

Railroad Commission Battle Highlights Critical Issues for Climate and Water


In spite of its name, the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) has nothing to do with railroads; rather, it is responsible for regulating most oil and gas activities in Texas. Big Oil is big business, especially in Texas where it extracts more oil and gas than from any other state. It is also a big polluter, responsible for much of the state's carbon emissions that are increasing wildfire risk, drought, and flooding across the planet; and it consumes and pollutes massive amounts of water. The RRC's three elected commissioners are infamous for kowtowing to the industry they are supposed to regulate, and their election campaigns are typically fueled by contributions from industry coffers.

This status quo is being vigorously challenged by Chrysta Castañeda, who is running a spirited campaign for railroad commissioner this November.



Castañeda has 35 years of experience as an energy engineer and attorney. She is committed to holding the industry accountable, especially when it comes to flaring, the wasteful, polluting practice of burning methane in the oil field

rather than capturing and selling it. The RRC almost never rejects a request to flare or simply vent methane into the air — Castañeda wants to change that. Castañeda is also determined to protect groundwater and surface water from oil and gas wastewater discharges. Castañeda enjoys widespread support across the state, and Clean Water Action has endorsed her candidacy. We urge our supporters to **vote for Chrysta Castañeda** for Railroad Commission in this year's election!



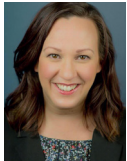
*“At this very minute,
oil companies are lighting
on fire enough energy to
power the city of Houston,
wasting natural gas
and polluting our air.
That doesn’t make sense.”*

— Chrysta Castañeda
Candidate for Texas Railroad Commission

Be a Clean Water Voter in 2020!

This year's elections are the most critical in recent history. The past four years have shown us the importance of electing candidates who let science guide policy, from confronting climate change to fighting COVID-19. It is equally vital that we choose candidates who are committed to fulfilling the promise of American democracy by acknowledging the reality of systemic racism and acting to dismantle it. And it is vital that we support candidates who understand that fair and open elections are essential to our democracy and who work to guarantee equal and unfettered access to the polls for all. With these values in mind, Clean Water Action proudly endorses these candidates.

**Vote Tuesday,
November 3**
**Vote EARLY
through
Friday, Oct. 30**



MJ Hegar for US Senate: Hegar is a decorated war veteran committed to reversing the Trump administration's dangerous rollbacks of landmark environmental protections, and she recognizes climate crisis as the greatest long-term threat facing our children. Texans deserve better than incumbent Senator Cornyn, who scored a zero on Clean Water Action's scorecard for consistently putting the interests of corporate polluters ahead of public health in his votes in the Senate.

US Congress:



Stephen Daniel, Dist 6: Daniel favors reducing fossil fuel extraction on public lands and assuring that communities of color are included in crafting solutions to pollution that affects their neighborhoods. His opponent Ronald Wright received a 'F-' for his anti-environmental votes during his one term in congress.



Mike Siegel, Dist 10: Raised in a union household, this former school teacher and civil rights attorney is committed to solving the climate crisis while creating millions of new jobs through clean energy investments. His opponent Mike McCaul has a dismal record of supporting the Trump anti-environment agenda at every turn.



Rick Kennedy, District 17: Kennedy favors market-based approaches to fighting climate change and he is taking on Pete Sessions, a former congressman with a long history of opposing protections for clean water and the environment.



Wendy Davis, District 21: Davis is a progressive champion who earned a solid 'A' rating for her environmental votes in the Texas Senate, while her far-right opponent Chip Roy scored an 'F-' on his congressional environmental report card.



Julie Oliver, District 25: Oliver, a staunch supporter of the Green New Deal, is waging a spirited campaign against well-funded incumbent and long-time anti-environmentalist Roger Williams.



Collin Allred, District 32: Allred had a stellar first term in congress, earning a score of 100% for his environmental votes from Clean Water Action. He deserves to be re-elected.



Registration Deadline:
Monday, October 5, 2020



Voting by absentee ballot:
Unfortunately Texas does not offer no-excuse absentee voting at this time.



Voting in person:
Voters who need or want to vote in-person on November 3 can do so. Early voting will be available from October 13 to October 30!



→ For more information:
<https://www.votetexas.gov>

→ Learn more about clean water endorsed candidates:
www.cleanwater.org/VoteTX



CLEAN WATER ACTION

The Nation Watches as Texas Reaches a Critical Juncture

This year's Texas State House races are drawing national attention as Democrats seek to regain control of that chamber for the first time in almost 20 years. Clean Water Action is not a partisan organization but to get an endorsement, a candidate must show a commitment to enacting laws to protect our water and air. Also, restoring balance to a state government now dominated by a single party that has consistently put corporate priorities before the health of people and the environment would create new opportunities for advancing clean water initiatives. It would also give both major parties a say in the critical process of redrawing congressional and legislative districts once the 2020 census results are in. Clean Water Action carefully screens candidates on their positions and leadership abilities before offering recommendations for your consideration. Clean Water Action proudly endorses:

Houston Region:

L Sarah DeMerchant, District 26
Elizabeth Markowitz, District 28
Ann Johnson, District 134

Austin Region:

Erin Zwiener, District 45
Vikki Goodwin, District 47
Jame Talarcio, District 52
John Bucy III, District 136

Dallas - Ft. Worth Region:

Michelle Beckley, District 65
Sharon Hirsch, District 66
Jeff Whitfield, District 92
Lydia Bean, District 93
Alisa Simmons, District 94
Joe Drago, District 96
Elizabeth Beck, District 97
Debra Edmondson, District 98
Ana-Maria Ramos, District 102
Threse Meza, District 105
Victoria Neave, District 107
Joanna Cattannach, District 108
Brandy Chambers, District 112
John Turner, District 114

San Antonio Region

Celina D. Montoya, District 121
Also, for Texas Senate:
Rolando Gutierrez, District 19

Austin Area Local Endorsements:

Ann Howard, Travis County Commissioner, Pct 3

Howard will bring a rich experience in public service to the job of managing growth to protect the environment in rapidly growing western Travis County. She is dedicated to implementing plans for wildfire prevention and flood mitigation, and banning the discharge of sewage effluent into local waterways.

Christy Williams, Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, Pct 4

The BSEACD regulates withdrawals of water from the Barton Springs Edwards and Trinity aquifers. Williams will bring 25 years of experience as an environmental scientist to the job of sustaining groundwater levels and protecting Barton Springs.

Leslie Pool, Austin City Council District 7

Pool has proven to be an environmental champion since her election in 2014, sponsoring the city's investment in new solar farms and her resolution opposing Trump's attack on the federal Clean Water Act. She will continue to honor her pledge to work with Clean Water Action for better flood and water quality controls in the growing city.

*Additional Austin city council endorsements are pending.
See cleanwateraction.org/texas to learn more.*

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Fight Climate Change, Traffic Congestion and Gentrification with Props A and B!

Austin voters have the opportunity this election to take huge strides forward in the battles against climate change, traffic congestion and gentrification. Prop. A would fund a first-ever comprehensive transit plan for Austin, while Prop. B would fund hundreds of miles of new sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and safe routes to school. Both merit support on their own, and together they will help create a cleaner, better, safer, more equitable city.

Austin's traffic congestion is legendary, and emissions from private automobiles are now the biggest contributor to climate change both here and nationwide. Prop. A would fund Project Connect, an ambitious plan for two light rail lines, commuter rail from downtown to Manor, new rapid bus lines, more frequent local bus service, new park and rides, and 15 neighborhood circulators serving people in areas with

limited transit. The bus and rail vehicles would be powered by clean, renewable wind and solar energy provided by the city. Prop. A also includes a \$300 million commitment in anti-gentrification funding, to be invested in station areas that would otherwise witness rapid increases in property value and displacement of low-income residents. This represents the largest investment in affordable housing coupled with a transit initiative in the nation's history. City leaders have pledged to work with the community on how this money will be spent, and Clean Water Action is committed to assuring that this promise is kept.

Clean Water Action urges our supporters to vote FOR Props A and B! They will help solve traffic congestion, increase affordability and equity, and protect the environment.

EarthShare of Texas' annual workplace giving campaign is underway! Look for the Clean Water Fund code number under the EarthShare of Texas heading in workplace giving campaign literature at all state agencies, federal agencies, and at the City of Austin or City of Houston. Support the environment through workplace giving!



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