THE 2026 MIDTERMS

Texas in 2026: Turnout, Results, and What Changed

What the midterm results and turnout shifts could mean for Texas and its 40 electoral votes in the 2028 presidential election.

In 2026, Gina Hinojosa became the first Democrat elected Texas governor in 36 years, since Ann Richards won in 1990. James Talarico became the first Democrat elected to the U.S. Senate from Texas in 38 years, since Lloyd Bentsen won reelection in 1988. Republicans retained 24 of Texas's 38 U.S. House seats. The preliminary count showed about 1.8 million more votes for governor than in 2022.

Governor results · Senate results · Bentsen election history · Texas returns

The Democratic vote grew far more than Abbott's

Hinojosa drew 1.68 million more votes than Beto O'Rourke in 2022, and Abbott gained about 87,000. The preliminary governor's count was 9,907,381, up from 8,102,908 in 2022. An earlier turnout snapshot reported about 9.8 million ballots among 19 million registered voters (51.6%). Texas reported 45.85% turnout among 17.67 million registered voters in 2022.

Texas Secretary of State returns · 2022 governor results · Texas Secretary of State 2022 turnout · Texas Tribune turnout analysis

The metros supplied volume and the border swung hard

Harris, Dallas, and Tarrant counties added about **563,000** Democratic governor votes combined, roughly one-third of the statewide gain. Across the 16 border counties, turnout rose by **more than eight percentage points** from 2022. In Hidalgo County, the Democratic margin widened from about 18 to 42 points. Hinojosa gained about 61,000 votes over O'Rourke's total while Abbott's count barely moved.

Texas Tribune turnout analysis · ABC News county returns · 2022 county results

Texas U.S. House Results

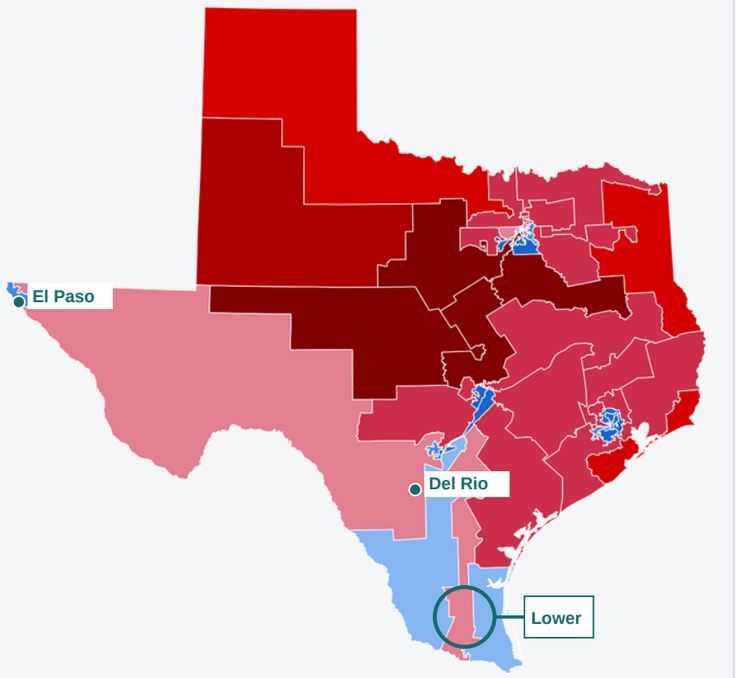
Republicans won 25 of 38 seats in 2022 and 2024, then 24 in 2026 under redrawn district lines. 2026 returns are unofficial.

TEXAS·MEXICO BORDER COUNTIES

El Paso · Presidio · Val Verde · Maverick · Webb
Lower border · Zapata · Starr · Hidalgo · Cameron

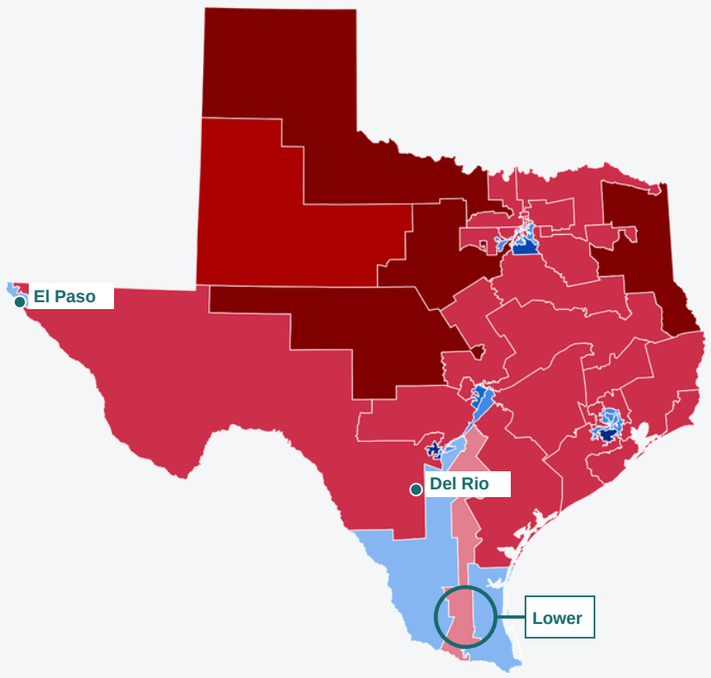
2022

25 Republican · 13 Democratic



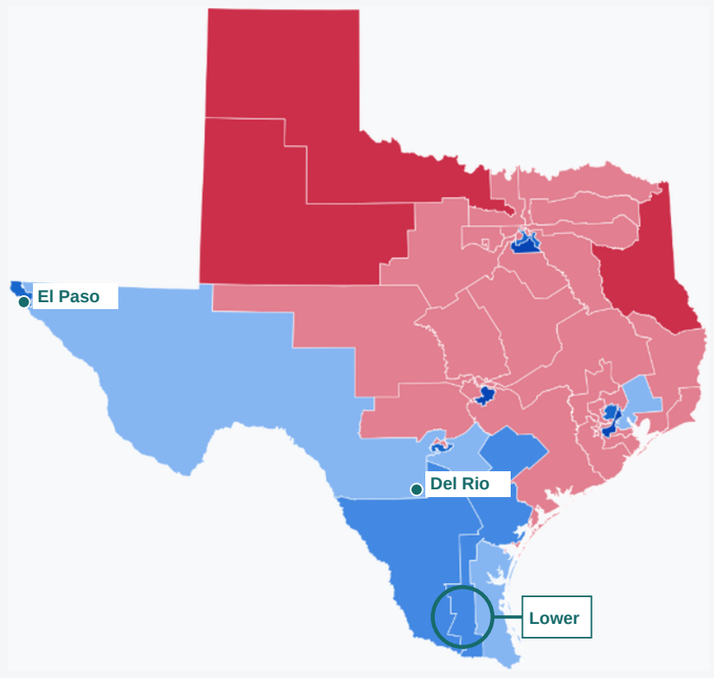
2024

25 Republican · 13 Democratic



2026

24 Republican · 14 Democratic



Winner’s share of votes cast

Republican 2022–24	50–60%	60–70%	70–80%	80–90%	90%+
Democratic 2022–24	50–60%	60–70%	70–80%	80–90%	90%+
Republican 2026	50–60%	60–70%			
Democratic 2026	50–60%	60–70%	70–80%	80–90%	

Republicans kept 24 of 38 seats after redistricting, down from 25 in 2024. Compare the deep reds in 2024 with the lighter reds in 2026. The 2024 map includes Republican winners above 70%, while the 2026 map shows Republican winners in the 50–60% and 60–70% bands. The lighter reds show lower Republican winning vote shares across the map. Redrawn boundaries and uncontested races limit comparisons between individual districts.

Historical maps: Wikimedia Commons 2024 House Clerk results 2026 state district returns Shading shown in the panels is illustrative. Consult the linked returns for exact shares.

Texas Governor Results

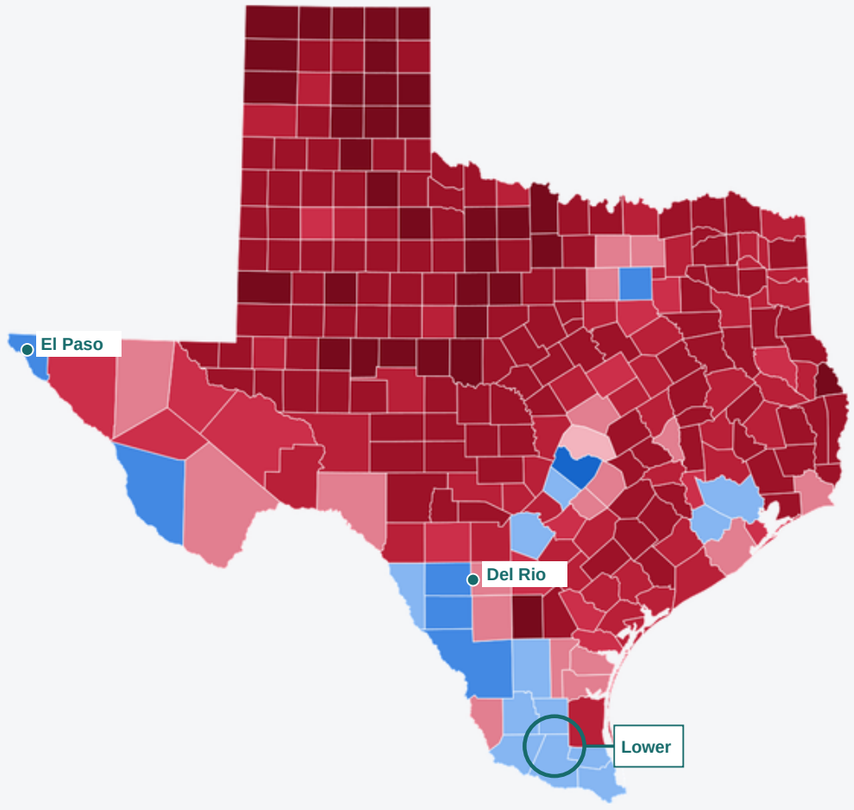
County winners and vote share in 2022 and 2026. The 2026 returns are unofficial.

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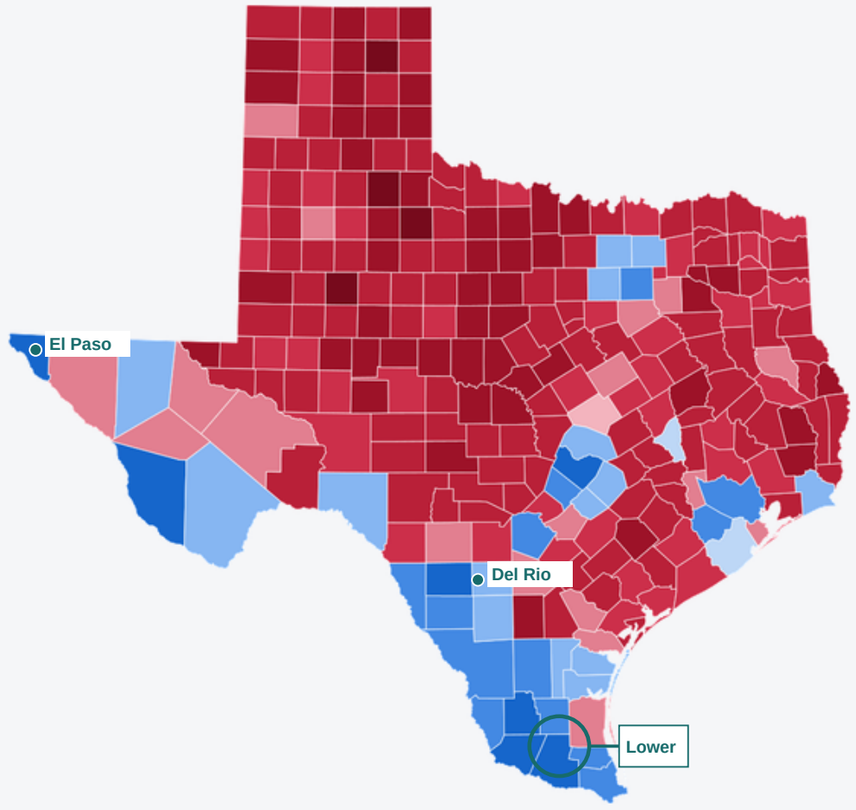
2022

Greg Abbott (R) won · 54.76%



2026

Gina Hinojosa (D) won · 52.80%



Winner’s share of votes cast

Republican	Under 50%	50–60%	60–70%	70–80%	80–90%	90%+
Democratic	Under 50%	50–60%	60–70%	70–80%	80–90%	90%+

What the map shows Abbott won 54.76% statewide in 2022. Hinojosa won 52.80% in 2026, with gains across the major metros and along the border. County area can make the map look more Republican than the statewide tally because counties cast very different numbers of votes.

2022 county map 2026 county returns (ABC/AP) 2026 state results feed Shading shown in the panels is illustrative. Consult the linked returns for exact shares.

Texas U.S. Senate Results

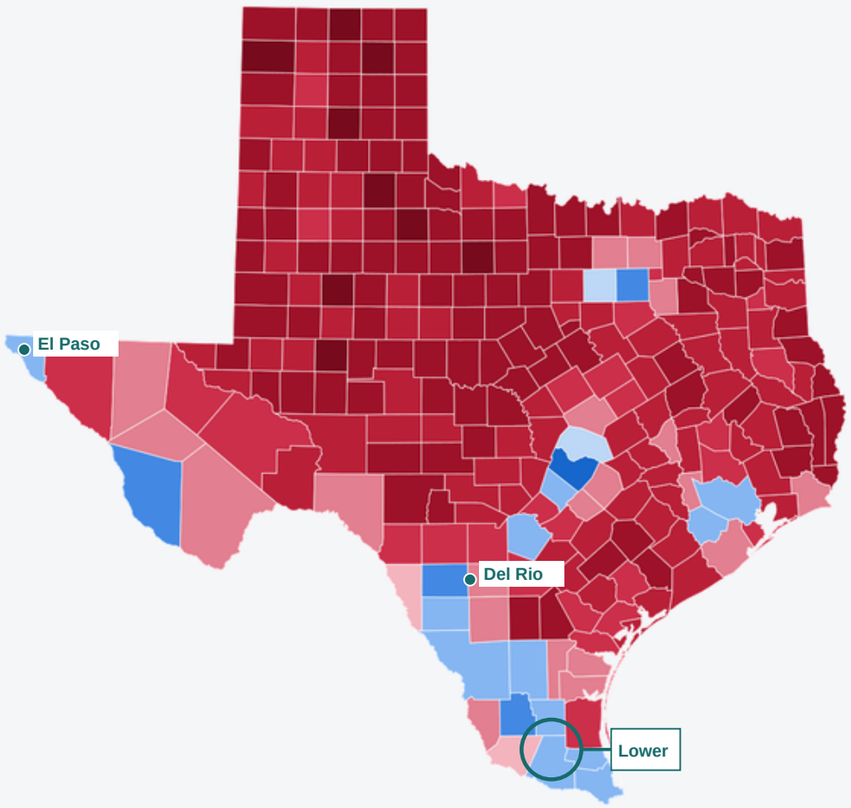
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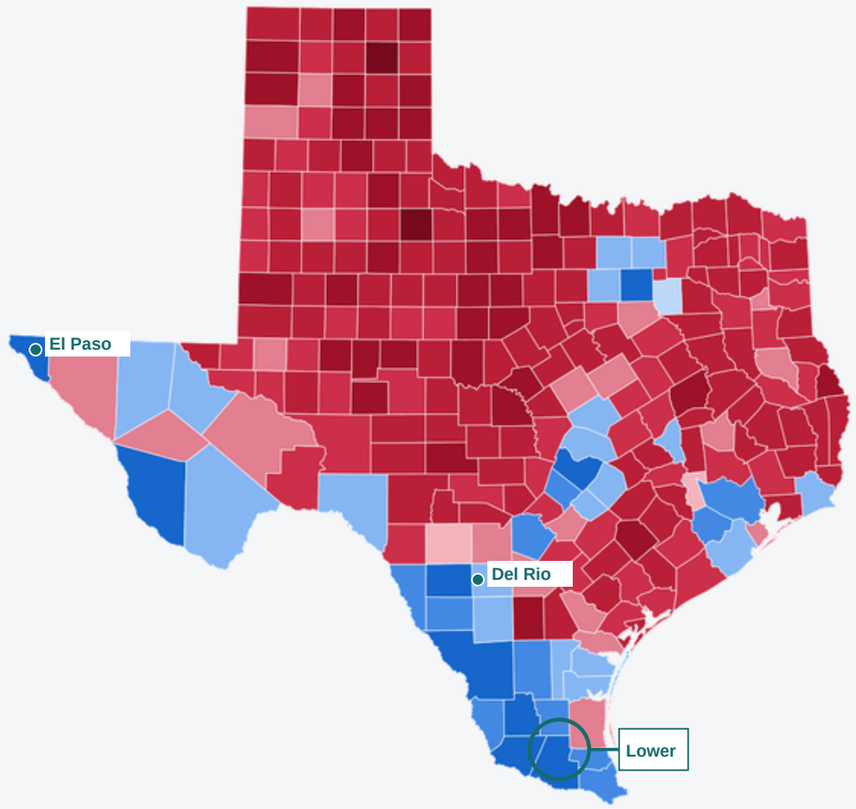
2024

Ted Cruz (R) won · 53.05%



2026

James Talarico (D) won · 55.06%



Winner’s share of votes cast

Republican	Under 50%	50–60%	60–70%	70–80%	80–90%	90%+
Democratic	Under 50%	50–60%	60–70%	70–80%	80–90%	90%+

What the map shows Cruz won 53.05% statewide in 2024, while Talarico won 55.06% in 2026. The Democratic gains visible around major metros and along the Texas–Mexico border also appear on the governor’s map. The comparison spans a presidential year and a midterm, so turnout and the candidates both matter.

2024 county map 2026 state results feed and county data 2026 state returns Shading shown in the panels is illustrative. Consult the linked returns for exact shares.

What changed under the new House map

Republicans won one of five targeted seats and lost two they held. Across all Texas U.S. House races, the reported Democratic vote share rose from 40.4% in 2024 to 52.6% in 2026. The Republican share fell from 58.4% to 46.9%. These totals include districts with different candidate lineups. House seats are decided district by district. Governor, U.S. Senate, and presidential votes are tallied statewide, and the presidential winner gets all 40 Texas electoral votes.

2024 House totals · Preliminary 2026 House totals · AP redistricting analysis

What changed in Congress in 2026

Democrats flipped TX-15 around McAllen and TX-23, which stretches toward El Paso. They held TX-16 in El Paso, TX-28 around Laredo, and TX-34 along the lower border. House map colors show district winners. Statewide races provide the county-by-county results.

TEXAS–MEXICO BORDER COUNTIES

Republican presidential support along the border

Across the 16 counties, an estimated 2.37 million of 2.68 million residents (88.5%) were Hispanic or Latino. The Census estimates cover all residents, including children and noncitizens, regardless of immigration status. Election figures are shares of presidential votes cast.

U.S. Census Bureau · 2020–2024 ACS, Table B03003

Border county	Bush 2004	Trump 2016	Trump 2024	2016–24 (pp)	Latino residents %
El Paso	43.2%	25.9%	41.8%	+15.9	82.7%
Hudspeth	65.1%	57.7%	73.1%	+15.4	66.7%
Culberson	51.6%	36.5%	57.8%	+21.2	78.0%
Jeff Davis	65.5%	58.4%	59.8%	+1.4	30.1%
Presidio	37.8%	29.5%	34.4%	+4.9	79.5%
Brewster	52.7%	48.8%	55.6%	+6.7	42.1%
Terrell	65.2%	65.8%	77.5%	+11.8	40.1%
Val Verde	59.1%	43.3%	62.8%	+19.6	81.2%
Kinney	65.7%	65.5%	74.9%	+9.5	57.5%
Maverick	40.1%	20.7%	59.0%	+38.2	94.8%
Dimmit	33.3%	30.2%	48.2%	+18.0	87.1%
Webb	42.7%	22.8%	50.7%	+27.9	95.0%
Zapata	42.4%	32.7%	61.0%	+28.2	93.9%
Starr	26.1%	18.9%	57.8%	+38.8	97.2%
Hidalgo	44.8%	28.0%	51.0%	+22.9	91.9%
Cameron	50.3%	32.0%	52.5%	+20.5	89.3%

In Starr, Bush took 26.1%, Trump fell to 18.9% in 2016, then reached 57.8% in 2024. Hidalgo followed the same pattern, from 44.8% to 28.0% to 51.0%. El Paso also rebounded after 2016 but stayed below Bush’s 2004 share. Trump made border security and tougher immigration enforcement central to his campaigns. The returns show how support changed across those campaigns, while voter interviews offer context about why some voters moved.

The 2026 midterms put those Republican gains in doubt. Democrat James Talarico carried nine border counties that Trump had won two years earlier. That is a setback for Republicans heading into 2028. The next Republican nominee will have to win back support in counties that swung away in 2026, and it is unclear how much of Trump’s 2024 coalition can be rebuilt.

Even where Republicans fall below 50% or lose a House district, every presidential vote they earn still counts toward the statewide total, which is why losing ground in the border counties could cost them all 40 of Texas’s electoral votes in a close 2028 race.

Texas border definition · 2004 returns · 2016 Texas canvass · 2024 returns · 2024 border reporting · 2026 border returns

What Texas–Mexico border communities experienced

During the Biden administration, rising crossings strained local services at several points along the Texas–Mexico border. In El Paso, shelters filled. Del Rio dealt with a large encampment near its international bridge, and McAllen opened a temporary shelter in a park. The effects varied by county and over time.

In 2024, reporting linked some voters’ support for Trump to frustration over border management. By 2026, interviews with some former Trump supporters pointed to concerns about affordability and how ICE enforcement affected local families and businesses. Taken together, the accounts suggest that voters can support tighter border controls and still object to how enforcement works in their communities. The interviews illustrate why trust matters, while the returns measure the change in votes.

El Paso shelter capacity · Del Rio in 2021 · McAllen in 2021 · 2024 border reporting · 2026 voter interviews

ICE enforcement made immigration personal

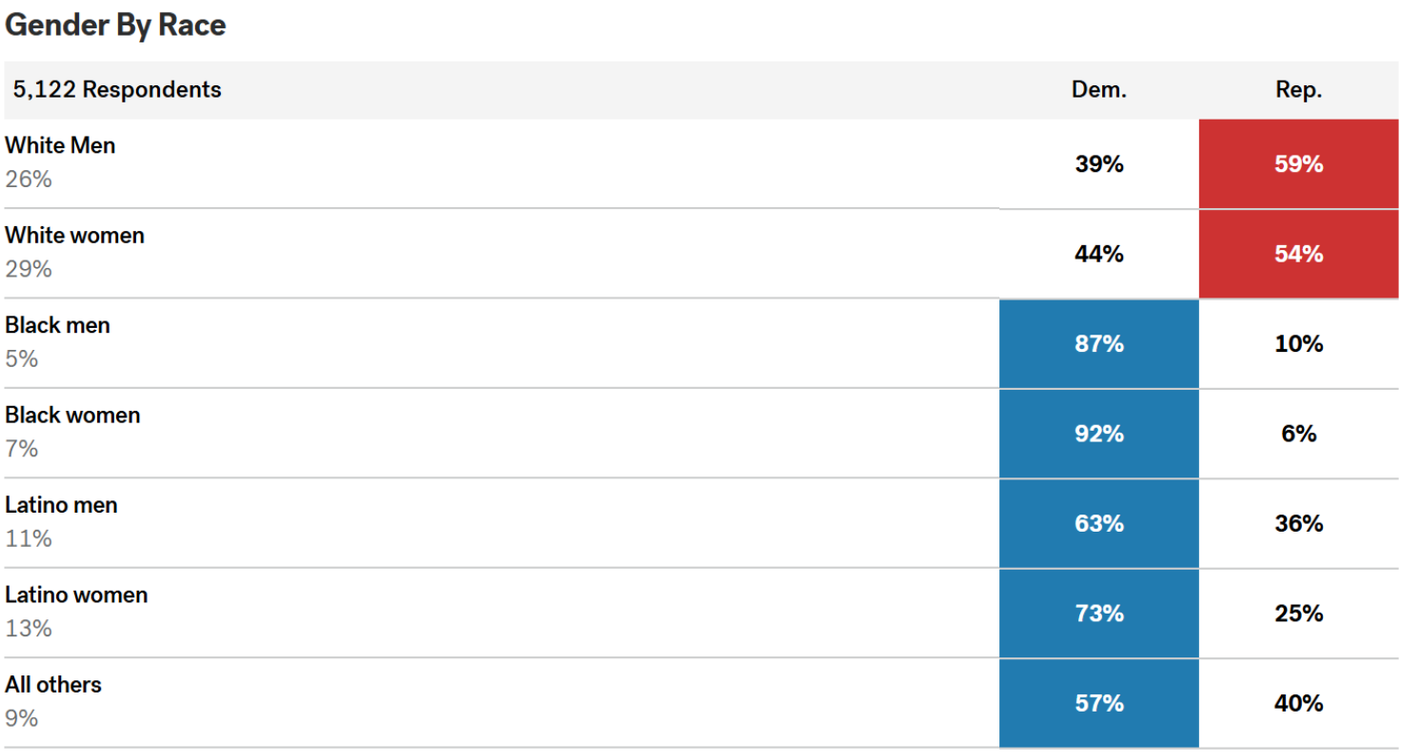
Among Texas voters who ranked immigration as the country’s most important issue, 84% voted for Abbott. In a separate question, 58% disapproved of ICE’s job performance. Of those who disapproved, 86% voted for Hinojosa. Ranking immigration first and judging ICE’s performance capture different concerns. Roughly four in ten Texas ICE arrests in the February 2025 to February 2026 comparison involved people with neither a recorded conviction nor a pending charge. Reporting from border communities described deportations affecting longtime neighbors and raids disrupting construction work. The available data do not measure how much enforcement contributed to overall turnout.

ABC News Texas voter poll · Houston Chronicle ICE analysis · Border voter interviews · Texas Tribune border reporting

Who powered the Democratic gains

The 2026 Texas Senate voter poll shows a clear divide by race and gender. Republican Ken Paxton led among white men and white women. Democrat James Talarico led among Black and Latino men and women, with his strongest support among Black women.

Texas U.S. Senate vote by race and gender



The percentage under each group is its estimated share of the electorate in the poll. The two columns show how each group voted for Senate. Percentages are rounded and omit other candidates.

ABC News Texas Senate voter poll

What stands out

White men and women together made up **55%** of voters in the poll. Paxton led by **20 points among white men** and **10 among white women**. Talarico drew **87% of Black men** and **92% of Black women**. He also won both Latino groups, with **63% of Latino men** and **73% of Latino women**.

Why I use the Senate race as a signal

My assumption is that a statewide Senate race gives a closer comparison for 2028 than a district-level House race. A six-year Senate term and a four-year presidency both put national issues before a statewide electorate. Talarico's poll helps identify that coalition. Candidates, turnout, and the issues on the ballot may differ in 2028.

How the Democratic nominees emerged

Gina Hinojosa, a veteran state representative, had backing from elected Texas Democrats and the Texas AFL-CIO. The Senate primary was more contested. Former U.S. Rep. Colin Allred, the 2024 nominee, withdrew after U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett entered and later endorsed her. Crockett also had backing from EMILYs List and SEIU. Talarico had endorsements of his own, including the State Tejano Democrats. He started with lower name recognition and won with a faith-rooted economic message and outreach in Republican areas. The contrast shows why the nominee and campaign strategy matter in a statewide race.

Senate primary · Primary endorsements · Hinojosa endorsements

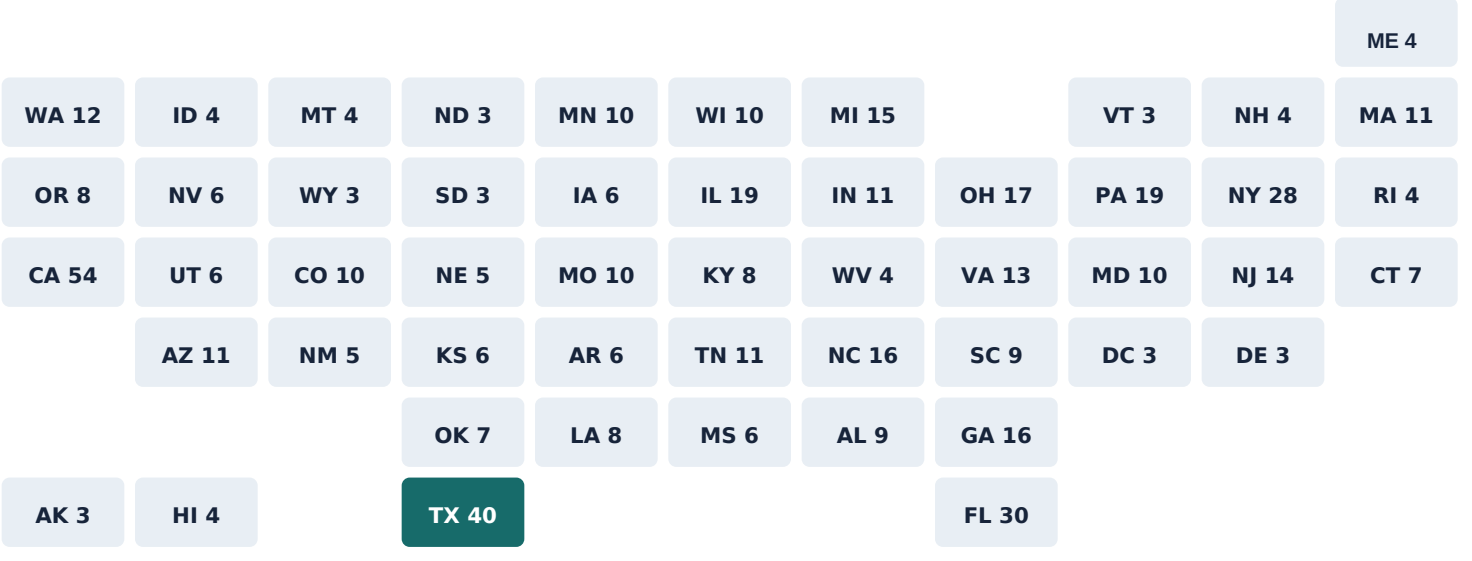
THE 2028 PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Why Texas matters in the Electoral College

Texas has 40 electoral votes, second only to California. It is the largest state Republicans carried in 2024. If Texas switches parties, Republicans would have to make up those votes elsewhere and Democrats would gain a new path to 270.

Electoral votes by state

Tile map of the allocation for 2028. Equal tile sizes represent states. The numbers show electoral votes.



Texas has 10 more votes than Florida (30), 12 more than New York (28), and seven more than Ohio (17) and North Carolina (16) combined.

National Archives allocation · Official 2024 results and map

Affordability was the broadest concern

The economy was the top national issue for **40% of Texas voters** in the ABC News voter poll. In a separate question about the congressional vote, **87%** called the cost of living crucial or a major factor. A pre-election survey of likely Latino voters in Texas found the economy outranked immigration and ICE combined by roughly two to one. Among the issues examined here, affordability had the broadest reach in the surveys.

ABC News Texas voter poll · Cook and TelevisaUnivision survey

Data centers and electricity costs

Reports of noise, strain on local resources and higher electricity bills deserve attention. Abbott proposed making developers pay their own grid costs. The county returns tell a more limited story. Abbott led in 64 of the 84 counties on the Tribune's data-center map, including 36 of 52 with operating sites and 42 of 56 with planned projects. The local accounts show why residents are concerned. The returns offer little support for treating data-center backlash as a major explanation for the statewide result, and county totals cannot isolate its effect on individual votes.

Abbott led (64) · Andrews, Angelina, Armstrong, Austin, Bell, Bosque, Bowie, Briscoe, Carson, Childress, Deaf Smith, Dickens, Ector, Ellis, Fisher, Floyd, Galveston, Glasscock, Gray, Guadalupe, Hale, Hall, Haskell, Hill, Hood, Howard, Hunt, Jack, Kaufman, Lamar, Liberty, Lubbock, Matagorda, McCulloch, McLennan, Medina, Midland, Milam, Mitchell, Montgomery, Moore, Nacogdoches, Navarro, Parker, Pecos, Potter, Randall, Reagan, Reeves, Scurry, Shackelford, Sherman, Smith, Taylor, Tom Green, Upton, Victoria, Ward, Washington, Wharton, Wichita, Wilbarger, Winkler, Young.

Hinojosa led (20) · Bastrop, Bexar, Brazoria, Brazos, Caldwell, Cameron, Collin, Dallas, Denton, El Paso, Harris, Hays, Hidalgo, Jim Wells, Maverick, Nueces, Tarrant, Travis, Webb, Williamson.

Each county is counted once in the overall total. Operating and planned groups overlap. Three counties appear on the map without either status specified. The comparison covers the Tribune's public map inventory.

Tribune statewide data-center map · ABC News/AP county returns · Abbott's ratepayer proposals

Younger voters saw deportation differently

In Texas, voters ages 18 to 44 backed Hinojosa **68% to 30%**. Nationally, Pew found that **65% of adults ages 18 to 29** and **55% of those ages 30 to 49** said the administration was doing too much on deportations, compared with **45% of those ages 50 to 64**. Harvard found that 47% of U.S. adults under 30 would feel less safe with regular local ICE operations, versus 13% who would feel safer. These age bands overlap with Gen Z and millennials. The national surveys measure views on enforcement, and the Texas poll measures vote choice.

ABC News Texas voter poll · Pew Research Center deportation survey · Harvard Youth Poll

Gen Z and millennials made up 41% of likely Texas voters in a pre-election University of Houston survey. Brookings projects the two generations will make up 54% of potential U.S. voters in 2028. Their share of ballots will depend on turnout.

University of Houston Texas survey · Brookings projection

What Texas in 2026 tells us about 2028

The preliminary returns show a higher-turnout election in which Democrats won the governorship and U.S. Senate race while Republicans held 24 of 38 House seats. The biggest metros supplied much of the added Democratic vote, and the border counties shifted sharply. The Bush-to-Trump comparison shows how much that region has moved across elections.

Affordability drew broad concern. Views on immigration and ICE enforcement varied, including across age groups. County returns and voter polls show where support changed and which issues mattered to voters. They cannot tell us how much any one issue drove the result.

In 2028, both parties will need candidates who can appeal beyond their base and turn out voters across the metros and border counties, including younger Texans. How those candidates address household costs, border management, and enforcement in local communities could matter in a close race for Texas's 40 electoral votes.

The border results sharpen the stakes. Republicans enter 2028 facing a harder task in counties where Trump made gains in 2024. Democrats have an opening if they can carry their midterm support into a presidential electorate. Whether the Republican nominee can recover that ground could matter in a close race for Texas's 40 electoral votes.

The immigration decision ahead

On election night, President Donald Trump raised immigration as an area where he might work with Democrats. “I mean, we can work with them on immigration, I think. Immigration’s a big deal. I’ve always felt we should be able to work on immigration.” The next day, on ABC’s *The View*, Texas Senator-elect James Talarico said, “I think we’ve seen over the past decade, both parties fail us on immigration.” He called on Congress to “hold this agency accountable and finally pass comprehensive immigration reform,” pairing border security with a pathway to citizenship for longtime residents. On Fox News’s *America’s Newsroom*, Talarico named immigration as an area where he could work with Trump: “Immigration is one of them. I think trying to pass comprehensive immigration reform that includes border security.” Vice President J.D. Vance, meanwhile, rejected amnesty on X and suggested focusing enforcement on employers who hire unauthorized workers. Stephen Miller, who has helped shape Trump’s immigration agenda since the 2016 campaign, remains a central figure in the administration’s approach to enforcement.

Trump transcript · ABC interview · ABC transcript excerpt · Fox interview · Vance’s X remarks · Miller’s role

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, the son of Cuban immigrants and a possible 2028 contender, helped write the 2013 bipartisan Gang of Eight bill. It passed the Senate 68–32 under Barack Obama, but the House never voted on it. George W. Bush’s second-term effort stalled in the Senate in 2007. As of November 6, I found no public response from Rubio specifically to Trump’s post-election remarks on working with Democrats on immigration.

Rubio biography · Rubio’s Gang of Eight role · 2013 Senate vote · 2007 Senate vote · Rubio and 2028 · Legislative history

Ronald Reagan’s 1986 immigration law paired legalization with penalties for employers who knowingly hired unauthorized workers. California accounted for more than half of the applicants. A CESifo working paper found that Democratic presidential vote share rose more between 1984 and 1992 in counties with greater exposure to the law, including in California. Much of that period preceded large-scale naturalization. The study measures changes in communities and leaves open how the people legalized under the law voted once they became citizens.

Reagan signing statement · CESifo working paper

For some Republicans, California is a warning about Texas. Iowa Republican Rep. Steve King made that comparison on the House floor in 2014. There’s another lesson in California’s experience. A peer-reviewed study found that Republican Gov. Pete Wilson’s support for Proposition 187 was followed by a lasting shift toward Democratic identification among California Latinos. For Texas Republicans, that raises two questions. How might future citizens vote, and how are Texans who can already vote responding to immigration enforcement today?

Congressional Record · California–Texas study

Lyndon B. Johnson faced a different issue, but his decision illustrates what it means to accept a political risk. After signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Johnson told his aide Bill Moyers, as Moyers later recalled, “Well, I think we may have lost the south for your lifetime – and mine.” Johnson was talking about the civil rights law. He signed a separate immigration law the following year. What stands out to me is that Johnson understood what the civil rights bill might cost his party and signed it anyway.

Moyers’s recollection · Civil Rights Act · 1965 immigration law

Several presidents took up major immigration legislation in their second terms. Reagan signed the 1986 reform. George W. Bush backed a comprehensive bill that stalled in the Senate in 2007. Obama’s administration announced DACA through a DHS memorandum in June 2012, during his first term. In his second, the Senate passed a broader bipartisan bill that never came to a House vote. Trump is in his final elected term and no longer has to run for reelection. If he lets this opening pass, another serious attempt could be years away.

Obama’s 2012 DACA announcement Second-term immigration bills Presidential term limit

What struck me about the Texas results was how much changed in just two years. Counties that backed Trump in 2024 went for Talarico in 2026. Those results give Republicans a reason to pay attention ahead of 2028, when Texas’s 40 electoral votes will be at stake. If there’s one Republican who can take the political risk of bringing both parties together on immigration, I think it’s Donald J. Trump. He’s defied expectations before. He could wait for Congress to send him a bill and decide whether to veto it, or he could bring both parties to the table now and help shape a bill he’d be willing to sign. To me, that’s the question worth asking. How does he want to use the time he has left in office, and what does he want to be remembered for?

Texas border results · Veto authority · Electoral vote allocation

By Sandeep Sastry · Independent political enthusiast with no party affiliation.

Research note · I prepared this article for recreational purposes using ChatGPT to gather and compare sources. I have not independently verified the research. The 2026 returns were preliminary and may change. You can verify the figures and claims using the sources listed in the article.