-15, TX-23; R flipped TX-32
U.S. House	259 D, 176 R	Projected	Democratic majority; net D gain of about 45
U.S. Senate (nation)	56 D, 44 R	Projected	Net D gain of 9; counts MS and AK as D

Results as of 11 a.m., Nov. 5, 2026. Sources: The Associated Press, NBC News, CBS News, Texas Secretary of State, Texas Tribune and The Texan.

02. THE BIG PICTURE: A STATEWIDE REALIGNMENT

Tuesday's shift was not confined to one region or one candidate. In early returns, Collin County, the largest county in the country that had not backed a statewide Democrat this century, voted for Talarico by 13 points. Tarrant and Kaufman counties, which Republicans carried in 2024, moved toward Democrats by 20 points or more. In the Rio Grande Valley, Starr County went from a Republican win in 2024 to a Democratic margin of nearly 60 points.

The result is a new governing map. Democrats will hold the statewide executive offices and the Texas House, while Republicans keep the Texas Senate. Most major bills in 2027 will need coalitions that did not exist a year ago, and the organizations that adapt first will have the strongest hand.

03. GOVERNOR: A NEW ADMINISTRATION IN AUSTIN

State Rep. Gina Hinojosa defeated Gov. Greg Abbott, who conceded Tuesday night. She will be the first Democrat to lead the state since Ann Richards left office in 1995 and the first Latina governor in Texas history. She takes the oath Jan. 19.

Her administration will take shape over the next 10 weeks. Public education, her signature issue in the House, is likely to be an early focus, and Gov. Abbott's data center directives from this summer will be reviewed by a new team.

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Her formal powers are significant. She sets emergency items, holds a line-item veto on the budget and appoints most state board and commission members. The Legislature has not overridden a governor's veto since 1979.

The changes reach beyond the governor's office. Attorney General-elect Nathan Johnson will reset enforcement priorities, and Comptroller-elect Sarah Eckhardt will issue the January revenue estimate that caps state spending. Democrats will also lead the Land Office, the Agriculture Department and one of three Railroad Commission seats.

04. TEXAS HOUSE: DEMOCRATS FLIP THE CHAMBER

Democrats flipped 21 Republican-held seats and will hold 83 of 150, up from 62. It is their first majority since 2003, and at 83 seats Democrats can elect a speaker and pass bills on a party-line vote. Sixteen Republican incumbents lost, including Rep. Angie Chen Button of Richardson, the longest-serving member defeated.

The flips came in every major metro area and along the border: seven seats in Dallas-Fort Worth, six in Houston, three in Central Texas, three in South Texas and two in San Antonio. That breadth is why we read this as a realignment, not a reaction to one candidate.

The speaker's race is moving fast. Rep. Senfronia Thompson of Houston, the dean of the House, launched her campaign Wednesday with the endorsement of Democratic Caucus Chair Gene Wu. She would be the first woman and the first Black speaker in Texas history. Rep. Joe Moody of El Paso, a former speaker pro tem, is also considering running. Speaker Dustin Burrows won reelection in Lubbock, but with 83 Democrats, his path to a second term runs through a caucus he campaigned against this fall.

For business, the speaker names committee chairs and decides which bills reach the floor. Expect a Democratic speaker to elevate school funding, health care access and utility protections, and to look harder at incentive and energy bills. The House elects its speaker Jan. 12.

Three Paths to the Gavel

Scenario	How it happens	What it means for business
Democratic speaker	Thompson or Moody wins the caucus vote and holds all 83 Democrats.	The most likely outcome. The first Democratic speaker since Pete Laney, with the most turnover in chairs.
Bipartisan coalition	A Democrat wins with a bloc of Republicans, or a Republican wins with Democratic votes, as Burrows did in 2025.	More continuity, with chairs shared between the parties.
Republican speaker	Republicans unite and win over at least nine Democrats.	Highly unlikely. Chairs aligned with Republican priorities.

05. TEXAS SENATE: A DEMOCRAT PRESIDES OVER A REPUBLICAN MAJORITY

Lt. Gov.-elect Vikki Goodwin is the first Democrat elected lieutenant governor since 1994. Republicans hold 19 of 31 seats, unchanged from before the election, and Democrat Taylor Rehmet

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won a full term in Senate District 9. Special elections will fill the Dallas and Austin seats that Sens. Nathan Johnson and Sarah Eckhardt are leaving for statewide office.

That split sets up the defining fight of January. Much of the lieutenant governor's power to name committees and steer bills comes from Senate rules, which the Senate adopts at the start of each session. Republicans have the 18 votes needed to bring bills to the floor without Democrats, and they could use the rules vote to limit the new lieutenant governor's authority. That vote will show how the Senate works for the next two years.

06. U.S. SENATE: A DEMOCRATIC SENATOR FOR TEXAS

James Talarico defeated Attorney General Ken Paxton. He is the first Democrat elected to the U.S. Senate from Texas since Lloyd Bentsen in 1988, and he arrives as part of a Democratic majority of 56 seats, by our count. Many Texas companies have no working relationship with a Democratic senator. He will name his chief of staff and Texas state director in the coming weeks, and introductions made now carry the most weight.

07. U.S. HOUSE AND SENATE: A DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS

Democrats will control both chambers of Congress in January, with 56 Senate seats, a net gain of nine, and about 259 House seats, their largest majority in nearly two decades.

The Senate: 56 Democrats, 44 Republicans

Democrats flipped Republican seats in Texas, Kansas, Iowa, Ohio, Maine, North Carolina and South Carolina. Two races remain uncalled, and we call both for Democrats: Scott Colom leads Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith in Mississippi by about 1,000 votes, and Mary Peltola leads Sen. Dan Sullivan in Alaska by about 600.

The House: 259 Democrats, 176 Republicans

About 40 House races were still uncalled Thursday morning. Our calls on the closest races that remain:

District	Where it stands	Our call
Maine 2	Paul LePage (R) and Matt Dunlap (D) within 0.2 points	Dunlap (D)
Arizona 2	Jonathan Nez (D) leads Rep. Eli Crane (R)	Nez (D)
Michigan 4	Democrat leads Rep. Bill Huizenga (R)	Democrat
North Carolina 6	Democrat leads Rep. Addison McDowell (R)	Democrat
New York 1	Rep. Nick LaLota (R) holds a small lead	LaLota (R)
Washington 4	Amanda McKinney (R) leads John Duresky (D)	McKinney (R)

The Texas Delegation: 24 Republicans, 14 Democrats

The new congressional map was designed to add five Republican seats. It added one, as Jace Yarbrough flipped TX-32, while Republicans lost TX-15 to Bobby Pulido and TX-23 to Katy Padilla Stout. Democrats also won TX-9, TX-28, TX-34 and TX-35, all redrawn to favor Republicans. The 14 Texas Democrats will serve in the majority for the first time since 2010.

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08. WHAT WE RECOMMEND NOW

1. **Test your agenda against the new map.** Assume every office that touches your issues has new leadership. List your priority bills, the committees likely to hear them and the officials who will decide them.
2. **Build relationships on both sides.** Many companies have deep relationships with only one party. In a divided Capitol, every bill needs a bipartisan path.
3. **Meet the new teams early.** Every new statewide official and the senator-elect will build a staff over the next 60 days. Introductions are easiest before those teams are set.
4. **Engage before filing, with numbers.** Pre-filing opens Nov. 9, and the Legislature convenes and elects its speaker Jan. 12. Fiscal notes, cost estimates and jobs data will drive the data center, grid and water debates.

WHY A REPUBLICAN BRIDGE MATTERS NOW

- **A Republican with standing in both caucuses.** I served three terms in the Texas House as a Republican, and I have spent my career building relationships on both sides of the aisle.
- **Close ties to the new leadership.** This year I publicly endorsed my friend James Talarico, as many Republicans did. I served in the House with Gov.-elect Gina Hinojosa, and I know the Democrats who will lead the executive branch and the Texas House.
- **Trusted by the Republicans who still decide.** Republicans still hold the Texas Senate and 67 House seats, and their votes still matter in both chambers. I know them, and they know me.
- **One team for both sides.** Our clients get an advocate who can make their case to both parties, in terms each side values, from the first week of the transition.

We will brief clients on the transition, the speaker's race and the committee outlook as the picture develops. We would welcome 30 minutes with you and your team before Dec. 1. Please reply to this alert or contact me directly, and we will make it easy.



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Jason leads FBT Gibbons' Texas Lobbying and Government Affairs Practice and its Water and Infrastructure Governmental Relations practice. He served three terms in the Texas House, representing Dallas from 2013 to 2019, and is a frequent commentator on Texas politics on statewide television and at the Texas Tribune Festival. His practice spans state and federal advocacy, corporate law, public finance and infrastructure.

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