Aikman may leave ESPN — but not for the Cowboys SPORTSDAY

The Dallas Morning News

Texas' Leading News Source | $4.99 | Dallas, Texas, Saturday, October 31, 2026 | DallasNews.com

ELECTIONS '26

Early voting smashes record

Even with one day to go, more than 6.4 million had cast ballots, easily besting old mark in 2018

By Aarón Torres
Austin Bureau
aaron.torres@dallasnews.com

AUSTIN — Texans didn't wait until Election Day to vote.

More than 6.4 million ballots were cast through the end of the day Thursday, far outpacing the state's previous record for early voting in a non-presidential election year. In 2018, 5.5 million Texans voted early in person.

The data is not broken down by party and does not include mail-in ballots. Friday was the last day of the early voting period before

See **SENATE** Page 4A

Chris Swann/Staff Photographer

U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett has hit the campaign trail for other Democrats.

Get the latest election news, find information on Election Day details and access The Dallas Morning News Voter Guide at **dallasnews.com**.

After loss to Talarico, Crockett focuses on helping downballot hopefuls, mobilizing Black voters

By Gromer Jeffers Jr.
Political Writer
gjeffers@dallasnews.com

MANSFIELD — Jasmine Crockett was back on the campaign trail last week, encouraging voters at a polling place here to support Democrats. But she wasn't there to talk up her former U.S. Senate rival, James Talarico.

Instead, the Dallas congresswoman joined Tarrant County judge candidate Alisa Simmons and two others running for county office.

"We're working in the races that absolutely are going to need a little bit more help," Crock-

See **THROUGH** Page 4A

POWER TRANSMISSION

Meeting with landowners

Photos by Chitose Suzuki/Staff Photographer

Emily Martin Howle, second from right, and Joanna Friebele, landowners in Erath County, speak with Oncor representatives on Monday.

Dallas-based Oncor leading project to construct extra-high-voltage lines

By Lana Ferguson
Staff Writer
lana.ferguson@dallasnews.com

STEPHENVILLE — Anyone curious about the public sentiment in Erath County surrounding Texas' future 765-kilovolt transmission lines need look no further than the checkout counter at Jake & Dorothy's Cafe in downtown Stephenville.

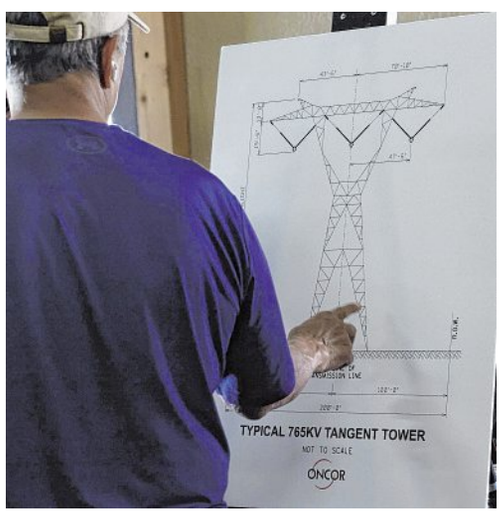
Sitting next to the cash register at the 78-year-old restaurant that's best known for its chicken fried steak, waffle fries and $9 lunch special is a stack of toy checks.

"Pay to the order of Transmission Service Providers $33,000,000,000.00" from "Texas Rate Payer" through "Boondoggle State Bank."

The county and its residents have played a major role in the state's plans for new extra-high-voltage power line projects because one of the routes — Dinosaur Switch to Longshore Switch — cuts through it.

The Public Utilities Commission of Texas has approved three of the five proposed routes, including this one. ERCOT, the state's electric grid operator, has said they are a necessary infra-

See **LANDOWNERS** Page 3A



A landowner talks with an Oncor representative during a landowner engagement outreach meeting hosted by Oncor on Monday at City Hall At City Limits in Stephenville. Oncor held the meeting to connect with landowners along the recently approved 765-kV transmission line routes.

ELECTIONS '26

Pamphlet senders remain hidden

Court blocks bid to learn source of mailers to youth on transgender resources

By Sarah Bahari and Nicole Asbury
Staff Writers

Days before the midterm elections, the Texas Supreme Court has blocked an effort to uncover who is behind a group that sent millions of pamphlets on transgender resources to Texas children.

The court's justices granted an emergency pause Friday, just minutes before a deposition was set to begin, possibly delaying a resolution to the election mystery until after Election Day.

The Transgender Education Network of Texas, an advocacy organization, signaled Friday that it will sue the Texas Transgender Student Union, the newly formed entity that sent the mailers. TENT has accused the group of trying to impersonate it.

The mailers and similar text messages, which purported to help transgender children, ignited an uproar as

See **TRANSGENDER** Page 3A

HOUSTON

ICE agent indicted on assault charge

Immigrant struck by SUV as he ran, breaking his leg; defense calls it an accident

By Nicole Hensley, John Wayne Ferguson and Julián Aguilar
Houston Chronicle

A Harris County grand jury on Friday indicted an U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent on a charge of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon in connection with an Oct. 10 crash in northwest Houston that left an immigrant wailing in pain from a broken leg after he was hit by the agent's SUV, according to the Harris County District Attorney's Office.

Mario Alberto Morales, 33, is believed to be the first federal agent to be charged in Texas over an incident related to the agency's recent ramped up enforcement actions during the Trump administration. It represents a rare instance of a state prosecutor

See **DA** Page 5A

©2026, The Dallas Morning News

Shower chance; mild

H 73
L 64

Metro, back page

INSIDE

Nation/World	2A	Jumble	3E
Editorials	7A	Obituaries	7B
Letters	7A	Sports TV	2C
Business	3B	Dear Abby	1E
Autos	6B	Comics	2-4E
Classified	6B	TV	4E

NATION & WORLD
Prisoner in constant pain
Christa Pike said she remains in constant pain and struggles to speak after surviving a lethal injection in last month. **2A**

METRO
Costumed canines
Dogs in raincoats, witch hats and colorful tutus showed up in their best Halloween costumes for the Dallas Zoo's Dog Days. **1B**

SPORTSDAY
A precarious offseason
The Rangers appear content to wait out brewing labor strife before trying to patch their roster's many holes before next season. **1C**