

# LONE STAR PROJECT

*Fighting Back... with Facts*



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March 7, 2008

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## Why Texas Democrats Are Smiling

There has been a lot of discussion over the last couple of days about individual candidates who won or lost their primary race on Tuesday. There is no doubt, however, about who the **biggest winners** are - **Texas Democrats and voters who want change that will replace failed one party Republican rule in Texas.** The notes below outline just how dramatic that victory was all across Texas.

### Record Democratic Turnout

- 2,868,454 people turned out to vote in the Democratic Primary, setting a new record and tripling the Democratic Primary vote in 1996, 2000 and 2004.
- More people voted in the 2008 Democratic Primary than voted for Al Gore in the 2000 General Election or John Kerry in 2004 General Election.
- Even more remarkably, 433,000 Democrats participated in just 40% of precinct caucuses that have reported thus far. Final numbers will likely exceed the 2004 statewide primary turnout and the 707,000 who voted for John McCain in the Republican primary. These dedicated Democrats provide a foundation for an organization in every community in Texas.

### Statewide Surge, Even in Republican Strongholds

- In the 20 largest counties in Texas, 19 had more Democrats turnout then Republicans.
- Democrats outvoted Republicans in GOP strongholds like Collin County (George W. Bush won 71% in 2004) and Williamson County (Bush 65%). 20,000 more Democrats voted than Republicans in each county.
- West Texas Counties like Lubbock (Bush 75%) and Tom Green County (Bush 75%) had more Democrats turn out than Republicans.

### Republicans Slumping and Unenthused

- Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama each received more votes than the entire Republican field in major counties like Harris, Dallas, and Bexar.
- Republican Turnout was down from the 2000 Republican Primary in traditionally Republican Counties like Midland, Ector (Odessa), and Gregg (Longview).

### **Democratic State House Candidates Show Strength**

- More Democrats turned out in Primary Elections than Republicans in all key State House Races including:
  - District 78 Moody (D) vs. Margo (R) - 14,175 more Democratic votes
  - District 96 Turner (D) vs. Zedler (R) -16,300 more Democratic votes
  - District 101 Miklos (D) vs. Anderson (R) - 8,718 more Democratic votes
  - District 102 Kent (D) vs. Goolsby (R)– 8,543 more Democratic votes
  - District 144 Redmond (D) vs. unknown-runoff (R) - 5,367 more Democratic votes
- Key competitive District candidates like Donnie Dippel (HD17) and Joseph Moody (HD 78) had convincing wins in their primaries on March 4th.
- In House District 96, where Chris Turner is challenging Bill Zedler, 27,577 Democrats turned out – over 1,000 more people than the number voting for the Democratic candidate in 2004 General Election.

### **Democratic Trend Continues in Key Countywide Races**

- In Dallas, Sheriff Lupe Valdez received over 40,000 more votes in a 4 way primary than the entire Republican field combined.
- Harris County Judge candidate David Minckberg won more votes than his two Republican opponents combined.

### **Democratic State Senate Prospects Improving**

- We saw why Republican Kim Brimer made his desperate attempt to knock Democrat Wendy Davis off the ballot. More than twice as many Democratic ballots (106,719), were cast as Republican ballots (49,041) in the primary election in Fort Worth-based Senate District 10.
- Democrat Joe Jaworski won his Democratic Primary convincingly. Also, 84,866 Democrats voted in SD 11 - more than 6 times the 2004 Democratic Primary turnout.

### **Republican Congressional Prospects in Texas Dimming**

- According to the Hotline, a Washington based political news service, “in TX-23, the cash-strapped NRCC lost a self-funder in atty. "Quico" Canseco (R), as he was defeated by Bexar Co. Commissioner Lyle

Larson (R)... Canseco's money sure would've helped in an uphill race against Rep. Ciro Rodriguez (D) in Nov." (Hotline, March 4, 2008) This is another example of Republicans rejecting a qualified Hispanic candidate in favor of an Anglo.

- In Tom DeLay's former District, CD22, Republicans now face a run-off election between two flawed candidates, erratic former Houston City Councilwoman Shelly Sekula-Gibbs and controversial recent arrival Pete Olsen. Neither candidate received over 30 percent of the primary vote. Popular incumbent Democrat Nick Lampson faced no primary opposition and is well positioned to hold this highly competitive seat.
- Meanwhile, "sleeper" Democratic challengers, Larry Joe Dougherty in CD10 and Michael Skelly in CD7 have quickly built strong and well funded organizations that may position them to capture districts previously considered safe for Republicans.

**Source: Secretary of State website and County Election Returns**

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