

NBC's *Today*  
08/04/25  
7:00:05 a.m. [TEASE]  
36 seconds

LAURA JARRETT: An old-fashioned standoff playing off in Texas.

CRAIG MELVIN: And it could impact the balance of power in Washington. It's August 4. This is *Today*.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking Overnight; Texas Turmoil]

MELVIN: Breaking overnight, Texas turmoil. Democrats making good on their vow, fleeing the state to try and stop Republicans from redrawing the political map.

TEXAS REPRESENTATIVE TREY MARTINEZ FISCHER (D): This is wrong. This is un-American and this is un-democratic.

MELVIN: But the governor pushing back hard, threatening to remove them from office if they're not back at the state House in just a matter of hours. Inside the battle with major implications on Capitol Hill.

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7:03:45 a.m.  
21 seconds

MELVIN: First, though, our top story on this Monday morning, that growing showdown in Texas over a controversial redistricting plan. Overnight dozens of Democratic lawmakers fleeing the state and flying to Chicago in an attempt to avoid voting on a new congressional map that could create five new Republican House seats. It could also have major national implications on President Trump's agenda.

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7:04:16 a.m.  
2 minutes and 57 seconds

MELVIN: We're going to start with NBC's Ryan Chandler. He is in Austin, Texas for us. Ryan, good morning.

RYAN CHANDLER: Good morning, guys. Yeah, President Trump's preferred map was set for debate in the chamber behind me today, but that is not going to happen with business stalled as this standoff kicks off. Democrats away in Chicago as Governor Abbott says he thinks he can remove them from office if they don't get back to town and get back to work. But, guys, this isn't

about the Texas capitol. This is about the United States Capitol and who gets to control Congress come next year.

TEXAS REPRESENTATIVE GINA HINOJOSA (D): We are fighting to win, and that's what you're going to see us do today. We're — we're leaving the state of Texas.

CHANDLER: Overnight, the fight in the Lone Star State heating up.

FISCHER: This cornbreak is not about the Democratic Party. This is about the democratic process.

CHANDLER: After Texas Democrats fled the states, the Republican governor threatening to remove them from office. The lawmakers leaving in a last-ditch attempt to block a partisan redrawing of the Texas congressional map, orchestrated by state Republicans with the support of President Trump.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP [on 07/15/25]: Just a very simple redrawing. We pick up five seats.

CHANDLER: It would potentially give the GOP a path to pick up five more seats in next year's midterm elections, helping Republicans keep control of their razor-thin majority in the House and clearing the way for the President's agenda. The move would divide up districts in traditionally blue cities like Austin, Houston and Dallas. Republicans defending it.

TEXAS REPRESENTATIVE CODY VASUT (R-TX): This map was politically based and that's totally legal, totally allowed, and totally fair.

CHANDLER: Texas Governor Greg Abbott writing, "real Texans do not run from a fight." The Democratic state lawmakers invited to Chicago by Illinois Governor JB Pritzker.

GOVERNOR JB PRITZKER (D-IL): Trump came up with a new scheme: rig the system by ramming through a corrupt, mid-decade redistricting plan.

CHANDLER: Experts now worried of a redirecting arm's race with democratic leading states like Illinois, California, and New York all vowing retribution.

LOYOLA LAW SCHOOL'S JUSTIN LEVITT: What concerns me most is mutually assured destruction. This could sort of be a domino effect to people re-drawing lines in the middle of the decade for reason other than partisan advantage and that's bad news for everyone in the country.

MELVIN: I mean, so, Ryan, how much of this is — is just a stunt? Or is there some indication that this move could actually work by Democrats?

CHANDLER: It's a — it's a good question, Craig. The answer, I think, depends on — on what side you are on. It will work temporarily. The question is what good is that for? I'll tell you.

We've seen this before. Back in 2021, Democrats fled to D.C. to protest a voting rights bill. It worked for about a month, but eventually, everybody has to come home. The — the Democrats out with a strong response to Governor Abbott's threat to remove them from office last night. Just four words. Can you guess? "Come and take it," Craig.

MELVIN: Alright. Our Ryan Chandler starting us off there in Texas. Ryan, thank you.

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8:00:08 a.m. [TEASE]  
25 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Texas Showdown]

MELVIN: Coming up, Texas showdown. Overnight, dozens of Democratic lawmakers fleeing the lone star state in an attempt to block a re-drawing of the congressional map, a move that could have a major national impact.

LEVITT: Will sort of be a domino effect to people re-drawing the lining in the middle of the decade for no reason other than a partisan advantage.

MEVLIN: We'll have the latest and the other states vowing to follow suit.

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8:03:04 a.m.  
1 minute and 43 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: News at 8; Texas Showdown Over Redistricting Plan]

MELVIN: We're going to start with that growing showdown in Texas over a controversial redirecting plan. Overnight, dozens of Democratic lawmakers fleeing the state in an attempt to avoid voting on a new congressional plan that could create five new Republican House seats. Let's get the very latest from NBC's Ryan Chandler. He is in Austin, Texas for us this morning.

CHANDLER: Craig, good morning. What happens here at the Texas Capitol over the next two weeks could very well impact every American. It could shift the balance of power in Congress for years to come. That is why Democrats have resorted to the nuclear option, fleeing the state to deny state Republicans a quorum here at the Texas Capitol, stalling all work to try and prevent President Trump from pressuring state Republicans to stop creating that map that you see there. It would create five more Republican seats and help his margins in Congress. That is what this is about. Don't take it from me. Take it from the chairman of the redirecting committee, who I spoke to over the weekend. He told me that this map was drawn in order to help Republicans based on political performance. This is an exercise of raw power and how you feel about that depends on what side you're on. Governor Abbott says that this is necessary to help the

Republican Party, and he is taking extreme measures to try to get Democrats back from Chicago where they have found safe harbor, partnering up with Illinois's Governor JB Pritzker. Governor Abbott says these Democrats could be at risk of arrest, felony charges, even removal from office if they don't get back to Austin and get back to work. He says that this is unacceptable, and he will take extreme measures in order to get the Texas capitol back on track. Democrats say come and take it, Craig.

MELVIN: Alright, Ryan Chandler for us there in Texas. Ryan, thank you.