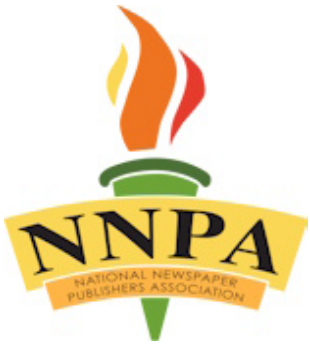




The Villager was founded by T. L. Wyatt in 1973, here, in East Austin, Texas.

The Villager

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September 25, 2026



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.

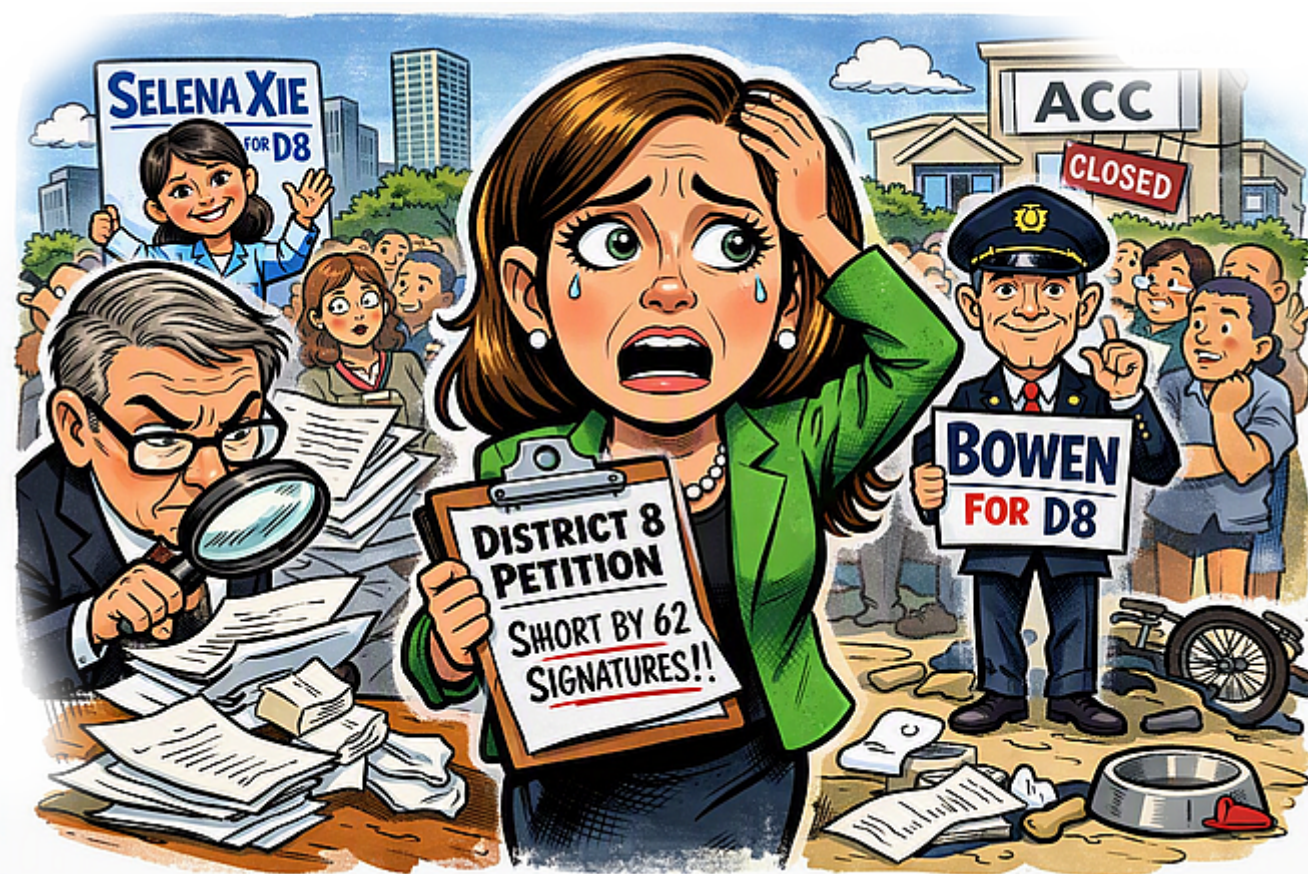
The real question is, how was Pérez hired by DoorDash? What kind of screening process was done to check his background and determine his citizenship? Let's be clear; Pérez isn't the only delivery driver out there. 97% of my food deliveries are from people from another country's origin. Of that 97%, 3%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

The Portal to Texas History

Texashistory.unt.edu

• Search for: AUSTIN VILLAGER To find over 11,000 documents of East Austin's true history recorded in the Villager newspaper.

Austin 3-1-1

Your All Day, Any Day, Information Center.

VANDALISM, POSSIBLE HATE CRIME ON UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS CAMPUS

By Villager staff

(AUSTIN, TX) - Callaway House management and the University of Texas Police Department are investigating two incidents of anti-semitic vandalism reported in early September. A resident returned from the Labor Day weekend to find their mezuzah removed from their dorm room door-frame. Days later, students discovered a drawing in a study room depicting a Star of David next to a swastika with

the caption “love kills hate.” Both incidents occurred as Jewish students were entering the period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Residents notified building management, which issued a statement to students and parents describing the acts as unacceptable and reiterating a zero-tolerance policy for harassment or discrimination. UTPD opened a case and is treating the

vandalism as a potential hate crime. Management increased nighttime security presence in the building and began coordinating with UT Austin Chabad to support affected students, including reinstalling mezuzahs for those who requested assistance. The incidents follow other antisemitic vandalism reported in Austin this year, including graffiti at Congregation Beth Israel. Local officials have previously noted an increase in



hate-motivated incidents and have called for strengthened coordination between law enforcement and commu-

nity organizations. Callaway House representatives say the investigation is ongoing and that additional se-

curity measures will remain in place while UTPD continues interviews and evidence review.

Judge Orders White House to Restore Banned Press Access

By Villager staff

(VILLAGER) - A federal judge has ordered the White House to immediately reinstate press access for CNN, MS NOW, and Politico, ruling that the administration likely violated the outlets’ constitutional due process rights when it abruptly revoked their hard passes without notice. The decision marks the second time Judge Timothy Kelly has intervened to stop the executive branch from excluding journalists without following required constitutional protections.

Kelly rejected the administration’s post-hoc national security justification, calling the cited reporting “routine” and noting that the president’s own statements focused on punishing coverage he labeled negative or “fake.” The judge emphasized that the government cannot restrict press access based on viewpoint, nor can it bypass basic due process when revoking credentials.

The ruling underscores a broader truth: when those in power attempt to silence scrutiny, the public loses its ability to hold institutions accountable. Press access is not a privilege granted at the discretion of political leaders — it is a public trust that ensures transparency for all communities, including those historically marginalized or excluded from decision-making.

The order remains in effect for two weeks as litigation continues. The administration has signaled it will appeal, setting up a renewed fight over whether the government can weaponize access to punish critical reporting. For communities that rely on independent journalism to illuminate inequity, the stakes extend far beyond the White House press room.

Local Community to Step Up for 2026 Walk to Defeat ALS Austin

The ALS Association

(AUSTIN, TX) – Hundreds of community members will come together in support of people living with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), uniting in hope and purpose at the 2026 Walk to Defeat ALS Austin on Saturday, October 31. Registration is now open.

The Walk to Defeat ALS® is the nation’s largest ALS fundraising campaign, driving progress in ALS research, care, and advocacy. It’s more than a fundraiser—it’s a celebration of the strength and resiliency of our ALS community. Through Walk to Defeat ALS fundraising efforts, the ALS Association has been able to dramatically accelerate the fight against ALS by funding the development of new ALS treatments, by discovering new ALS genes, by creating new global research collaborations, and by significantly expanding access to ALS care.

The 2026 Walk to Defeat ALS is supported by our dedicated national sponsors, including Numotion Foundation and Shinogi. Their unwavering commitment fuels our mission to make ALS livable and cure it.

EVENT INFORMATION

WHAT: 2026 Walk to Defeat ALS Austin

WHEN: Saturday, October 31. Walk starts at 10:30 AM.

WHERE: PopStroke, Austin

13000 Harris Ridge Blvd

Austin, TX 78753

Consumers, Markets Bracing for Another Rate Hike

By Villager staff

(VILLAGER) – Federal Reserve Governor Michael Barr’s remarks on Wednesday signal that the Federal Reserve is prepared to hike interest rates again because it doesn’t trust the trend lines. Barr’s assertion that further rate hikes are “likely” if inflation doesn’t show a “timely” move toward 2 percent is less a forecast than a warning: the Fed believes the risk of doing too little now outweighs the risk of tightening into political headwinds.

That single posture shift is already reshaping market behavior. Traders moved quickly, pricing in nearly a 70 percent probability of another quarter-point hike at the late-October meeting — a jump of more than 14 points within a day of Barr’s comments. Markets aren’t reacting to inflation itself; they’re reacting to the Fed’s willingness to escalate.

A hike at this stage would have predictable — and politically inconvenient — consequences. Treasury yields would push higher, tightening financial conditions across the board. Rate-sensitive sectors like housing, autos, and small-business credit would absorb the blow first, amplifying the slowdown already visible in consumer-driven segments. Equity markets, which have been trading on the assumption that the September hike was a one-off recalibration, would need to reprice risk more aggressively.

The Fed’s own messaging reinforces that tension. Chair Kevin Warsh’s insistence that inflation readings “do not tell me that underlying trends have meaningfully improved” signals a committee that sees stubborn inflation everywhere except the headline numbers. Add geopolitical instability and the AI-driven investment surge to the Fed’s mandate, and the central bank appears more concerned about being caught flat-footed than about overshooting.

With the next FOMC meeting landing days before the midterms, the stakes are unusually high. A pre-election rate hike would inject volatility into markets already navigating political uncertainty — and it would underline a reality investors are beginning to accept: the Fed is not done, and the market’s comfort with a one-and-done tightening cycle was premature.

This is the moment when markets stop trading the data and start trading the Fed’s resolve.

State Representative John Bucy Calls on Governor Abbott to Provide Additional Funding to Counties Following DPS Voter Registration Failure

State Representative John Bucy

(AUSTIN, TX) — State Representative John Bucy III, Vice Chair of the Texas House Elections Committee, released the following statement after reports that the Texas Department of Public Safety failed to transmit voter registration applications to county election officials, creating a backlog less than two weeks before the October 5 voter registration deadline:

“It is absolutely outrageous that, in the run-up to one of the most consequential midterm elections in decades, Texans have had their voter registrations impacted by a failure at the Texas Department of Public Safety.

“County election officials are now being asked to clean up the state’s mess at one of the busiest times of the election season. They have to process this backlog on top of the surge in registrations we always see before the deadline, while ensuring older DPS records don’t overwrite more recent voter information.

“Governor Abbott needs to immediately commit whatever state resources and funding counties need to process every one of these applications accurately and on time. Not one eligible Texan should have their ability to vote jeopardized because the state failed to do its job.

“Texans also deserve answers. We need to know how many voters were affected, how long this went undetected, why it happened, and what safeguards will be put in place to prevent this occurring again.

“The freedom to vote is fundamental. When a Texan does everything right and registers to vote, their government has a responsibility to make sure that registration gets processed.”

Across the Border, a Rare Consensus: Americans and Canadians Say Trump’s Trade War Was a Mistake

By Villager staff

(VILLAGER) - In a moment when political polarization seems to define nearly every public conversation, Americans and Canadians have found uncommon agreement on at least one subject: President Donald Trump’s decision to ignite a trade war between the two countries was a costly misstep that neither side wanted and both sides felt.

From Detroit’s auto plants to Alberta’s grain fields, the sentiment is remarkably consistent. Workers, small-business owners, and trade-dependent communities describe the tariffs and retaliatory measures not as a bold negotiating tactic but as an unnecessary rupture between two economies that have long operated as intertwined partners. The shared frustration reflects a lived reality: when Washington and Ottawa clash, ordinary people on both sides of the border absorb the shock.

The criticism has grown sharper in recent months as the economic fallout becomes harder to ignore. Manufacturers in the Midwest report higher input costs and disrupted supply chains. Canadian producers, especially in agriculture and consumer goods, say the uncertainty has chilled investment and forced them to rethink long-standing export routes. Tourism-dependent towns — from upstate New York to British Columbia — have watched cross-border travel decline, eroding revenue for hotels, restaurants, and seasonal businesses that rely on predictable flows of visitors.

What stands out is not just the economic impact but the emotional one. For decades, Americans and Canadians have treated their shared border as a symbol of stability — a place where commerce, culture, and family ties move freely. Trump’s tariffs, imposed under a rarely used Depression-era authority, felt to many like a breach of trust. The move signaled a willingness to weaponize economic interdependence, and both publics responded with a mix of disbelief and irritation.

In interviews and public polling, Americans frequently describe the trade war as “pointless,” “self-inflicted,” or “bad for business.” Canadians, for their part, have used words like “provocative,” “unnecessary,” and “disrespectful.” The language differs, but the meaning aligns: the conflict was avoidable, and the costs were real.

Economists on both sides of the border have echoed that view. They note that Canada remains one of America’s most important trading partners, and that the tariffs disrupted industries that depend on predictable cross-border flows — autos, dairy, steel, consumer goods, and tourism among them. The retaliatory measures from Ottawa only deepened the strain, creating a cycle of penalties that punished communities rather than resolving policy disagreements.

Even in political circles, the consensus is striking. While Trump’s base has largely stood by his broader tariff strategy, business-aligned conservatives in the U.S. and pragmatic centrists in Canada have criticized the trade war as a miscalculation that undermined economic stability without delivering meaningful concessions. The shared critique underscores a broader truth: the U.S.–Canada relationship is not built for brinkmanship. It is built for cooperation.

Today, as both countries navigate a shifting global economy, the memory of the trade war lingers as a cautionary tale. It demonstrated how quickly a single policy decision can ripple across borders, unsettling industries and communities that depend on each other. It also revealed something deeper — that despite political differences, Americans and Canadians still recognize the value of their partnership and are willing to speak plainly when that partnership is threatened.

In an era defined by division, that clarity is notable. On this issue, at least, the people on both sides of the world’s longest peaceful border agree: the trade war was the wrong fight at the wrong time, and the consequences are felt far beyond the negotiating table.

Texas NAACP Issues Urgent Call to Protect the Vote for Everyday Texans

NAACP Texas STATE CONFERENCE

(AUSTIN, TX) — The Texas NAACP and President Gary Bledsoe today issued an urgent call for all Texans—of every race, color, and background—especially those who are not wealthy and who live as regular, everyday citizens, to take immediate steps to verify their voter registration status and make a concrete plan to vote this November. The organization has confirmed that a number of counties have purged voters from the rolls and that voters are also being placed in “suspense” status due to address and other issues. At the same time, recent changes have made it significantly more difficult for Texans to successfully vote by mail, and strict in-person delivery rules now govern any mail ballot a voter decides to hand-deliver on Election Day.

The Urgency for Everyday Texans

President Gary Bledsoe emphasized that the issues at stake affect neighborhood integrity and the affordability and quality of everyday life for Texans who are not part of the wealthy elite. “When policies advance the interests of the wealthy at the expense of regular people, every neighborhood’s integrity, affordability, and quality of life are on the line,” said Bledsoe. “We need every eligible Texan to vote, because efforts to suppress or sideline voters should matter to all Texans. Ironically the most pressing needs for everyday people such as large data centers, the potential loss of Texas hospitals and affordable healthcare, support for our rural schools and communities and general affordability are common across the board.”

Voter Purges and “Suspense” Status Demand Vigilance

The Texas NAACP has received lists showing voters purged following written communications from local registrars, often based on information from the Secretary of State requiring a response within 30 days, and many purges occur simply because voters do not respond . Even highly informed and sophisticated Texans have been affected, underscoring that no one is beyond risk.

Travis County Voter Registrar issues statement regarding newly transmitted voter registration applications from the Texas Department of Public Safety

Celia Israel
Travis County Tax Assessor-Collector & Voter Registrar

(AUSTIN, TX) — Celia Israel, Travis County Tax Assessor-Collector and Voter Registrar, released the following statement in response to reports regarding voter registration application data transmitted by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS):

“The Travis County Tax Office received approximately 32,000 applications from Texas DPS overnight, bringing our total DPS application count to over 35,000 records to process. This is in addition to the high volume of applications we are receiving through our network of Volunteer Deputy Registrars, those mailed directly to the Texas Secretary of State, and the many more we expect to receive by the Oct. 5 deadline.

We have taken an all-hands-on-deck approach to process this increased volume of applications accurately, efficiently and in accordance with state law. Our focus is on maintaining the integrity of the voter registration process while providing timely service to eligible voters.

While I am deeply disappointed in our state partner, the Texas Department of Public Safety, I have the utmost confidence in the Travis County team to carry out our mission for eligible voters.”

Voters are urged to check mail for any “Notice of Examination,” to respond within 30 days if the information is inaccurate, and, if outside the 30-day window but eligible, to immediately re-register and keep records of correspondence and copies of updated registrations . We will be uploading a form for voters to fill out if they feel their rights have been violated when they attempt to vote, and we want to call everyone’s attention to that. On election day we will have a voter hotline and will work with other groups such as the National Bar Association Texas affiliates, the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and the National NAACP Office of General Counsel.

President Bledsoe stated, “This is not a partisan issue. It is a question of whether everyday Texans will have a voice. Check your status now, respond to any official notices immediately, and keep documentation. We cannot allow clerical issues to cancel our voices.”

What Every Voter Should Do Now

Check with both the Texas Secretary of State and your local registrar right away to verify whether you are registered, whether your registration has been purged, or whether you have been placed in “suspense” for address or other issues . If unregistered, re-register if eligible, retain a copy of your registration, and keep it with you . The registration deadline for the November 3, 2026 election is October 5, 2026, and voters should re-register as early as possible if needed .

If You Encounter Problems at the Polls

If you have a valid voter registration and complete a Statement of Residence Form for address issues, you should receive a regular ballot under Texas Election Code Section 63.0011 . If officials require a provisional ballot, promptly follow up after Election Day to provide proof as instructed, noting that a voter has six days after the election to present additional information to the voter registrar . “Do not walk away,” said Bledsoe. “If you are pushed to a provisional ballot, finish the process

Historic East Austin Neighborhoods host forum for City Council, AISD candidates

African American Cultural Heritage District Neighborhoods to hear from candidates



(AUSTIN, TX) - The neighborhoods of the African American Cultural Heritage District—including Robertson Hill, Swede Hill, Homewood Heights, Rogers Washington Holy Cross Historic District, Chestnut, Blackland and other neighborhoods—will hold a candidate forum for AISD Trustee District 1 and At-Large candidates and District 1 City Council candidates on Saturday, October 3, 2026. The forum will begin at 1 p.m. and will be held at the Yellow Jacket Conference Center, 900 Thompson Street (Eastside ECHS at L. C. Anderson Campus).

The forum will begin with the AISD Board candidates, followed by the District 1 Austin City Council candidates. Candidates will each have 15 minutes to introduce themselves and their platform and then take questions from the audience with the remaining time.

and provide the follow-up documentation within the deadline.”

Mail-In Voting: Proceed Early and Carefully

Mail-in ballots are no longer handled with preferred status by the U.S. Postal Service and are more likely to be delayed, so voters should plan early and, if possible, consider lawful in-person delivery on Election Day and to factor into their decision the difficulties with ensuring that your mail in ballot is counted. Texas law requires mail ballots be returned to the early voting clerk in the official carrier envelope by mail, common or contract carrier, or in person by the voter on Election Day only, with acceptable ID, and delivery must be received by an election official who records the voter’s information . “If you bring your mail ballot in person because of mail issues, there is a narrow window on Election Day and you must deliver it to the correct official with proper ID,” Bledsoe cautioned.

For Voters in “Suspense” or Who Have Moved

Voters should determine whether they are in suspense status and, if so, update their address and keep a copy of the Change of Address Form . If address change cannot be effectively completed in advance, a Statement of Residence Form should allow voting a regular ballot for a new residence within the same county, and a “limited ballot” may be needed if the new residence is in a different county .

Call to Action

Bledsoe concluded, “This election will decide whether the everyday Texan’s voice continues to matter. Verify your registration today, make your plan to vote, and help your neighbors do the same. The integrity, affordability, and quality of life in our communities depend on it.”

If you need assistance with provisional ballot follow-up or related voting issues, contact the Lonzo Kerr or Linda Lewis of the Texas NAACP at 512-985-9151 and/or the Lawyers’ Committee at 866-OUR-VOTE .

ATTENTION!

FY27 Tax Rate Adoption Notice

CITY OF AUSTIN ADOPTED A TAX RATE THAT WILL RAISE MORE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS THAN LAST YEAR'S TAX RATE.

THE TAX RATE WILL EFFECTIVELY BE RAISED BY 3.5 PERCENT AND WILL RAISE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS ON A \$100,000 HOME BY APPROXIMATELY \$15.04.

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Clayton Tucker Statement on Nate Sheets' Data Center Plan
Hector Mendez | Clayton Tucker for TX Agriculture Commissioner

(Lampasas, TX) - Clayton Tucker, Texas Agricultural Commissioner candidate, released the following statement in response to “Data Nate” Sheets’ newly announced data center plan:

“Well, it looks like Data Nate finally figured out that the Agriculture Commissioner can do something about data centers.

For months, his puppets and parrots have told Texans that this office can’t do anything about data centers. Data Nate himself was largely quiet while farmers, ranchers, homeowners, and entire communities were fighting to protect their land and water. Now, less than two months before Election Day, he suddenly has a five-point plan for

the Agriculture Commissioner. Thankfully, as the only real farmer in this race, having grown up around cattle, I know what bull smells like. His so-called plan is just that.

Data Nate’s plan is for data centers to bribe the government so they can keep taking our land, water, and resources. While I want a moratorium to protect and preserve Texas from the AI bubble and the harms it threatens, his so-called plan fits the mold of how he treated his personal business: sell it to the highest private equity bidder.

Data Nate’s plan is to continue selling off Texas to Wall Street and Silicon Valley, one piece at a time. As the only rural Texan in this race, we

need to protect and preserve our countryside, our dark skies, our farms, our water, our beautiful Texas vistas, our right to quiet enjoyment, our cultural heritage, and more.

I’ve spent months traveling across Texas and sitting down with the people fighting these projects in their own backyards. We’ve stood with rural communities demanding action, calling for a pause to data center development.

I didn’t need an election around the corner to start listening to these Texans. They’ve been sounding the alarm for months. I’ve been standing beside them in city councils, county commissions, and other places, well before everyone else, because Texas is worth protecting.

TWC Offers Funding to Advance Industry-Recognized Apprenticeships
Texas Workforce Commission

(AUSTIN, TX) – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is awarding Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship (TIRA) grants to help Texas employers rapidly develop and deliver short-term apprenticeship training programs. Funding for the initiative was allocated by the Texas Legislature and approved by Governor Greg Abbott to address immediate industrial workforce needs, offset labor shortages, and support economic resilience after natural disasters.

The TIRA grant program highlights TWC’s continued commitment to increasing the number of skilled workers throughout the state. Unlike traditional Registered Apprenticeship programs, which are administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, the TIRA grant program draws on state funding to support short-term (26 weeks or less) earn-while-you-learn training models that

meet urgent industry demands. Eligible applicants include Texas employers, trade and industry groups, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and unions.

TWC will award up to \$1 million per grant—with a cap of up to \$10,000 per participant (excluding wages and benefits)—to `cover training, materials, tools, and credentialing costs. Proposed programs must align with a TWC-recognized occupation, feature progressive wages and benefits at or above median wage levels, and prioritize unemployed Texans (UI claimants), veterans, formerly incarcerated individuals, and underemployed individuals lacking credentials. Programs must combine structured instruction with full-time employment, leading to portable, industry-recognized credentials and a requirement for 12 months of sustained private

sector employment post-completion.

To apply, eligible applicants can visit the TWC website to begin their applications. Completed application packages—including a project summary, training plan, partnership documentation, implementation timeline, and budget detail form— must be submitted to apprenticeshipinitiatives@twc.texas.gov. For more information on the application process and program parameters, visit the TWC website or contact the ApprenticeshipTexas team.

TWC will also be hosting the 10th Annual ApprenticeshipTexas Conference at the Hyatt Regency Houston West Hotel on Sept. 24-25, 2026. The conference will empower attendees to start or expand apprenticeship programs that help develop a more skilled workforce. Register for the 2026 ApprenticeshipTexas Conference today.

Annual Job Growth Exceeds 159,000 in Texas



(AUSTIN, TX) - Texas added 5,600 nonfarm jobs in August to reach a total of 14,469,300 positions. Over the year, the state added 159,400 jobs for an annual growth rate of 1.1 percent, outpacing the national rate by 0.7 percentage points.

Texas’ civilian labor force registered at 15,932,600 after adding 17,100 people over the month. Over the year, Texas’ civilian labor force has added 10,900 people.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Texas registered at 4.4 percent.

“The addition of more than 159,000 jobs over the year reinforces Texas’ status as a premier destination for employers and a source of ample opportunity for Texas workers,” said TWC Chairman Joe Esparza. “The gains we are seeing across service-based and goods-producing industries highlight how Texas is successfully balancing



growth across the entire economic spectrum.”

The Leisure and Hospitality industry had the largest private sector over-the-month increase in August after adding 4,900 jobs. Professional and Business Services added 4,500 jobs over the month while Manufacturing added 2,200.

“Growth across Texas’s major industries means more opportunities for Texans to realize their full potential,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Alberto Treviño III. “Through our Adult Education and Literacy programs, TWC is empowering workers with the foundational skills and credentials necessary to transition into high-demand, high-growth roles.”

The Midland metropolitan statistical area (MSA) had the lowest unemployment rate with a not seasonally adjusted rate of 3.3 percent in August. It was followed by the San Angelo MSA at

3.6 percent and the Abilene and Amarillo MSAs, which registered 3.7 percent.

“Texas’ steady employment growth is a testament to the talent of our workforce and the vitality of our industries,” said TWC Commissioner Representing the Public Brent Connett. “By prioritizing career and technical education, we are equipping the next generation of Texans with the specialized, hands-on skills needed to fill critical roles in our state’s evolving economy.”

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 September is scheduled to be released on Friday, October 16, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. (CT).

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OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING
THE AUSTIN HOUSING AUTHORITY
PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV)
ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN AND
THE 2027 PHA ANNUAL PLAN

Public Comment Period and Public Hearings for the Proposed Changes to the HCV Administrative Plan and the Draft 2027 PHA Annual Plan
The Austin Housing Authority (AHA) will have a public comment period for its Proposed Changes to the HCV Administrative Plan and the 2027 PHA Annual Plan. There will be a forty-five day public comment period commencing at 8:00 a.m. on September 18, 2026 through 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 2, 2026. All comments should be made in writing and delivered to 1124 S. IH-35 Austin, TX 78704 and made to the attention of Michael Gerber, President/CEO or via electronic mail at executive@austinha.org.

A Public Hearing to present comments regarding the draft annual plan and the proposed Administrative Plan revisions will be conducted as follows:

September 30, 2026 12:00 p.m. AHA Central Office
1124 S. IH-35
Austin, TX 78704

The Austin Housing Authority Board of Commissioners will vote on the adoption of the proposed changes to the HCV Administrative Plan and the 2027 PHA Annual Plan November 19, 2026, at the AHA Central Office located at 1124 S. IH-35, Austin, Texas 78704. A forum will be available during Citizens Communication to voice your views.

Copies of the proposed changes to the HCV Administrative Plan and the 2027 PHA Annual Plan are available for review and inspection at the AHA Central Office located at 1124 S. IH-35 Austin, TX 78704 or electronic versions are available online at www.austinha.org.

AHA is committed to compliance with the American Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. Please call 512-477-7111 for assistance.

PUCT Commissioner Hjaltman Appointed to
National Electric Research Advisory Council
Public Utility Commission of Texas

(AUSTIN, TX) – The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) appointed Commissioner Courtney Hjaltman of the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) to the Advisory Council to the Board of Directors of the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI).

"As the energy landscape evolves, strong collaboration is critical to

meeting the needs of consumers and communities," said PUCT Commissioner Hjaltman. "Texas is a leader in electric planning and innovation and I am honored to serve on EPRI's Advisory Council where I can share these ideas and contribute to the future of the electric industry."

Through EPRI's Advisory Council, leaders from government, business,

finance, education and other stakeholder groups provide insight into the technological, economic and policy issues affecting the electric sector. The council also helps ensure EPRI's research remains relevant and aligns with the public interest.

For more information on the council and Commissioner Hjaltman’s appointment, visit EPRI's announcement.

HHSC Highlights Healthy Aging
Resources, Seeks Input on Aging Plan

Texas Health and Human Services Commission

(AUSTIN, TX) – The Texas Health and Human Services Commission is observing Healthy Aging Month in September by highlighting resources that support older Texans and encouraging people to help shape the future of aging in the state.

Gov. Greg Abbott issued a proclamation encouraging Texans to recognize the contributions of older adults and support healthy aging across the state.

“Older Texans have helped build and sustain communities as educators, mentors and community leaders,” HHS Executive Commissioner Stephanie Muth said. “Healthy Aging Month honors their contributions and encourages Texans to stay healthy, con-

nected and informed as they age.”

HHSC offers a variety of programs and services to support older Texans:

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) provide nutrition, legal, care coordination and other supportive services to people 60 and older, their family members and caregivers. **Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)** provide referrals and help people access long-term services and specialized supports.

Age Well Live Well is a statewide initiative that promotes easy pathways to resources and encourages healthy changes through three core messages: be healthy, be connected and be informed.

Texercise provides free physical activity and

nutrition resources to educate, motivate and engage adults 45 and older.

Strengthen the Care You Give offers caregivers resources for self-care, peer support and mental health.

Local AAA and ADRC offices can provide benefits counseling services for older Texans as Medicare open enrollment begins in October. For more information, visit the HHSC Resources website.

HHSC is also seeking public input to develop the Aging Texas Well Strategic Plan, which will focus on access to services, healthy aging, caregiver support and age-friendly communities. Complete a short online form to choose your level of participation in creating the plan.

GET REGISTERED!
IT’S TIME TO VOTE!

The Next Election Takes Place on

NOV:3:2026

Last Day to Register	Mail Ballot App Deadline	Early Voting Begins	Early Voting Ends
5 OCT	23 OCT	19 OCT	30 OCT