



Austin Landline Report June 2020

Elections

The main July 14th run-off event in South Texas is Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr., from Brownsville, who faces a serious run-off challenge. There is also a run-off in the Republican primary to challenge incumbent Democrat Congressman Vicente Gonzalez and there are run-offs for the House seat formerly held by Poncho Nevárez of Eagle Pass and to replace Speaker Dennis Bonnen in Matagorda and Brazoria Counties. Our state PAC has endorsed Ro'Vin Garrett in that latter race.

Early mail-in ballot requests must be in by July 2nd.

I am keeping up with several run-offs in other areas, particularly rural-based ones, in hopes that we will have good allies this session.

Senators Zaffirini and Hinojosa and Rep. Guillen all face general election opponents. J.M. Lozano had neither a primary nor general election opponent.

I just received this [list of Aggies in government](#), which may be of interest.

Interim Charges

As I have mentioned previously, a [joint hearing of Senate committees](#) was held at the end of January to examine groundwater ownership and regulation.

A second Senate committee hearing that was scheduled for the end of April has been postponed indefinitely. I have attempted to contact the directors of both the House and Senate water regulation committees, but they are not responding as yet, which indicates more delays in hearings.

As I have also mentioned, the first Senate hearing demonstrated the tension between landowner groups and groundwater conservation districts, groups that should be working together to ensure continued local control of regulation as Texas becomes more urbanized. I am still working to help bridge that communication gap between the Farm Bureau and the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts.

As of this writing, there is only one interim hearing set on the calendars of either chamber and that is the Senate Health and Human Services Committee on September 9th. I would expect for some sort of hearings to be announced sometime after the July 14th run-off election.

Preparation for the 2021 Legislative Session

It's hard to imagine, but the next legislative session will be here before we know it and now is the time to get serious about preparing for it. I will be working with our highly qualified volunteer Austin advocacy team of Eric Opiela, Joe Maley, and Charles Maley to prepare for our priority issues, especially eminent domain reform, on which we have already been working.