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MILITARY ASSAULT BILL PASSES

McCaskill bill unanimously clears US Senate— Ed O’Keefe, The Washington Post

A bipartisan plan to overhaul the way sexual-assault cases are handled in the military was easily approved by the Senate Monday evening. The measure written by Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.) was approved 97 to 0 -- a rare unanimous vote. But Congress has been quick to respond to the rising rate of assault and rape in the ranks.

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PATTERSON SLAMS PATRICK AHEAD OF RUNOFF WITH DEW

Calls him utter obscenities— Alana Rocha & Morgan Smith, The Texas Tribune

Whether incumbent Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst can make up for a big primary night loss to challenger Dan Patrick in a May runoff may depend on if he can successfully court the supporters of his two former opponents.

But in interviews on Tuesday, neither Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples nor Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson, who earned a combined 30 percent of the vote in the March GOP primary for lieutenant governor, were ready to come out in favor of Dewhurst.

Staples said outright that he had decided not to give a nod in the race.

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WENDY DAVIS TAPS FORMER REID AIDE AS COM DIRECTOR

Hopes to assuage campaign fears— Wayne Slater, The Dallas Morning News

It’s no secret that the Wendy Davis campaign has struggled — especially with efforts to advance its message in the media. Campaign operatives failed to properly vet her political biography, advancing an incomplete (and in some cases inaccurate) version of her trailer park-to-Harvard Law School personal story. And the Davis communications shop bungled Davis’ speech aimed at setting the record straight, inexplicably barring virtually the entire press corps from the speech last month. The campaign initially hired young and inexperienced campaign operatives, who in some cases shielded Davis from interviews, refused to confirm basic campaign scheduling details and failed to respond directly with information reporters covering the race had requested.

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COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER NEW ATTORNEY GENERAL LOOKING PLAN TO TACKLE CITY BLIGHT AT AUSTIN PLASTIC BAG BAN

Laster, Green are supportive—[Mike Morris, Houston Chronicle](#)

Rep. Flynn seeks opinion over ordinance—[Amena Ahmed, The Texas Tribune](#)

Few topics put civic leaders on the warpath like blighted buildings - the crumbling apartments and dilapidated strip centers that ring so many Houston neighborhoods. Ask Houston City Council members about blight, and you may to draw similar ire, this time directed at the city's inability to help.

As proponents continue to tout the benefits of banning plastic bags, the debate over whether Texas cities like Austin actually have the ability to enact such ordinances has made its way to the attorney general's office.

City officials now hope to change that, with a plan to grant tax breaks to those who redevelop distressed properties. The City Council will consider the item Wednesday. "We think it is something the community will embrace, albeit modest in scope," said Andy Icken, the city's chief development officer.

In a letter seeking an opinion from Attorney General Greg Abbott, state Rep. Dan Flynn, R-Canton, questioned whether the city bans are in compliance with the state's health and safety laws. "At least nine cities in Texas have enacted bans on plastic bags and adopted fees on replacement bags in recent years," the letter stated. "This appears to be in contravention of state law."

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JOAQUIN CASTRO WILL NOW BOYCOTT BUC-CES GAS STOP

Follows owners' endorsement of Patrick—[Kolten Parker, San Antonio Express-News](#)

Texas roadside megastore Buc-ee's found itself in between two political powerhouses Tuesday after the chain's owners offered their support to state Sen. Dan Patrick.

Following a photo and announcement of the owners' support on Facebook Monday, Congressman Joaquin Castro said he would no longer shop at Buc-ee's "since they support a fear mongering immigrant basher."

"I am disappointed to learn that a popular and well-respected retailer would lend its corporate brand to a candidate for statewide office who has built his career around dividing Texans and bashing immigrants, solely for his own political gain," Castro said in a written statement.

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VAN DE PUTTE TAPS A NEW CAMPAIGN MANAGER, REMLEY

Will lead charge for Dem Lite Gov candidate—[David Rauf, Houston Chronicle](#)

State Sen. Leticia Van de Putte has hired a veteran Democratic political operative who hails from outside of Texas to run her bid for lieutenant governor.

Van de Putte, D-San Antonio, recently tapped as her campaign manager Scott Remley, a former researcher for the Democratic National Committee who has spent the last 15 years working for a variety of political campaigns, a U.S. Senate office and top-flight Democratic polling and consulting firms.

Remley, a 36-year-old self-described Coloradan, was picked to oversee the campaign after Van de Putte and her team conducted a nationwide search.

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THE DAMNED THIRD PAGE

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The Houston Post

TEXAS COULD SWING FROM RED TO BLUE

And fast, too!—Dante Chinni, The Wall Street Journal

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

For students of politics and demographics, Texas has the look of a state in transition. The Lone Star State is a Republican Party stronghold, and also is home to a growing number of Hispanics, who tend to vote Democratic, as 2012 showed. Despite Texas' large Hispanic population, GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney swept the state in 2012, winning by 16 percentage points. So why do analysts and some politicians, including Sen. Rand Paul, a Kentucky Republican who grew up in Texas, say the state could actually flip Democratic soon?

Shifts in demographics aren't just about race or ethnicity. Age also plays a role. And when you look at how Texas' changing ethnic landscape combines with its age breakdown, you'll see signs that if Texas flips, it could go from red to purple to blue relatively quickly.

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Noah M. Horwitz

THE PEANUT GALLERY

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