

November 6, 2008

Memo To: Interested Parties

From: Kyle Frazier

Re: Election results

While the results of Tuesday evening's election pose considerable changes at the Federal level, results here in Texas also promise to alter the composition and workings of our state government. Democratic gains in both the Texas House and Senate promise potential challenges to current Republican leadership.

## SENATE

Half of the members of the Texas Senate were up for re-election. Most of these races were won easily by the incumbent senator. The exception was the defeat of long time State Senator and former member of the Texas House, Kim Brimer. Senator Brimer was defeated in the Tarrant County area district by former Ft. Worth city council member Wendy Davis. Her margin of victory was over 7,000 votes.

While this single victory does not give Democrats a majority in the 31 member Senate, it increases their total to 12. This number is significant because of the Senate's Constitutional rule requiring a 2/3rds vote to bring any bill up for consideration.

There is also still pending a special election to fill the un-expired term of Senator Kyle Janek who retired. Former Congressman Chris Bell (Democrat) could increase the margin if he is successful in the special election.

## HOUSE

The results of Tuesday night's election maintained an extremely narrow Republican majority in the Texas House. If all things remain as they are the Republicans hold a 1 vote majority, 76-74. This is significant in that the members of the Texas House vote on who will be Speaker on the first day of the upcoming Legislative Session. It takes a simple majority of House members to be elected Speaker.

The one interesting side note is that Representative Linda Harper Brown (R-Irving) won a very narrow victory with only a 28 vote margin. There are a number of provisional ballots that have yet to be counted that could either increase her margin or give her opponent a victory. Should she lose, the Republican/Democrat split in the House would be 75-75. This poses an interesting question and could allow as few as one House member to break ranks, go to the other side and elect a speaker.

The vote for Speaker is not a secret ballot.

Current reports indicate that a number of House members (Republican and Democrat) have filed the necessary paperwork to run for Speaker. Some of these are serious and some are not. This issue will not be decided any time soon. Even on the first day of the Legislative Session there could be numerous ballots and votes for Speaker.