

NBC's *Today*

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[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: New Showdown in Texas Redistricting Battle]

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE: Also this morning, there are new developments in the ongoing redirecting battle in Texas that could dramatically shift the balance of power in Washington. After that weeks-long standoff, Democratic leaders that fled the state to slow down the Republican plan to re-draw the voting maps — well, they have now returned to the state capitol. NBC's Ryan Chandler is there for us. Good morning.

RYAN CHANDLER: Savannah, good morning. Republicans here in Texas are closer than ever to passing those new congressional maps that President Trump asked them to draw. They could add five more Republicans to an already razor-thin Congress. Democrats fled the state for two weeks in order to try and stall these maps. But now that they're back, they're facing up new legal consequences and setting up a vote that could trigger a response far outside of Texas. The standoff in the Lone Star State may be over, but the showdown over Congress has just begun. Texas Democratic lawmakers returning to Austin to cheers — [CHEERS] — and consequences —

STATE HOUSE SPEAKER DUSTIN BURROWS (R-TX): The door keeper will lock the doors.

CHANDLER: — ending their quorum break, but not escaping law enforcement. Republican leaders barring Democrats from leaving the chamber without a police escort. State agents seen in plainclothes walking lawmakers around the capitol, a sign to watch them around the clock.

STATE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE ANN JOHNSON (D-TX): That's not American. There is nothing about this that is normal or constitutional.

CHANDLER: The Texas House speaker's office tells us the escorts are in accordance with House rules authorizing leadership to compel attendance. But one Democrat refusing to comply, sitting at her desk on the House floor in protest. [TO COLLIER] You're right inside these doors, but we can't get to each other because you say you are not free to leave.

[SCREEN WIPE]

STATE REPRESENTATIVE NICOLE COLLIER (D-TX): They're showing they have power over us, and that's why they're using the force of law enforcement.

CHANDLER: Republicans wasting no time, passing the new congressional maps Monday night, setting them on a fast track to passage.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE BRIAN HARRISON (R-TX): It's not that all my hypocritical,

dishonest Democratic colleagues are all around here have any problem whatsoever with re-drawing maps to maximize political partisan advantage. They're just angry that a Republican state is finally standing up.

CHANDLER: Meanwhile, in California, Democrats unveiling a proposal that would trigger new maps in that state, but only if Texas moves forward with its redirecting plan.

STATE ASSEMBLY SPEAKER ROBERT RIVAS (D-CA): Donald Trump sparked this crisis, and we only act if Texas breaks the rules.

CHANDLER: Overnight, Texas Governor Greg Abbott confident the redirecting plan will pass.

GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT (R-TX) [on FNC's *Hannity*, 08/18/25]: The five Republican seats that we are adding — they are going to withstand challenges and those will be Republican members added to the United States Congress.

CHANDLER: And Representative Collier told me yesterday she is prepared to stay inside the Texas Capitol for as long as it takes throughout this 30-day special session, but we expect Republicans will try to finish their work here by Labor Day, Savannah.

GUTHRIE: Alright, Ryan, thank you very much.