

Why Precinct 2 Deserves Answers Before April 8: Texas Constitution and the Public Trust

By **Richard Vega**

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On April 8, the **Texas First Court of Appeals** will hear oral arguments in a case that goes straight to the heart of honest government in Harris County. The county itself tried to have the case dismissed, hoping to sweep this issue **under the rug**, but the Court refused, making it clear that the **law cannot** be ignored. The question at the center of this fight is straightforward yet critical: Did Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia automatically resign under Texas law when he accepted a seat on the Gulf Coast Protection District board, a **second taxing entity** with overlapping authority over the **very same residents** he is **supposed** to represent? This isn't a political maneuver; it's about whether our laws and public trust **mean anything at all** in Harris County.

Texas law is clear. **Article XVI, Section 40 of the Texas Constitution prohibits** holding more than **one civil office** of emolument, and the long-standing common-law doctrine of incompatibility holds that acceptance of a conflicting office operates as an **automatic resignation**. If the law means what it says, Precinct 2's seat has been **effectively vacant since 2023**.

For nearly three years, the 1.2 million residents of Precinct 2 have been shortchanged. Across the full spectrum of our community, from every neighborhood and background, from all walks of life, families have paid in full but been left without the representation they deserve. Taxpayers have faced the **real risk** of double taxation and a lack of focused leadership on critical priorities like flood control, public safety, and infrastructure, all while one man divided his attention between **two powerful boards**.

I did not bring this fight for headlines or political advantage. As a **U.S. Army veteran** who **swore an oath** to defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and **domestic**, this is exactly what I am called to do right here in Harris County, our home. And as a pastor who has dedicated my life to serving families through my nonprofit, Justin's Well, I **believe** public office is a **sacred trust**. When that trust appears compromised by potential conflicts, someone must stand up. That is why we asked the Court to compel Harris County to acknowledge

the **vacancy** and call a **special election** so **voters** can have full-time leadership for the remainder of the term.

This is not about one individual. It is about upholding the bedrock Texas **principle** that **no official is above the Constitution**. Automatic resignation upon accepting an incompatible office prevents divided **loyalties** and protects every taxpayer. **Veterans** who served this country expect **honest government** at home. Faith leaders who teach integrity deserve leaders who model it. And **every family** in Precinct 2, regardless of background, deserves a commissioner focused solely on safer streets, better flood protection, and efficient use of their hard-earned tax dollars.

The Court will hear the **arguments on April 8**. Whatever the outcome, the larger principle remains: Precinct 2 voters have **a right** to undivided representation. The current term runs through December 2026, but the time to demand **accountability is now**.

I am running to be that commissioner, a veteran who understands sacrifice, a pastor who believes strong values build strong neighborhoods, and an outsider committed to ending business as usual.

Before the Court speaks on April 8, **voters deserve transparency**. The Constitution demands it. Precinct 2 families have waited long enough.

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