

# [***Greg Abbott's Win in Texas Primary***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BGP-S2X1-JBR6-94J4-00000-00&context=1516831)

Newsweek.com

March 6, 2024 Wednesday 7:39 AM EST

Copyright © 2024 Newsweek Inc. All Rights Reserved



**Length:** 676 words

**Byline:** Katherine Fung

**Highlight:** The governor had been on a mission to unseat the House Republicans who voted against his school vouchers program.

**Body**

Texas Governor [*Greg Abbott*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/greg-abbott?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) scored a victory on Super Tuesday after only two of his endorsed candidates lost to incumbent [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) who had earned Abbott's ire.

Of the 10 Republican primary challengers whom Abbott endorsed, five prevailed in their races Tuesday night while another three are headed to the state's May 28 runoff. Those wins are expected to help Abbott stack the state Legislature with members who would be more favorable to passing one of his top priorities.

The governor had been on a mission this primary season to unseat the House Republicans who repeatedly voted against his school vouchers program. Campaign finance reports show that Abbott spent $6.1 million between January 26 and February 24 to deliver on his campaign promise.

Even after calling legislators back for four special sessions, Abbott ultimately lost a yearlong fight to pass a bill that would have given parents educational tax dollars to send their children to private or religious schools instead of public ones. His defeat was largely driven by a united Democratic coalition and about two dozen Republicans who represent rural areas and whose communities oftentimes rely on public schools as a lifeline.

Texas ***politics*** expert Brandon Rottinghaus told *Newsweek* that Abbott's win puts the governor "squarely at the head of the Republican party in Texas," showing just how strong of a political force Abbott is while arming him with allies who could help him in the tough legislative battle on school choice.

Ahead of Texas' March 5 primary, Abbott endorsed Republican candidates running against Representatives Glenn Rogers, Gary VanDeaver, Hugh D. Shine, Steve Allison, DeWayne Burns, Stan Lambert, John Kuempel, Drew Darby, Ernst Bailes and Travis Clardy. Five of them—Rogers, Shine, Allison, Bailes and Clardy—were ousted on Tuesday, while VanDeaver, Burns and Kuempel are headed to the state's May 28 runoff.

VanDeaver is the only one of the three incumbents headed to the runoff who had an advantage over their Abbott-backed challenger in Tuesday's primary. Burns and Kuempel trailed their opponents by roughly 8 and 3 percentage points, respectively. Only Lambert and Darby survived their primary challenges.

Rogers, VanDeaver, Shine, Allison, Burns, Lambert and Kuempel were up against a particularly challenging re-election, facing opposition from not only Abbott but also Texas Attorney General [*Ken Paxton*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/ken-paxton?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), who was on his own crusade to go after the Republican legislators who voted in favor of his impeachment last year. Paxton's list, however, extends beyond the House, and includes judges on Texas' Criminal Court of Appeals.

The Texas GOP has been embattled in a civil war over school vouchers and Paxton's impeachment. The governor and the attorney general are not the only state leaders turning the primary into a referendum on their influence over local House districts. Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick and even former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) have endorsed Republican challengers in Texas.

"Governor Abbott is well known and liked in most segments of the Republican party, and he certainly has enough money to move the needle among primary voters," Rottinghaus, a professor at the University of Houston, said. "But when it comes to activating the most conservative voters in the party, others like Dan Patrick or Ken Paxton and even Donald Trump have got more juice."

Here is a list of the 10 GOP candidates Abbott endorsed and the outcome of each race:

* Chris Spencer — House District 1 — HEADED TO RUNOFF (with 43 percent of the GOP vote to Rep. Gary Vandeaver's 46 percent)Joanne Shofner — House District 11— WINJanis Holt — House District 18 — WINAlan Schoolcraft — House District 44 — HEADED TO RUNOFF (with 48 percent to Rep. John Kuempel's 45 percent)Hillary Hickland — House District 55 — WINHelen Kerwin — House District 58 — HEADED TO RUNOFF (with 49 percent to Rep. DeWayne Burns' 41 percent)Mike Olcott — House District 60 — WINLiz Case — House District 71 — LOSEStormy Bradley — House District 72 — LOSEMarc LaHood — House District 121 — WIN

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2357659/greg-abbott-texas-primary.jpg)

**Graphic**

Greg Abbott Texas Primary

Brandon Bell/Getty Images

Texas Governor Greg Abbott speaks on October 27, 2022 in Katy, Texas. Deeply angered by Republican opposition against his school vouchers program, Abbott endorsed a string of GOP challengers to help him defeat the obstacle he faces in the state House of Representatives.

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2024

**End of Document**