

# LONE STAR PROJECT

*Fighting Back... with Facts*



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## **Democrats Expanding Base, Launch New ePrimary Poll** *Meanwhile, Republican Candidates Bail on GOP Straw Poll*

### **TDP ePrimary Poll – Open to all Texans**

The Texas Democratic Party is launching an innovative *ePrimary Poll* today, August 31, 2007 with voting to continue through Friday, September 7, 2007. ([See TDP ePrimary Poll Here](#)) The online poll is open to all Texas Democrats and is designed to engage voters all across the state. The *ePrimary Poll* provides Texas Democrats their first chance to weigh in on the Presidential Primary. The *ePrimary Poll* does not require previous Democratic voting history or convention attendance. ***Instead, just like a Democratic Primary in Texas, voters simply cast a ballot for the candidate they prefer.***

### **GOP Straw Poll – No New Members Need Apply**

In stark contrast, the Texas Republican party has imposed severe restrictions on who can participate in their Texas GOP straw poll to be held in Fort Worth over Labor Day weekend. Under the Texas Republican rules, only past activists and party regulars can cast a vote. To cast a ballot in the Texas GOP Straw Poll, a voter must have:

- Served as a Delegate or Alternate Delegate to at least one of the last four Republican State Conventions; or
- Attended one of the last two Republican National Conventions; and
- Paid a fee of \$50 to \$75.

	<b>Primary Voters from 2000-2006</b>	<b>Voters Eligible in Dem ePrimary vs. GOP Straw Poll</b>
<b>Texas GOP Straw Poll</b>	1,554,928	less than 1%
<b>Texas Dem ePrimary Poll</b>	1,779,937	100%

Source: TX Secretary of State, Houston Chronicle, Daily Texan

Of the 1.5 million people who voted in a Republican primary over the last six years,

fewer than 15,000 attended a recent GOP convention and are eligible to vote. That means **less than one percent of Texas Republican Primary voters will be allowed to express their opinion in the GOP Presidential Straw Poll.**

Texas Republican leaders have long been justifiably criticized for suppressing Democratic votes and creating barriers to voting in a general election. ([see one example here](#)) Republican animosity to **all** new voters, even those in their own party, takes insecurity and desperation to hold power to a new level.

### **Comparison: GOP Straw Poll vs. Democratic ePrimary Poll**

	<b>Texas Republican Party Straw Poll</b>	<b>Texas Democratic Party ePrimary Poll</b>
<b>Participation</b>	Must have been a GOP Delegate or Alternate to a recent Party Convention	All Texas voters are welcome
<b>Cost</b>	\$50 -\$75 to vote	No Cost to Participants
<b>Location</b>	Fort Worth	Any computer in Texas
<b>Attendance</b>	Must attend event in Fort Worth over Labor Day Weekend	Can vote from any location in Texas From: August 31 – September 7th
<b>Candidates Participating</b>	Ron Paul Duncan Hunter	Joe Biden Hillary Clinton Chris Dodd John Edwards Mike Gravel Dennis Kucinich Barack Obama Bill Richardson
<b>Candidates Opting Out</b>	Rudy Giuliani Mitt Romney John McCain Fred Thompson Mike Huckabee Sam Brownback	None

(Source: Fort Worth Star-Telegram, August 30, 2007)

### **Republican Straw Poll never got off the ground**

The Texas Republican Straw Poll has been plagued with troubles from the very beginning, with all top tier Presidential candidates dropping out and viewing it as irrelevant. Even second tier candidates like Mike Huckabee and Sam Brownback have bailed, leaving only Libertarian Ron Paul and the virtually unknown Duncan Hunter. Now Republican Governor Rick Perry, Lt. Governor David Dewhurst, and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison have announced they are also skipping the straw poll.

### **Perry, Dewhurst and Craddick Torpedoed GOP Straw Poll**

Perhaps the most damaging blow to the Republican Straw Poll came from their own elected leadership. Earlier this year, Governor Rick Perry, Lt. Governor David Dewhurst

and Speaker Tom Craddick refused to move up the Texas Presidential Primary to February 5th. Democratic legislative and party leaders strongly supported a primary move, acknowledging that the earlier primary date would create excitement and bring new participants into the primaries from both parties. The Republican leaders, however, failed to push the primary bill, and it died when the legislature adjourned. As a result, Republican leaders left Texas voters without a serious voice in the primary and left their own party with a meaningless presidential Straw Poll. Now, presidential candidates are treating Texas like they normally do – as an ATM machine to claim Texans' dollars instead of Texans' votes.

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