

*CBS Mornings*

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[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Coming Up; Texas State Rep. James Talarico]

VLADIMIR DUTHIERS: Coming up, fresh off his huge victory in the Texas Democratic primary, James Talarico joins us here in studio. Why he thinks he can finally turn Texas blue.

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7:38:28 a.m.

6 minutes and 12 seconds

TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE JAMES TALARICO (D) [on 03/03/26]: Thank you all for being here. One thing is clear today. We're about to take back Texas. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE]

DUTHIERS: Texas State Representative James Talarico celebrated his victory in the State's Democratic Senate primary last week. He defeated Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett in a race that captured national attention. Now, he's looking forward to a general election where he will face the winner of a Republican runoff between incumbent Senator John Cornyn and state Attorney General Ken Paxton. James Talarico joins us here for his first interview since his victory. Welcome. Good morning.

TALARICO: Thank you all for having me.

DUTHIERS: So, it seems as if we've been hearing about Texas turning blue for years. I'm old enough to remember a governor who's still who looms very large in the state of Texas, Ann Richards. Explain to us what the strategy is in terms of how the congressional makeup of Texas means that it's been red for the last couple of years and how you hope to turn it blue.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Texas Democrat James Talarico on Key Senate Race]

TALARICO: Well, my faith teaches me to love my neighbor as myself, not just my neighbor who looks like me or prays like me or votes like me. And that's because, despite our differences, we all want the same things. A safe neighborhood, a good job with good benefits, a high quality, well-funded public school, and the ability to see a doctor when we need one. And so, I'm tired of being pitted against my neighbor. I'm tired of being told to hate my neighbor. And I think in Texas across the political spectrum, there is a deep hunger for a different kind of politics, not one that's rooted in fear or hate or division, but one that's rooted in love. And that old politics that we've been suffering under for the last 10 years, politics has blood support as trolling and owning as — as total war, that — that politics is dying and a new politics is being born. You saw it in this last primary, the number of young people, the number of first-time voters, the number of

independents, and Republicans who showed up to vote in this Democratic primary is unprecedented. So, there's — there's something happening in Texas, we're building a movement to take on this broken, corrupt political system on behalf of all people in our state.

DUTHIERS: You mentioned politics is a blood sport, the combatant-in-chief has yet to weigh in, but he is expected the way in on the Republican runoff race. How do you think that will impact the race?

TALARICO: Well, no matter —

DUTHIERS: We're talking about Donald Trump, of course.

TALARICO: — you know, no matter what happens in this Republican runoff, we already know who we're running against. It's the billionaire mega donors and their corrupt political system. It's — you're seeing it already, the billionaires who run the algorithms, who run the cable news networks, who run the — the — so much of the politics in our state and our country. They try to divide us. They divide us on an hourly basis by party, by race, by gender, by religion. And so, we don't notice that they are picking our pockets, that they are closing our schools in Texas. They're gutting our health care, they're raising taxes on working people while they cut taxes for themselves. So, this is the — it's the oldest strategy in the world.

DUTHIERS: Mmmm.

TALARICO: Divide and conquer. And what we're trying to do in Texas is bringing working people together across all those divides, so that we can take power away from those at the very top and bring it back into our community.

ADRIANA DIAZ: So, representative, going into this race, it was really unclear who was going to win. What does your win signal you think about what Democrats in Texas voters want?

TALARICO: Well, I think people again, not just Democrats, but independents and Republicans too, they're really sick of this politics that we've had for the last 10 years. I mean, it — it tears families apart.

DIAZ: But what do you think it was about you in particular that appealed to so many?

TALARICO: I think it's the movement that we're building. The fact that the first words out of my mouth on the campaign trail was that the real fight in this country is not left versus right. It's top versus bottom.

NATE BURLESON: Mmmm.

TALARICO: And so, we're trying to bring working people across partisan, racial, cultural, or religious divides, so that we can take power back for ourselves, that we can focus on education and health care and, and economy where we can actually get ahead, and live the American

Dream. I think that's what people are really hungry for in Texas and across the country.

BURLESON: Let's talk about the war on Iran. What are you hearing from your constituents in Texas about how they feel about this war that's happening right now?

TALARICO: Well, you know, as a millennial, I saw how military disasters like the Iraq War robbed this nation of young lives, of billions of dollars of our moral standing in the world, and I worry that our current leaders are repeating those same mistakes. I was in San Branch, Texas, which is a community south of Dallas that doesn't have running water. It doesn't have basic sewer infrastructure, so every dollar we spend bombing people in the Middle East is a dollar we're not spending in San Branch, Texas, or in our communities here at home. We're — we're always told that we don't have enough money for schools or for health care or for our veterans, but there's always enough money to bomb people on the other side of the world. And so, we can support the democracy movement in Iran. We can prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, all without bombing innocent schoolchildren or sending our American troops off to die on the other side of the world.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Texas Democrat James Talarico on War With Iran]

DUTHIERS: Representative, but are the leaders in your party, specifically Chuck Schumer and Hakeem Jeffries, bringing that message home to the Republicans to the President?

TALARICO: I don't know. All I know is what's happening in Texas and people across the political spectrum are deeply worried about another forever war in the Middle East, and especially young people who are seeing not only gas prices rise, but they're seeing this affordability crisis that continues to go unaddressed by our leaders in Washington. And so I — I think a lot of us are mystified that we're starting another forever war instead of focusing on lowering costs for working people.

DUTHIERS: All right Representative James Talarico, thank you very much for joining us. Really great to have you. Appreciate it.

TALARICO: Thank you.