

Exhibit E

Texas Legislature's second special session begins as quorum-breaking Democrats plan return

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Patricia Lim / KUT News

Texas Rep. Dustin Burrows, Speaker of the House, adjourned the chamber Sine Die on Friday Aug. 15, 2025, in Austin.

Texas House Speaker Dustin Burrows adjourned the 2025 Legislature's first special session sine die Friday morning, telling lawmakers "not to go very far."

That move set in motion a series of events that will end the House Democrats' nearly [two-week-long quorum break](#) and likely lead to the passage of [a new congressional map](#) that has the potential to help Republicans win an additional five seats in next year's midterm elections.

"I believe our governor will be calling us back for another special session very, very soon," Burrows told the House before adjourning Friday.

Moments later, Gov. Greg Abbott released his [second special session proclamation](#), scheduling the session to begin at noon on Friday.

"We will not back down from this fight," said Abbott. "That's why I am calling them [the Texas Legislature] back today to finish the job. I will continue to use all necessary tools to ensure Texas delivers results for Texans."

Shortly afterward, state Rep. Ann Johnson (D-Houston) became the first of several Democrats to announce she'd be returning

"We broke quorum to protect the Constitution, to defend fair representation, and to stop a racist and rigged process in its tracks - and we succeeded," Johnson said in a statement. "Now with that [first special] session behind us, I'm returning to Texas to continue the fight - from the floor of the House."



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The majority of Texas House Democrats fled the state, leaving the House without a quorum during the adjournment of the 89th Legislative Special Session on Friday, Aug. 15, 2025, in Austin.

The governor has said publicly that he will call [as many special sessions as needed](#) for the Legislature to pass the map, which President Donald Trump has sought to help preserve the GOP's narrow majority in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Texas House Democrats, led by state Rep. Gene Wu (D-Houston) issued a statement from Chicago Thursday saying [they would return to Texas when two conditions were met](#): the Legislature's adjournment sine die on Friday and California's introduction of its own redistricting map to counteract Texas' proposed map.

California is [expected to release its map](#) either Friday or over the weekend.

"Texas House Democrats broke quorum and successfully mobilized the nation against Trump's assault on minority voting rights," Wu said Thursday. "Now, as Democrats across the nation join our fight to cause these maps to fail their political purpose, we're prepared to bring this battle back to Texas under the right conditions and to take this fight to the courts."

California's passage of any proposed redistricting map is far from automatic. It would have to be approved by voters in a special election. Republicans in the state, including former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, [are already mobilizing](#) to try to defeat the effort.

In addition to California, [several other Democrat-led states](#) have begun discussions about redistricting, including Illinois and New York. None of those other states would be able to shift nearly as many seats from Republican to Democratic as easily as California, and New York is effectively prohibited from redistricting for at least another two years.

"What this walkout has done has sparked a whole conversation nationwide about

"If the Texas Democrats hadn't done this, then those blue states would not be taking action right now."



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Texas Rep. Gene Wu gives a speech during a protest against redistricting at the Texas Capitol on Friday, Aug. 1, 2025. Texas GOP members released the first draft of the new congressional map on Wednesday.

Second special session begins with threats to absent Democrats

As ordered, Speaker Burrows kicked off the second special session Friday at noon. While Democrats have signaled they will return to the state, most were still absent Friday: Only 97 members were present and a quorum was not reached.

But, with the special session clock now reset at 30 days, Burrows let it be known he intends to get this session wrapped up by Labor Day.

As for this weekend, Burrows sent Texas House lawmakers home to enjoy it with their families. But, he added, absent Democrats shouldn't expect the same courtesy.

"Those who have refused to make quorum, I'm sure you're missing home. Do not think you have permission to return to Texas and enjoy a peaceful weekend before finally showing up to work," Burrows said. "DPS will remain active and civil arrest warrants will be reissued. If you are located, you will be compelled to this chamber."

If Texas Department of Public Safety officers happen to find enough Democrats to make quorum sooner than Monday, Burrows said lawmakers will be given six hours to return to the Capitol — a procedural move called a "call of the house" which the speaker also made last weekend.

While Burrows was getting the second round of legislative overtime underway, Gov. Abbott was a few doors down giving a press conference about [the New World screwworm](#).

Near the end, reporters asked Abbott about an idea that [at least one House Republican](#) has shared: Going even further with redistricting by redrawing the state's House and Senate districts.

"Every strategy is at play — depends on when and whether the Democrats show up

wait and see. But we hold a lot more bullets in our belt that we will be ready to use if we need to.”

So when will House Democrats be back in Texas?

State Rep. Vince Perez (D-El Paso) told the Texas Newsroom on Friday that he’s “not sure on the date when Democrats are going to return.”

“In order for us to block this, we would probably have to quorum break through Thanksgiving,” Perez said. “That’s a difficult thing to achieve.”

Perez said his personal focus remains on highlighting [the proposed, new congressional maps](#) from his Republican colleagues.

“These maps are the worst in the nation in terms of the level of segregation and the racial engineering that’s taking place,” Perez said.

He agreed that Republicans will pass the maps eventually, but said he hopes the courts will act quickly to stop something he called “blatantly illegal.”

“Republicans are going to pass this. They're dead set on passing this, no matter how segregated the maps are,” Perez said. “We have to do all that we can to ensure that this also makes its way through the legal system and gets overturned in the courts.”

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