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DAVIS OUT-RAISES GREG ABBOTT

Wendy Davis, \$12.2M vs. Greg Abbott, \$11.5M Jay Root, The Texas Tribune

Democrat Wendy Davis pulled \$8.7 million into her campaign coffers in the last half of 2013, and another group committed to her election as governor raised \$3.5 million over the same period, the Davis campaign announced Tuesday. Minutes after she announced the combined \$12.2 million haul, her expected Republican opponent, Attorney General Greg Abbott, announced he had raised \$11.5 million over the same time frame.

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JOE POOL CONTINUES FIGHT AGAINST JUSTICE JEFF BROWN

Wants to throw Justice Brown off the ballot— Peggy Fikac, Houston Chronicle

A GOP primary challenger to Texas Supreme Court Justice Jeff Brown is pressing his legal fight to knock him off the ballot.

Joe Pool, in a lawsuit against the Republican Party of Texas, contends that Brown doesn't have the required number of valid signatures to be on the ballot, which Brown and the state GOP dispute. Brown first was named to his seat by Gov. Rick Perry to fill a vacancy and is running to keep the post.

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US HOUSE APPROVES BIPAR- SAN SPENDING BILL FOR 2014

Bill restores spending to '08 levels— Ed O'Keefe, The Washington Post

A large bloc of House conservatives voted Wednesday against a \$1.1 trillion spending plan to fund the federal government for the rest of the fiscal year, saying that the new bipartisan agreement fails to scale back the new health-care law or dramatically pay down the national debt.

But the spending bill easily passed the House 359 to 67 with broad support from both Republicans and Democrats. The omnibus measure moves next to the Senate, where it is expected to pass easily before heading to President Obama for his signature.

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JUDGE SAYS DAVE WILSON MAY TAKE OFFICE AT HCC

Judge Brent Gamble sets aside TROs— [Brian Rogers, Houston Chronicle](#)

A judge Wednesday declined to prohibit small businessman and anti-gay activist Dave Wilson from taking his seat at the first meeting of the board of the Houston Community College Thursday. State District Judge Brent Gamble turned back efforts by the Harris County Attorney's Office to get a new temporary restraining order to keep Wilson from taking the dais as questions about his residency are litigated.

Another civil court judge had previously granted a restraining order prohibiting Wilson from taking the oath of office and declined to issue another one, saying the issues raised around Wilson will be heard in the court where the case landed when it was filed in December.

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PAYDAY LENDING CONTINUES TO BE A BIG ISSUE THIS YEAR

From Houston to Austin—[Corrie MacLaggan, The Texas Tribune](#)

The payday lending controversy that exploded in the governor's race in recent weeks highlights the state's lack of regulation and the challenge that lawmakers have faced with an issue that has been as contentious at the Capitol as it is on the campaign trail.

Last year, a major legislative effort to impose state regulations on lenders failed, and since then, Houston has joined Austin, Dallas, El Paso and San Antonio in passing a city ordinance to limit the loans. Now, the issue of so-called predatory lending is flaring in the gubernatorial race amid calls for the resignation of Gov. Rick Perry's appointed head of the governing board of the agency charged with regulating the credit industry and educating consumers, who is also an executive for one of the lenders.

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DEWHURST LEADS PATRICK, OTHERS IN AMOUNT RAISED

But Patrick and Staples have more cash— [Mike Ward, Austin American-Statesman](#)

In the four-way campaign dogfight to win the March Republican primary for lieutenant governor, incumbent David Dewhurst has taken the lead in fundraising, bringing in more than \$2.3 million in the past six months.

But two challengers, state Sen. Dan Patrick and Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples, have more cash on hand — \$3.1 million each — than Dewhurst, even though Dewhurst is widely expected to pump several additional millions of dollars into his campaign during the next month from his personal fortune.

Those details emerged Wednesday afternoon from campaign-finance reports to be filed with the Texas Ethics Commission.

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CITY COUNCIL TAGS SOME BIG CONTRACTS, PASSES OTHERS

*Councilmember Pennington opposes giving contracts to out-of-State law firms
—[Noah M. Horwitz, Texpatiate](#)*

As was noted last week, the City Council delayed a proposal to approve an advertising contract at the airports for one week, until today's meeting. Today, after brief discussion, the Council decided to refer the decision back to the Mayoral administration. Not much else about this item came up for public consideration this week, as the original controversy revolved around both Clear Channel and another firm fighting over the contract.

Next, the City Council discussed hiring "advisory counsel" for a planned new Courthouse and Justice Complex. Specifically, the firm of Hawkins, Delafield & Wood was retained, out of New York City.

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THE DAMNED THIRD PAGE

^{new}
The Houston Post

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Presented by: *Sophia Arena, Olivia Arena, George Bailey, Noah M. Horwitz and Andrew Scott Romo.*

BUDGET DEFICITS BASED ON POLITICS

Former Mayor of Houston says we should be more fiscally prudent— Bill White, The Dallas Morning News

Republican and Democratic leaders blame each other for deficit spending, so no wonder many Americans fault partisanship itself for recurring budget crises. In reality, federal elected officials have often compromised on budget issues. The federal government cannot balance its budget so long as those compromises raise spending or lower revenue.

The appropriations bills scheduled for congressional action this week provide a prime example. Congress will authorize spending at a level consistent with last month's bipartisan budget resolution, which contained a section with the Orwellian title: "Budget Enforcement and Deficit Reduction." That section relaxed — rather than enforced — legal limits on outlays and opened the door to higher deficits in the next two fiscal years.

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BEST OF THE BLOGS!

BIG JOLLY POLITICS

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