

# [***Ted Cruz Fights For His Political Future***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BM3-MM71-JBR6-90M0-00000-00&context=1516831)

Newsweek.com

March 22, 2024 Friday 4:00 AM EST

Copyright © 2024 Newsweek Inc. All Rights Reserved



**Length:** 837 words

**Byline:** Ewan Palmer

**Highlight:** Cruz will face off against Democrat Colin Allred for the Texas Senate seat in an election in November.

**Body**

Texas Senator [*Ted Cruz*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/ted-cruz?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) could face another major battle to hold on to his seat, similar to what was seen during the 2018 race, but experts pointed out some differences between then and now to *Newsweek*.

Cruz will face off against [*Democrat Colin Allred for the Texas Senate seat*](https://www.newsweek.com/exclusive-colin-allred-work-defeat-ted-cruz-1879878?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)in an election in November in what is already shaping up to be a hotly contested campaign.

While the incumbent [*Republican*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republican?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) is considered the early favorite, with a Texas ***Politics*** Project poll giving him a 14-point lead over Allred in February, other surveys have suggested that Cruz and Allred are[*currently neck-and-neck in the race.*](https://www.newsweek.com/ted-cruz-texas-senate-polll-allred-1875137?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)

The influential [*Cook Political Report*](https://www.cookpolitical.com/ratings/senate-race-ratings) also says that Cruz's Texas [*Senate*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/senate?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) seat will only "likely" stay Republican after November's election, instead of being a "solid" Red seat.

The apparent closeness of the election could once again mean that Cruz will once again be in the midst of one of the most closely-watched races in the country.

In 2018, Cruz won re-election to the Senate for the first time [*following a fiercely competitive race*](https://www.newsweek.com/beto-orourke-hopes-this-time-will-different-battle-governor-against-abbott-1635300?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) with former Texas congressman [*Beto O'Rourke*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/beto-orourke?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships). Cruz ended up beating O'Rourke by just over 2.6 points in what was at the time the [*most expensive*](https://www.axios.com/2018/10/26/texas-senate-race-most-expensive-in-history) Senate campaign race in U.S. history.

Cruz himself has also suggested his future in office is again at risk, telling [*Fox News*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/fox-news?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) in February that [*Democrats*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) have made flipping his Senate seat their [*"number one target"*](https://www.newsweek.com/ted-cruz-texas-senate-seat-democrats-collin-allred-1871262?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)as they hope to retain control of the upper chamber.

Mark Jones, professor of political science and fellow in political science at Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy in Texas, suggested that both Cruz and Allred have "incentives" to claim the race is much closer than it is at present.

"Primarily to boost their fundraising efforts but also, in the case of Cruz, to help prevent complacency among the Republican base and for Allred to help prevent despondency on the Democratic base," Jones told *Newsweek.*

"That said, for national Democrats, Texas remains their best option—albeit a long shot option—to go on the offensive in 2024 with the goal of flipping a Republican-held U.S. Senate seat, in a year where Democrats will primarily be playing defense in states such as Michigan, Montana and Ohio."

Jones added that Cruz appears to be already taking steps to avoid the mistakes he made in 2018 of not considering O'Rourke a threat until the final few months of the campaign, by which point the Democrat had already established monument and name recognition on a national scale.

"In 2024, Cruz won't be fooled again," Jones said. "He is treating Allred seriously from day one, and will also be working throughout the year to prevent Allred from presenting himself to moderate [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and independents as a pragmatic centrist in an effort to peel off Republican and independents voters [*who presently favor Cruz."*](https://www.newsweek.com/ted-cruz-democrats-texas-senate-1876972?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)

Cruz's office has been contacted for comment via email.

Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha, a professor of American ***Politics*** at the University of North Texas, also suggested Cruz won't be caught "flat-footed" against Allred like he was against O'Rourke in 2018 to boost his chances of re-election.

"Beto O'Rourke came on like gangbusters; Cruz and his supporters took until the summer to realize that he was a threat," Eshbaugh-Soha told *Newsweek*. "Cruz has already positioned himself to start campaigning now. He won't let Allred build the kind of momentum O'Rourke had."

Other factors that could prove beneficial for Cruz is that 2018 was a year of midterm elections when Republican [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) was in the White House. Historically, the ruling party tends to struggle in midterm elections, especially in the House, which will not be an issue for Cruz in 2024.

With Trump running for the White House again this year, there is an argument that the strong Red state of Texas will show support for each Republican in their respective races come November.

"Predicting the Cruz-Allred race—barring some personal cataclysm that affects Cruz or chaos at the top of the ballot that confuses Republicans and keeps them home in November—is as simple as predicting Trump-Biden in Texas," Eshbaugh-Soha said.

"The one plus for Allred is the large 'don't knows' in the polling. Cruz has sufficient unfavorable ratings to hint at a close race. In the event that Allred can convert those don't knows into favorables, maybe I will be wrong. In all likelihood, as voters begin to know Allred, even if they like him, they will split on party, and party benefits Republicans in Texas."

Kimi Lynn King, a University of North Texas political science professor, said that the 2022 midterm results, [*where the GOP underperformed as a whole,*](https://www.newsweek.com/republicans-must-review-2022-midterm-failures-opinion-1765154?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) suggest that Allred would need to pull off a significant turnaround if he is to become the first Democrat to win a Senate seat in the Red state since 1988.

"It will be an uphill battle, because Republicans pretty handedly took statewide races by at least 60-65 percent or more," King told *Newsweek*. "It is not clear that something is about to shift unless there is a massive voter turnout."

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2365656/ted-cruz-fights-his-political-future.jpg)

**Graphic**

Ted Cruz Fights For His Political Future

Photo-illustration by Newsweek/Getty

Ted Cruz Fights For His Political Future

**Load-Date:** March 22, 2024

**End of Document**