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SUBJECT: 2020 General Election Results – Texas

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## 2020 General Election

The results of the elections are in (mostly), and 2020 continues to be unprecedented in recent memory in terms of redefining what is considered “normal”. Prior to these elections, Republicans held a majority across all levels of state government. But shifting voter demographics, the Covid-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty social upheaval, and a polarizing race for President have all combined to create a dynamic election that has driven more voters than ever to turn out. This increase voter participation did not result in the significant shift in Texas politics that many predicted. More than 9.7 million Texans voted early and another heavy vote count on Election Day obliterated the record for voter turnout in any previous election in the state but did not ultimately change the balance of power in the state.

Some votes remain to be counted, and data will still be coming in for the next several days and need to be canvassed and certified by election officials. At the end of the night, Republicans will still control all statewide offices, the Texas House of Representatives and the Texas Senate. Democrats will pick up a seat in the Texas Senate and potentially make progress in the Texas House but the balance of power will stay intact at least for this political cycle.

The team at Imperium Public Affairs has compiled this memo to analyze the election results and provide information about how the 2020 elections will impact the political power structure in Texas for the near future. We will provide updates regularly as they become available. As always, if you have any questions or need for more information, please feel free to contact us directly.

## Texas Legislature

### *Texas House of Representatives:*

The current makeup of the Texas House is 83 Republicans and 67 Democrats, giving the Republicans solid control over the legislative agenda of the lower house. The retirement of House Speaker Dennis Bonnen signified that there would a leadership change in the House,

which also guarantees changes in committee chairs and committee composition in 2021. However, Democrats have positioned this cycle as their best opportunity in decades to seize control of the chamber, but to do so they needed to retain the 12 seats they picked up two years ago and pick up 9 more in this election.

While the vote counts in some of these races will likely change, and recounts may be called, these are the numbers available after the first count and based on best available data. If these numbers hold true, the Republicans will maintain an **83-67** advantage in the Texas House of Representatives in 2021.

### **KEY RACES (THESE NUMBERS ARE PRELIMINARY AND REQUIRE CERTIFICATION)**

#### **Incumbents that lost:**

- HD 132: Rep. Gina Calanni (D-Katy) lost to former Rep. Mike Schofield, 52% - 48%
- HD 134: Rep. Sarah Davis (R-Houston) lost to Ann Johnson, 47% - 53%

#### **Republican incumbents that defended against Democrat opponents:**

- HD 14: Rep. Jon Raney (R-College Station) defeated Janet Dudding, 57% - 42%
- HD 28: Rep. Gary Gates (R-Rosenberg) defeated Eliz Markowitz, 52% - 48%
- HD 54: Rep. Brad Buckley (R-Salado) defeated Keke Williams, 54% - 46%
- HD 64: Rep. Lynn Stucky (R-Sanger) defeated Angela Brewer, 55% - 45%
- HD 66: Rep. Matt Shaheed (R-Plano) defeated Shanon Hirsch, 49.7% - 48.5%
- HD 67: Rep. Jeff Leach (R-Allen) defeated Lorenzo Sanchez, 52% - 48%
- HD 93: Rep. Matt Krause (R-Fort Worth) defeated Lydia Bean, 55% - 45%
- HD 94: Rep. Tony Tinderholt (R-Arlington) defeated Alisa Simmons, 51% - 46%
- HD 97: Rep. Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) defeated Elizabeth Beck, 53% - 45%
- HD 108: Rep. Morgan Meyer (R-Dallas) defeated Joanna Cattanach, 49.6% - 48.2%
- **HD 112: Rep. Angie Chen Button (R-Garland) defeated Brandy Chambers, 49% - 48.6%**
- HD 121: Rep. Steve Allison (R-San Antonio) defeated Celina Montoya, 54% - 46%
- HD 126: Rep. Sam Harless (R-Spring) defeated Natali Hurtado, 53% - 47%
- HD 133: Rep. Jim Murphy (R-Houston) defeated Sandra Moore, 57% - 42%

#### **Democrat incumbents that defended against Republican opponents:**

- HD 45: Rep. Erin Zwiener (D-Driftwood) defeated Carrie Isaac, 50.5% - 49.5%

- HD 47: Rep. Vikki Goodwin (D-Austin) defeated Justin Berry, 49% - 48%
- HD 52: Rep. James Talarico (D-Round Rock) defeated Lucio Valdez, 51% - 49%
- HD 65: Rep. Michelle Beckley (D-Carrollton) defeated Kronda Thimesch, 52% - 48%
- HD 102: Rep. Ana-Maria Ramos (D-Richardson) defeated Lind Koop, 54% - 46%
- HD 113: Rep. Rhetta Bowers (D-Rowlett) defeated Will Douglas, 51.6% - 48.3%
- HD 114: Rep. John Turner (D-Dallas) defeated Luisa Del Rosal, 54% - 46%
- **HD 135: Rep. Jon Rosenthal (D-Houston) defeated Justin Ray, 49.1% - 48.6%**
- HD 136: Rep. John Bucy (D-Cedar Park) defeated Mike Guevara, 53% - 47%

#### **Open Seats:**

- HD 10: Jake Ellzey (R) defeated Matt Savino (L), 76% - 24%
  - Rep. John Wray (R-Midlothian) did not seek re-election
- HD 25: Cody Thane Vasut (R) defeated Patrick Henry (D), 72% - 28%
  - Speaker Dennis Bonnen (R-Angleton) did not seek re-election
- HD 26: Jacey Jetton (R) defeated Sarah DeMerchant (D), 52% - 48%
  - Rep. Rick Miller (R-Sugar Land) did not seek re-election
- HD 74: Eddie Morales (D) defeated Ruben Falcon (R), 54% - 46%
  - Rep. Poncho Nevarez (D-Eagle Pass) did not seek re-election
- HD 92: Jeff Carson (R) defeated Jeff Whittfield (D), 51% - 47%
  - Rep. Jonathan Stickland (R-Bedford) did not seek re-election
- HD 96: David Cook (R) defeated Joe Drago (D), 51% - 46%
  - Rep. Bill Zedler (R-Arlington) did not seek re-election
- HD 119: Liz Campos (D) defeated George Garza (R), 62% - 35%
  - Rep. Roland Gutierrez (D-San Antonio) did not seek re-election to run for state senate
- HD 138: Lacey Hull (R) defeated Akilah Bacy (D), 51.5% - 48.5%
  - Rep. Dwayne Bohac (R-Houston) did not seek re-election
- **HD 148: Luis LaRotta (R) was defeated Penny Morales Shaw (D), 64% - 36%(incomplete)**
  - Rep. Anna Eastman (D-Houston) was defeated in the primary election

#### **Newly elected without general election opponent:**

- HD 59: Shelby Slawson (R)

- Rep. J.D. Sheffield (R-Gatesville) was defeated in the primary election.
- HD 60: Glenn Rogers (R)
  - Rep. Mike Lang (R-Granbury) did not seek re-election.
- HD 76: Claudia Ordaz Perez (D)
  - Rep. Cesar Blanco (D-El Paso) did not seek re-election to run for state senate.
- HD 100: Jasmine Felicia Crockett (D)
  - Rep. Lorraine Birabil (D-Dallas) was defeated in the primary election.

The House's Next Order of Business will be selecting a Speaker to lead the body. This internal election will have significant implications for the upcoming 2021 legislative session with the members of the House of Representatives voting amongst themselves to determine who will replace Dennis Bonnen as Speaker of the House. A simple majority of all members of the House is all that is technically necessary to pick the winner. The speaker's race could continue for days or months. At this time it's too soon to tell how long it will last or how many candidates will ultimately run for it, but we do know that House members will need to have a decision on the first day of the legislative session.

*Texas Senate:*

Republicans currently hold a super-majority (more than the 3/5 required to consider legislation) in the Texas Senate, with a split of 19 Republicans to 13 Democrats. While there was only one truly competitive Senate race on the ballot, the Democrats had the opportunity to force Republicans below the "three-fifths" threshold, giving them significantly more power as the minority party to impact the control of the legislative agenda in the upper chamber.

The competitive Senate race, SD 19, featured a race between the incumbent Senator Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) who faced a challenge by current state representative Roland Gutierrez (D-San Antonio). Sen. Flores won the seat for this historically Democratic district in a special election in 2018 after the Democrat occupying the seat was forced to resign due to legal entanglements. Democrats were hoping to flip this seat back in their favor this election cycle, and were successful in closing the gap in the Texas Senate. Although Republicans made significant gains in many of the areas of SD 19 from the presidential ballot down to this race, this historically Democrat-held seat anchored in San Antonio proved to follow that pattern and vote overwhelmingly for Representative Gutierrez.

**Contested Seat:**

- SD 19: Senator Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) lost to Rep. Roland Gutierrez (D-San Antonio),  
31% - 65%

**Open Seat:**

- SD 29: Rep. Cesar Blanco (D-El Paso) defeated Bethany Hatch (D), 67% - 33%
  - Sen. José Rodríguez (D-El Paso) did not seek re-election

Prior to current Lt. Gov. Patrick taking office the Senate operated for decades under the “two-thirds rule.” Patrick lowered that threshold to three-fifths to align the state senate policy with the U.S. Senate and give Republicans more control over priority legislation. While he has not stated explicitly that he intends to make any changes to the three-fifths rule in 2021, he has commented on the possibility and therefore it is worth noting that it is not outside the realm of possibility for him to attempt to lower the standard again in the future.

Also impacting the Senate dynamic is the upcoming special election to replace the Senator representing Senate District 30. Sitting Senator Pat Fallon (R-Denton) was selected to replace an outgoing member of congress and announced his resignation [effective January 4, 2020], prompting Governor Abbott to call an emergency special election to find a replacement to serve out the two remaining years of the term. Republicans control this seat and it is unlikely to flip, but the run off race set for December 19 between state representative Drew Springer (R-Muenster) and political newcomer Shelly Luther can make for interesting internal dynamics for republicans in the senate depending on the outcome.

**Texas Executive Branch Officials***Railroad Commissioner:*

Jim Wright (R) defeated incumbent Commissioner Ryan Sitton in an upset Republican Primary Election. He is faced Chrysta Castañeda, the Democratic nominee, in the general election. Castañeda announced that she had received \$2.6 million in donations from former New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg, which accounted for nearly 70% of her contributions in the final reporting period. Despite these large expenditures, the Republican candidate prevailed with a comfortable margin that looks insurmountable as the final votes are tallied.

- RRC: Jim Wright (R) defeated Chrysta Castañeda (D), 53%-43%

**Texas Congressional Delegation**

*United States House of Representatives:*

The partisan makeup on the Texas Congressional delegation remains at 23-13 in favor of Republicans.

- CD 2: Rep. Dan Crenshaw (R-Houston) defeated Sima Ladjevardian (D), 56% - 42%
- CD 3: Rep. Van Taylor (R-Plano) defeated Lulu Seikaly (D), 55% - 43%
- CD 4: Pat Fallon (R-Prosper) defeated Russell Foster (D), 75% - 23%
- CD 5: Rep. Lance Gooden (R-Terrell) defeated Carolyn Salter (D), 53% - 44%
- CD 6: Rep. Ron Wright (R-Arlington) defeated Stephen Daniel (D), 53% - 44%
- CD 7: Rep. Lizzie Fletcher (D-Houston) defeated Wesley Hunt (R), 50.8% - 47.5%
- CD 10: Rep. Michael McCaul (R-Austin) defeated Mike Siegel (D), 53% - 45%
- CD 15: Rep. Vicente Gonzalez (D-McAllen) defeated Monica De la Cruz-Hernandez (R), 50.5% - 47.6%
- CD 17 (Open): Pete Sessions (R-Dallas) defeated Rick Kennedy (D), 56% - 41%
  - Rep. Bill Flores (R-Bryan) did not seek re-election
- CD 21: Rep. Chip Roy (R-Austin) defeated Wendy Davis (D), 52% - 45%
- CD 22 (Open): Troy Nehls (R-Richmond) defeated Sri Kulkarni (D-Sugar Land), 49.7% - 42.7%
  - Rep. Pete Olson (R-Sugar Land) did not seek re-election
- CD 23 (Open): Tony Gonzales II (R-San Antonio) defeated Gina Ortiz Jones (D-San Antonio), 50.7% - 46.5%
  - Rep. Will Hurd (R-Helotes) did not seek re-election
- CD 24 (Open): Beth Van Duyne (R-Irving) defeated Candace Valenzuela (D-Carrollton), 48.8% - 47.5%
  - Rep. Kenny Marchant (R-Coppell) did not seek re-election
- CD 25: Rep. Roger Williams (R-Austin) defeated Julie Oliver (D), 56% - 42%
- CD 31: Rep. John Carter (R-Round Rock) defeated Donna Imam (D), 54% - 44%
- CD 32: Rep. Colin Allred (D-Dallas) defeated Genevieve Collins (R), 52%-46%
- CD 34: Rep. Filemon Vela (D-Brownsville) defeated Rey Gonzalez (R), 54% - 43%

*United States Senate:*

- SEN 2: Sen. John Cornyn (R-San Antonio) defeated M.J. Heger (D), 53%-43%

### **President of the United States**

Nationally, President Donald Trump (R) and former Vice President Joe Biden (D) are in a dead heat, but the race is still too close to call.

In Texas, more than 11 million voters participated in the 2020 Presidential Election. President Trump won the State of Texas with 52.3% of vote, continuing the trend for Texas of voting for the Republican as far back as 1976.