

TEXAS DEMOCRATS

March 19, 2020

Chairman James Dickey
The Republican Party of Texas
P.O. Box 2206
Austin, TX 78768
Via Email

Dear Chairman Dickey,

Thank you to you and your team for joining me and mine today to discuss how we provide Texans with the continuity of government and maintain our democratic systems in the wake of this public health emergency. We all know that the First Amendment gives each of our parties the right to run our nomination processes independently, but appreciate a collaborative discussion to find a way to hold the primary runoff elections scheduled for May 26th.

In our conversation this morning, you suggested postponing the election and not immediately making significant changes to our election processes that would address or accommodate voting in the current public health crisis. It is my understanding that your argument was based on the assumption that the public health situation would be considerably improved by June. We do not believe that the available scientific evidence supports these claims but even were they to prove true, we still believe the public education of these few days presents enormous obstacles to voting systems that require in-person contact. As leaders of this state, we believe it is our responsibility to take immediate and decisive action to make plans for this election that allow it to go forward even amid a continued public health crisis.

You also raised concerns about transmission of COVID-19 by mail. However, it is our opinion that we should look to the guidance of the United States Postal Service (USPS) as the source of truth on these issues. To date, the USPS is continuing service and [said on March 17, 2020](#) that there is "currently no evidence that COVID-19 is being spread through the mail." Therefore, we believe we must immediately move forward planning for a primary runoff election that reduces the need for in-person voting and enhances Texans' ability to vote by mail.

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While it won't be easy, we are confident that our county election officials and Secretary of State can carry out a meaningful election that ensures the participation of all communities with minimal delays. However, we must immediately provide them the guidance, financial support, and other resources they need in order to do so.

To that end, we will provide you with our proposal for the path forward by noon Monday and look forward to seeing your team's proposal as well. Rose Clouston on my team will coordinate with Brandon Moore on yours to find a time on Monday afternoon for all of us to discuss these proposals and hopefully chart a joint path forward.

Sincerely,
Hon. Gilberto Hinojosa
Chairman, Texas Democratic Party

CC: Governor Greg Abbott c/o Luis Saenz
Secretary of State Ruth R. Hughs
Jose A. "Joe" Esparza, Deputy Secretary of State
Keith Ingram, Director of Elections
Christina Adkins, General Counsel, Elections Division
Manny Garcia, Executive Director, Texas Democratic Party
Brandon Moore, Organization Director, Republican Party of Texas

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