

*CBS Evening News*

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[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: District Map Fight]

MAURICE DUBOIS: And we begin with the tale of two maps. This is a proposed new map of congressional districts in Texas. It was drawn by Republicans to try to give them five more seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. And this map shows why that is so critical. Republicans now have only seven more seats than the Democrats in the U.S. House. So control will be up for grabs next year. If Republicans gain five more seats from Texas, it would improve their chances of keeping control, maybe even adding to their majority. But Democrats in the Texas House are preventing a vote on the redistricting by fleeing the state. Late today, the Republican governor, Greg Abbott, ordered them arrested. Ed O'Keefe followed the Texas Democrats to the suburbs of Chicago. Ed?

ED O'KEEFE: Maurice, good evening. As you said, the Lone Star State standoff has national implications over the future balance of power in Congress. And it all began because President Trump asked Texas Republicans to act. The Texas Democrats now here in Illinois say they're going to stay here to try to block the changes, at least temporarily. When Republicans gaveled in the Texas Statehouse today in Austin —

STATE REPRESENTATIVE DUSTIN BURROWS (R-TX): Members, a quorum is not present.

ED O'KEEFE: — there weren't enough Democrats in town to hold a vote on a GOP-proposed redraw of the state's congressional map, leading Speaker Dustin Burrows to threaten their arrest.

BURROWS: This House will not sit quietly while you obstruct the work of the people.

O'KEEFE: The new map is part of a special legislative session Republican Governor Greg Abbott called mostly to address the aftermath of deadly July flooding. Democratic lawmakers we spoke with in St. Charles, Illinois, John Bucy, Ann Johnson, James Talarico, say that's an issue they wanted to address.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN BUCY (D-TX): We had a cabin full of eight-year-old girls get washed away in the middle of the night. That's an emergency worthy of our time, our attention and our action. Unfortunately, Greg Abbott has answered the call of Donald Trump, and he's holding this special session hostage.

O'KEEFE: President Trump, aware that, historically, a commander in chief's party loses House seats in the midterm elections, asked Abbott to redraw the Texas map. [TO TRUMP, on 07/15/25] On Texas, how many more seats do you want the Republicans to draw?

DONALD TRUMP [on 07/15/25]: Five.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE JAMES TALARICO (D-TX): Democrats and Republican politicians both gerrymander and it's wrong in both instances. This is particularly egregious.

O'KEEFE: And to the Republican charge that you guys leaving the state allows them to turn around and say, they're playing games, they're avoiding the flood debate, you say what?

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ANN JOHNSON (D-TX): This is kind of like the bully that takes your lunch money every day. At some point, you got to stand up. Otherwise, you just end up broke and hungry. We have told Republicans, enough. You have gone way too far.

O'KEEFE: Down in Texas, Democrats are urging them on, like the thousands who showed up across the state for recent hearings about the new map, including Vicki Toups (sp?). [TO TOUPS] You drove two hours to be here for this?

VICKI TOUPS: To protest the redistricting.

O'KEEFE [TO TOUPS]: That's how much it bothers you?

TOUPS: Yes, absolutely. Yes.

DUBOIS: So, Ed, how much longer could this go on?

O'KEEFE: Well, the Democrats we spoke to today, Maurice, say they're going to be here for at least two more weeks, the scheduled end of that special session. If it goes that long without them being there, the governor could call another special session. If he takes up issues just related to the flood relief, they say they will come back, but if he tries to bring up the redistricting again, they may leave the state yet again.

DUBOIS: At the same time, Democrats in other states are responding too?

ED O'KEEFE: That's right. And if you look here in Illinois, they have drawn their map in such a way that Republicans barely have any seats. There's really no more territory to gain. In New York, it would be unconstitutional to do what's going on in Texas, so all eyes turn to California, where Governor Gavin Newsom says he's going to work with the state legislature to hold a statewide referendum asking voters' permission to draw a new map in response to Texas if Texas does indeed redraw its map. It might give Democrats four or five more seats.

DUBOIS: Okay, got it. Ed O'Keefe there in Illinois, thank you so much.