



TADC

e-Update

The Texas Association of Defense Counsel, Inc.

TADC 2016 Primary Election Report March 2, 2016

Despite the much ballyhooed voter anger against the “establishment,” incumbents ruled the roost in the Texas March 1 primary election. Fewer than 30 percent of Texas’ 14 million voters showed up, 2.8 million and 1.4 million voters for Republicans and Democrats, respectively.

In the top statewide races (other than a Railroad Commission seat), Texas Supreme Court incumbents Paul Green, Debra Lehrmann, and Eva Guzman held off challengers. Justices Green and Lehrmann won with just over 52% of the vote, Justice Guzman with about 59%. Justice Green will face 13th Court of Appeals Justice Dori Contreras Garza in November, while Justice Lehrmann squares off against former District Judge Mike Westergren of Corpus Christi. Justice Guzman has drawn Savannah Robinson, a practitioner from Danbury. Barring unforeseen circumstances, the incumbents will be heavily favored and should easily secure new terms.

In the Texas House, Speaker Joe Straus (R-San Antonio) easily held off two challengers with 60% of the vote, once again foiling Midland oilman Tim Dunn’s attempts to oust him. Key House leadership and Straus allies, whom Dunn also targeted, likewise won re-election, including Reps. Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth), Byron Cook (R-Corsicana), Dan Flynn (R-Canton), Kyle Kacal (R-College Station), John Raney (R-Bryan), John Cyrier (R-Lockhart), Paul Workman (R-Austin), DeWayne Burns (R-Cleburne), Gary VanDeaver (R-New Boston), J. D. Sheffield (R-Gatesville), Brooks Landgraf (R-Odessa), John Frullo (R-Lubbock), Jodie Laubenberg (R-Parker), Cindy Burkett (R-Sunnyvale), Jason Villalba (R-Dallas), and Dan Huberty (R-Houston). On the other hand, a few supporters of Speaker Straus lost

their seats, including Reps. Debbie Riddle (R-Houston) and Marsha Farney (R-Georgetown), while challengers forced others into a runoff, including Reps. Doug Miller (R-New Braunfels) and Wayne Smith (R-Baytown).

In races in which more moderate Republicans challenged Tea Party candidates, results were mixed. Straus opponents Reps. Jonathan Stickland (R-Bedford), Tony Tinderholt (R-Arlington), and Matt Rinaldi (R-Irving) defeated strong challengers. On the other side of the coin, former Rep. Lance Gooden retook his old seat from one-term Straus opponent Stuart Spitzer (R-Kaufman).

We are pleased to report that all three TADC members with challengers easily won re-election on Tuesday: Reps. Sarah Davis (R-Houston), Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches), and Rene Oliveira (D-Brownsville).

On the Senate side, two contested open seats and a pair of Democratic primary races resulted in a pair of runoffs and victories for the incumbents. In northeast Texas Senate District 1, Reps. Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and David Simpson (R-Longview) appear headed for a runoff, though the third-place finisher, General Red Brown of Tyler, trails Simpson by only 13 votes. Hughes won almost 48% of the vote, so it's possible, if not likely, that the second place finisher will withdraw rather than run what appears to be a pointless race. In Senate District 24 in west central Texas, Rep. Susan King (R-Abilene) and Austin physician Dawn Buckingham made the runoff in a crowded race. Finally, incumbent Senators Carlos Uresti and Jose Menendez, both from San Antonio, turned back primary challengers.

TADC PAC made highly targeted and successful contributions in the primary. In addition to supporting Justices Green, Lehrmann, and Guzman, the PAC contributed to Speaker Straus and Reps. Davis, Clardy, Geren, Cook, Cyrier, Frullo, Landgraf, and Miller.

Your PAC contributions matter! Targeted candidate contributions help to retain qualified officeholders, and elect qualified candidates with whom TADC can work to promote the interests of the civil justice system. Please get involved in a way that will make a difference. Give to the TADC PAC.

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Hotel Reservation cut-off is April 4, 2016

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An Association of Personal Injury Defense, Civil Trial & Commercial Litigation Attorneys - Est. 1960

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