GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

March 16, 2020

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
7:30PM O'CLOCK
MAR 16 2020
Secretary of State

The Honorable Ruth R. Hughs
Secretary of State
State Capitol Room 1E.8
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Secretary Hughs:

Pursuant to his powers as Governor of the State of Texas, Greg Abbott has issued the following:

> A proclamation ordering a special election to be held in Texas State Senate District 14 on Tuesday, July 14, 2020, for the purpose of electing a state senator to serve out the unexpired term of the Honorable Kirk Watson.

The original proclamation is attached to this letter of transmittal.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Davidson
Executive Clerk to the Governor

GSD/gsd

Attachment

PROCLAMATION

BY THE

Governor of the State of Texas

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

WHEREAS, the resignation of the Honorable Kirk Watson, and its acceptance, has caused a vacancy to exist in Texas State Senate District No. 14, which consists of Bastrop and parts of Travis counties; and

WHEREAS, Article III, Section 13 of the Texas Constitution and Section 203.002 of the Texas Election Code require that a special election be ordered upon such a vacancy, and Section 3.003 of the Texas Election Code requires the special election to be ordered by proclamation of the Governor; and

WHEREAS, the vacancy occurred on February 25, 2020, and, therefore, pursuant to Section 203.004(a) of the Texas Election Code, the special election would ordinarily be held on the first uniform date occurring on or after the 36th day after the date the election is ordered; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Governor of Texas certified that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) poses an imminent threat of disaster and, under the authority vested in the Governor by Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code, declared a state of disaster for all counties in Texas; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code, the Governor has the express authority to suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business or the orders or rules of a state agency if strict compliance with the provisions, orders, or rules would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with a disaster; and

WHEREAS, Saturday, May 2, 2020, is the first uniform election date occurring on or after the 36th day after the date the special election is being ordered, but holding the special election on that date would prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the declared disaster by placing the public's health at risk and threatening to worsen the ongoing public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, Section 41.0011 of the Texas Election Code provides that the Governor may order an emergency special election before the November uniform election date; and

WHEREAS, the circumstances presented by COVID-19 that justified declaring a state of disaster also constitute an emergency within the meaning of Section 41.0011 of the Texas Election Code.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GREG ABBOTT, Governor of Texas, under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Statutes of the State of Texas, do hereby suspend Section 203.004 of the Texas Election Code to the extent necessary to avoid holding a special election for a vacancy in the legislature on or before May 2, 2020, and I do hereby order the special election to be held in Texas State Senate District No. 14 on Tuesday, July 14, 2020, for the purpose of electing a state senator to serve out the unexpired term of the Honorable Kirk Watson.

Candidates who wish to have their names placed on the special election ballot must file their applications with the secretary of state beginning Wednesday, April 29, 2020, with a deadline of no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 13, 2020.

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Early voting by personal appearance shall begin on Monday, June 29, 2020, in accordance with Sections 85.001(a) and (c) of the Texas Election Code.

A copy of this order shall be mailed immediately to the County Judges of all counties contained within Texas State Senate District No. 14, and all appropriate writs shall be issued and all proper proceedings shall be followed to the end that said election may be held to fill the vacancy in Texas State Senate District No. 14 and its result proclaimed in accordance with law.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and have officially caused the Seal of State to be affixed at my office in the City of Austin, Texas, this the 16th day of March, 2020.

GREG ABBOTT
Governor

ATTESTED BY:

RUTH R. HUGHS
Secretary of State

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