

New Child Care Resources Webpage

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION

(AUSTIN, TX) – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) today announced the launch of a new online resource for Texas employers. The Child Care Resources for Employers webpage is designed to help employers better support their employees' child care needs. "We are empowering Texas employers with the tools they need to support working families, which is a critical component of our state's economy," said TWC Chairman Joe Esparza. "This resource is a strategic investment in our workforce that helps businesses retain talent and

ensures Texas remains the best state to live, work, and raise a family." The new webpage was created in response to Senate Bill 1265, passed by the 89th Texas Legislature. It offers clear information on several topics including child care assistance programs, available state and federal tax credits, and dependent care savings accounts. The webpage also shares best practices and policies that businesses can adopt to help their employees access reliable child care. Studies show that supporting child care needs can improve employee morale, reduce absences, and increase productivity.

The Texas Restaurant Association (TRA) was a key partner in passing the legislation and developing the webpage. Their advocacy highlighted the need for these resources across all industries. "We hear consistently from local business operators that they want to help their employees access child care,

but they don't know where to start," said TRA Chief Public Affairs Officer and Co-Founder of Employers for Childcare (E4C) Kelsey Erickson Streufert. "We are grateful for the TWC's partnership creating the new ChildCare Resources for Employers webpage, and we look forward to building on this momentum to expand working families' access to affordable, quality childcare." This new resource makes it easier for Texas employers to offer benefits that help attract and retain their workforce. The webpage provides guidance on how employers can survey their staff to understand their specific child care challenges. This helps businesses offer the most effective and impactful support. The Child Care Resources for Employers page can be found within the Texas Work & Family Policies section of the TWC website. Employers are encouraged to visit the webpage to learn more.

Texas Job Market Steady in April

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION

(AUSTIN, TX) - Texas reached a total of 14,394,300 nonfarm jobs after adding 300 positions in April. Over the year, the state added 82,400 jobs for an annual nonfarm growth rate of 0.6 percent, outpacing the national growth rate by 0.4 percentage points.

Texas' civilian labor force registered at 15,894,800 after decreasing by 21,800 over the month. Over the year, Texas' civilian labor force has added 49,200 people.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Texas remained stable at 4.3 percent.

"Texas continues to demonstrate economic resilience by outpacing the national growth rate and reaching nearly 14.4 million jobs," said TWC Chair-

man Joe Esparza. "Through our support for initiatives like the Texas Jobs Council, we are gathering the insights necessary to keep our workforce competitive, so Texas employers can continue to lead their industries and drive our state's growth."

The Professional and Business Services industry had the largest private sector over-the-month increase in April after adding 4,700 jobs. Construction added 3,500 jobs over the month while Trade, Transportation, and Utilities added 1,300. Construction posted the highest annual growth rate of any major industry for the 21st month in a row at 2.1 percent in April.

"The growth we see across industries like construction and professional services translates to more high-demand opportunities for working Texans," said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Alberto Treviño III. "TWC is committed to helping all Texans access these opportunities, which is why we continue to prioritize support for foster youth transitioning into the workforce and champion Second Chance initiatives that help people find paths to stable, successful careers."

The Midland metropolitan statistical area (MSA) had the lowest unemployment rate with a not seasonally adjusted rate of 2.9 percent in April. It was followed by the Abilene MSA at 3.0. The College Station-Bryan and San Angelo MSAs registered at 3.1 percent.

"To maintain a strong labor market, we must ensure that every Texan has a chance to enter the workforce, pursue their career goals, and achieve prosperity," said TWC Commissioner Representing the Public Brent Connett. "TWC is enabling more Texans to contribute to the overall strength of our economy through services like Vocational Rehabilitation and essential child care support for working families."

Employment estimates released by TWC are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. *All estimates are subject to revision. To access this and more employment data, visit TexasLMI.com.

The Texas Labor Market Information Data for May is scheduled to be released on Friday, June 19, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. (CT).

EDITORIAL: A New Chapter in Texas' 18th District and a Test of Democratic Renewal

By Thomas Wyatt | EIC, The Villager

(VILLAGER) - The Democratic runoff in Texas' newly redrawn 18th Congressional District did more than settle a contest between two incumbents. It marked a generational turning point in one of the nation's most storied Black political strongholds, and it exposed the deeper tensions shaping Democratic politics in the Trump era: age versus youth, legacy versus momentum, and grassroots identity versus the gravitational pull of national money.

News outlets have projected Rep. Christian Menefee as the winner over longtime Rep. Al Green, though official results have not yet been certified. What is clear, however, is that the margin was decisive — a far cry from the razor thin first round in March. Voters in Houston and its surrounding counties delivered a mandate that signals both continuity and change: continuity in the district's half century tradition of Black representation, and change in the form of a 38 year old attorney who has risen quickly through the ranks of Texas politics.

This runoff was never a typical primary. It was engineered by a mid decade redistricting plan pushed through by the Republican controlled Legislature, a maneuver designed to weaken Democratic power in the Houston region. The result was an unprecedented incumbent on incumbent showdown, pitting Green — a civil rights stalwart and one of Congress' most persistent critics of President Donald Trump — against Menefee, a freshman lawmaker who entered Congress only months ago af-



Rep. Christian Menefee

Rep. Al Green

ter winning a special election to replace the late Rep. Sylvester Turner.

Green's decision to leave his dramatically altered 9th District and seek refuge in the deep blue 18th was understandable. But the political terrain had shifted. Voters were ready for a new voice, and Menefee offered one: younger, legally battle tested, and fluent in the language of institutional accountability. As Harris County attorney, he sued the Trump administration repeatedly — a credential that resonated in a district where resistance to Trump's policies has long been a political baseline.

Yet the race was also shaped by forces far beyond Houston. More than \$4-5 million in outside spending from Protect Progress, a super PAC backed by cryptocurrency aligned donors, poured into the district on Menefee's behalf. Outgoing Rep. Jasmine Crockett appeared in one of the group's ads, adding another layer of intra party complexity. Green condemned the influx of megadonor money;

Menefee, for his part, maintained that super PACs should be banned altogether. The contradiction was not lost on voters, but it did not alter the outcome.

The 18th District has endured an unusual period of instability, with two sitting members — Sheila Jackson Lee in 2024 and Sylvester Turner in 2025 — dying in consecutive years. For long stretches, the district had no representation at all. That vacuum heightened the stakes of this election. Voters were not simply choosing between two Democrats; they were choosing who would restore continuity to a seat once held by Barbara Jordan, the trailblazing congresswoman whose legacy still defines the district's political identity.

Menefee's projected victory suggests that voters want both stability and renewal. They want a representative who honors the district's history while navigating the political realities of 2026 — a year defined by Trump's return to the White House, aggressive redistricting, and a national political climate that grows more polarized by the month.

The 18th District remains safely Democratic, but the message from its voters is anything but complacent. They have chosen a new standard bearer for a new era, one who will be judged not only by his ability to resist the pressures of Washington but by his commitment to the communities that have shaped this district for more than fifty years.

In a moment when democracy feels increasingly fragile, the voters of the 18th have offered a reminder: renewal is not abandonment. It is the work of a living, breathing electorate — one that knows its history and refuses to stand still.

CELEBRATE CARIBBEAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH THIS JUNE

Tisha-Vonique | ScriptHOPE

(MAY 26, 2026 – AUSTIN, TX) – Celebrate Caribbean American Heritage Month in Austin by experiencing a pierce of St. Croix, USVI heritage at the event, "Creating Coastal Chaney", during the Free First Sunday on June 7 presented by HEB at Bullock Texas State History Museum.

This free, family-friendly event invites visitors to journey between the coastlines of Galveston, Texas and the Caribbean searching for treasure. Each guest will be able to search through sand for their own treasures they can then turn into custom jewelry.

"Chaney" hunting is a traditional activity and jewelry originating from residents of Saint Croix, United States Virgin Islands. Chaney is a type of washed up historical artifact found uniquely on the



beach shores of Saint Croix that beachgoers discover as they walk along the coastlines. The fine china used during the Colonial Period often found their way to the bottom of the ocean and over decades of tumbling on the ocean floor, make their way to the surface for use in art, stemware, and mostly, custom jewelry.

ScriptHOPE founder Tisha Vonique draws this connection between her birthplace (USVI) and her home state of Texas by bridging common experiences during archeological coastal discoveries in Galveston and on Saint Croix. The Bullock Texas

State History Museum houses a collection of pottery fragments found not far from Galveston that visitors can discover. Except, guests visiting ScriptHOPE get to recreate their "found pottery" into custom Chaney jewelry!

We invite everyone to simulate a visit across coastlines connected by Caribbean waters this Juneteenth and leave with a beautiful Caribbean Chaney keepsake at the Coastal Chaney Workshop. Free First Sunday occurs from 10am-4pm at 1600 Congress Ave at the Bullock Texas State History Museum. All ages welcome.