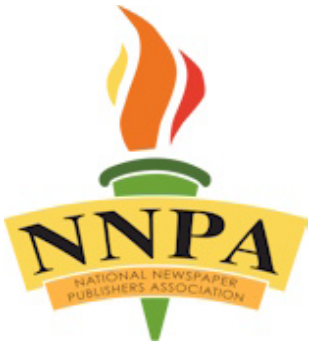




The Villager was founded by T. L. Wyatt in 1973, here, in East Austin, Texas.

The Villager

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RAPPIN' THOMAS WYATT

Food Delivery Security

You come home from a hard day's work, open the fridge, and there's nothing simple to eat nor cook. The kids are fussing because they're hungry and your significant others are too. So, what do you do? Well, if you're anything like me, you order out. Have food delivered.

This week we saw something extraordinary in our city. A man shot by ICE in a part of town I frequent quite often on a weekly basis. ICE reported that Wilber Rafael Garcés Pérez was fleeing apprehension when he was shot in the back. Later it was discovered Pérez was a DoorDash driver delivering orders when the ordeal occurred.

The national media has been all over this. I mean, CNN & MS NOW can't get enough. However, their focus continues to be on ICE. I contend that their focus should be on DoorDash. Not only that but their investigative coverage should extend to all food delivery services such as GrubHub, Uber Eats, Postmates, Instacart and the likes.

ICE reports Pérez, a Venezuelan national, was the target of an immigration operation. While Pérez's lawyer claims he is in the country legally, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is stating Pérez entered the country illegally. This fight among Pérez's official status is playing out in court.

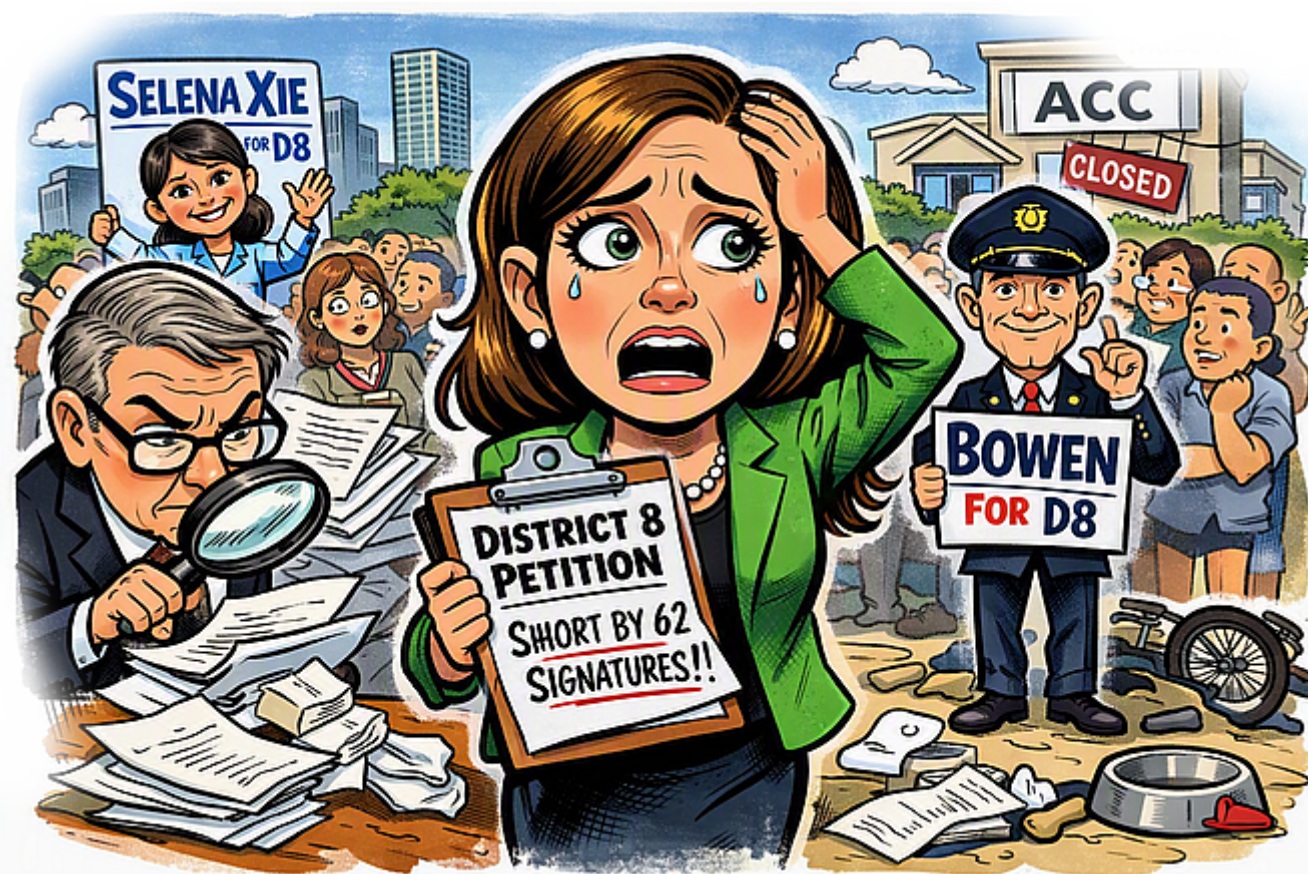
The real question is, how was Pérez hired by DoorDash? What kind of screening process was done to check his background and determine his citizenship? Let's be clear; Pérez isn't the only delivery driver out there. 97% of my food deliveries are from people from another country's origin. Of that 97%, 3% speak English with 1% fluently.

My concern is a security one. These people's employers don't know who they are and neither do we. Yet, our names and addresses, even phone numbers, are on every order we place. If you're like me, you might want to start considering eliminating the food delivery experience from the places mentioned in this column and beyond. I have. I'm back to cooking or getting my own food from now on.

I mean, think about it, people. The Pérez incident happened in an industrial, business, entertainment sector of the city. But what if it happened in a residential neighborhood; say, your front door?

PAIGE COMES UP SHORT!

Ellis' bid for a third term on the Austin City Council ends after City Clerk rules her petition short of the required number of valid signatures



RULES ARE RULES - Paige Ellis' bid for a third term on the Austin City Council ended this month after the City Clerk ruled her petition short of the required number of valid signatures, an unexpected decision that reshapes the district 8 race and closes out Ellis' eight-year tenure representing Southwest Austin.

By Thomas Wyatt | EIC, The Villager

(AUSTIN, TX) - Austin's city charter allows council members to exceed the two-term limit only by submitting a petition signed by at least five percent of qualified voters in their district. For District 8, that threshold was 3,044 valid signatures. Ellis submitted more than 3,400, but after verification, the Clerk determined she was 62 valid signatures short. The ruling immediately disqualified her from the November ballot. Ellis said her campaign's internal counts showed a comfortable margin, but she accepted the Clerk's decision and noted she would seek clarity on how the discrepancy occurred. She thanked supporters and said her service will conclude in January when her second term ends.

Her tenure has been defined by sustained work on mobility, environmental stewardship, and neighborhood-level infrastructure. Ellis championed the 2020 Active Mobility Bond, pushed for expanded bike and pedestrian networks, and supported amenities such as the Circle C dog park. She also played a role in discussions around the MoPac South corridor, emergency response coordination, and collaborations with Austin Community College. Her departure leaves these efforts without an incumbent advocate and introduces uncertainty into several long-running policy conversations.

With Ellis out, the district 8 race now centers on two candidates: Selena Xie, an EMS commander, ICU nurse, and former president of the Austin EMS Association; and Jeffery Bowen, an Air Force veteran, small-business owner, and former mayoral candidate. Both were already in the race, but Ellis' exit transforms the contest from a three-way field into a direct matchup. District 8, which covers parts of South and Southwest Austin, has historically favored pragmatic, infrastructure-focused leadership. Without an incumbent, voters will

District 1 Voters at a Crossroad

By Villager staff

(AUSTIN, TX) - Austin's District 1 race is one of the most competitive contests on the 2026 ballot, driven by the departure of term-limited Council Member Natasha Harper-Madison. Six candidates—Steven Brown, Alexandria Anderson, Amber Goodwin, Michael Na-

weigh two sharply different professional backgrounds and visions for the district.

Xie's experience in emergency medical services positions her to speak to public health, response times, and departmental coordination. Bowen's background in veteran leadership and entrepreneurship brings a focus on small-business needs, neighborhood development, and fiscal stewardship. The absence of an incumbent removes the typical advantage of name recognition and established networks, giving both candidates a more level playing field and forcing District 8 to reconsider its priorities without the continuity Ellis would have provided.

Ellis' departure also affects council dynamics. After eight years on the dais, she was one of the more experienced voices on environmental policy, transportation, and neighborhood planning. Her exit contributes to ongoing turnover on the council, potentially shifting coalitions on land use, public safety, and mobility. For District 8, the change is especially significant: the district's political identity has been shaped by steady, infrastructure-oriented representation, and the upcoming election will determine whether that trajectory continues or gives way to a new set of priorities aligned with either candidate's background.

Election Day is November 3, and District 8 voters will choose between Xie and Bowen to set the district's direction for the next four years. Ellis' disqualification underscores the significance of Austin's petition-based third-term provision—an unusual mechanism that can abruptly reshape political futures and district leadership. As the race moves forward, District 8 enters a rare open-seat contest with substantial implications for mobility, emergency services, and neighborhood development across Southwest Austin.

Housing costs remain a central issue: District 1 residents face significant financial pressure, with 44% of renters and 26% of homeowners spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Some candidates support large-scale interventions, including discussion of a future \$350 million housing bond aimed at stabilizing long-term affordability. Fundraising has also defined the race. Attorney

Amber Goodwin leads financially, having raised more than \$91,000, outpacing all other candidates combined as of mid-2026. Anderson, Ramos, and Brown each surpassed the \$20,000 mark, signaling strong community engagement.

Ultimately, District 1 voters will choose between competing visions for preserving cultural identity while managing growth.

INSIDE

University of Texas rocked by what appears to be a hate crime on campus.

See VANDALISM, page 2

If the FEDS thought that one-off rate hike two weeks ago was enough to curb inflation, they're wrong.

See BRACING, page 2

NAACP Texas State Conference

Texas NAACP has detailed plan to ensure you don't squander you chance to make a difference in this year's elections.

See PROTECT, page 3

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