

# LA VOZ

de

**Brazoria  
County**

**INSIDE  
THIS ISSUE**

Volume 19 Number 11  
November, 2008

**The Taxes We  
Pay in Texas**

**En Palabras  
Hay Poder**

**Celebrando  
Dia De Los  
Muertos**

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## NCLR CHALLENGES DISTORTIONS MADE ABOUT MI- NORITY COMMUNITIES

Washington, DC—Janet Murguía, President and CEO of the **National Council of La Raza (NCLR)**, the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States, expressed grave concern about the atmosphere of attacks and distortions on cable television and other media that have focused negative attention on low-income and minority communities. Pundits and others have blamed these groups for the financial crisis and accused them of subverting the political process. **Murguía** noted that these attacks, broadly aimed at low-income communities and communities of color, encourage division and discord at a time when Americans should be coming together to address our nation's concerns.

Since January, **NCLR** has shined the spotlight on organizations and media outlets that demonize immigrants and minorities. Through its website, [www.WeCanStopTheHate.org](http://www.WeCanStopTheHate.org), NCLR has documented the proliferation of hate groups and the extent to which they appear as "experts" in the media on issues like immigration.

*"We will not stand by while outright distortions dominate the airwaves," said Murguía. "These falsehoods foster fear of minority communities and attempt to scapegoat them for our nation's financial crisis and other problems."*

**Murguía** noted that for several weeks, pundits and others have made outrageous arguments that mortgage loans to minorities pursuant to the Community Reinvestment Act caused the financial crisis. Since then, respected economists have refuted this claim convincingly.

Recently, the **Social Contract Press**, an organization with well-documented ties to white supremacists and a long history of publishing white supremacist works, released a study alleging that large numbers of immigrants have improperly registered to vote. Attorney generals from several states have looked into this claim and found no truth to the allegation. *"It is a sad day when some try to taint the intentions of a new generation of eligible voters at a time when there is an unprecedented level of enthusiasm for the political process," she added. "Everyone who is eligible to vote should register and participate in this historic election. We cannot tolerate voter suppression and intimidation."*

## NCLR LANZA SU SITIO WEB "WE CAN STOP THE HATE" PARA COMBATIR EL USO DE PALABRAS DE ODIO EN EL DEBATE MIGRATORIO

Washington, DC— El Consejo Nacional de la Raza (NCLR por sus siglas en inglés) develó hoy un sitio web que documenta cómo los grupos extremistas y de odio en los Estados Unidos se han energizado con el debate migratorio y cómo la creciente intolerancia de parte de éstos ha aumentado la incidencia de crímenes por odio en contra de los latinos. El sitio titulado [www.WeCanStopTheHate.org](http://www.WeCanStopTheHate.org), compagina y analiza las acciones y afirmaciones de odio por grupos, portavoces, y miembros de los medios que apoyan el movimiento antiinmigrante.

*"Dada la realidad de que docenas de comentaristas radiales y organizaciones antiinmigrantes han venido a vociferar sus mensajes de odio al Capitolio esta semana, es sumamente importante que el público tenga acceso a los mensajes y las plataformas que ellos patrocinan para que podamos combatirlos", denotó Janet Murguía, presidenta de NCLR. "Independientemente de cuál sea la opinión de cada cual acerca del debate migratorio, es claro que un debate matizado por el odio es inaceptable".*

El sitio se lanzó originalmente en enero de este año, y ha sido rediseñado para facilitar la navegación de los usuarios de manera que éstos puedan obtener boletines y mantenerse al tanto de lo que acontece respecto a este tema. Los visitantes pueden acceder una extensa videoteca con enlaces a testimonios de portavoces a favor y en contra del debate migratorio. Además hay un glosario con las palabras "código" que usan los comentaristas en los medios de comunicación para perpetuar el odio y un sin número de páginas de datos. Una sección titulada, "The Latest", publicará los incidentes más recientes del uso de odio en los medios y cualquier acto de odio que se perpetúe por políticos o comentaristas.

El sitio se puede acceder en: [www.WeCanStopTheHate.org](http://www.WeCanStopTheHate.org).



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**Por cualquier pregunta, llamanos:**

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# The Election Season Before Us

As we wind down the election season in America there is probably not a single voter who is going to be able to say with a straight face, that he or she did not know there was an election contest going on.

With the millions of dollars that candidates at all levels of government have spent to get the word out, I personally will find it very difficult to learn that some one didn't vote because they just didn't know what was going on November 4th, 2008.

That said, it has been a long time since so many have been fired up about voting. This past spring, in March, voters in **Brazoria County** who usually turnout in to vote in the **Democratic Primary** in the 2,000 to 3500 range, shocked everyone by turning out in numbers that almost reached 30,000! That's not a typo, 30,000.

Why did they turn out in such large numbers? The answer seems to be that people are in the mood for change. Over the summer, that mood began to change dramatically for many as the economy has taken a turn for the worse.

Many people who have worked all their lives and have played by the rules, made sacrifices to save money and put it in retirement accounts, are now shocked and mad that they have lost large sums of money.

They are mad and they want to blame somebody. But the problem is that some of those people who had their hands directly on their money are disappearing. They don't return phone calls.

So people are left to wonder or hope that their elected officials can do something to straighten out the economic mess that they find themselves in. And so what many people will do is go into the voting booth and take it out on the candidate or party that they feel is the most to blame.

In the few days since early voting has begun, we are already seeing droves of people turning out to vote. Many expect, myself included, that we will see a number of surprises come November 4th, 2008

La temporada de las elecciones ya esta en mocion por todo el pais. No hay ningun votante que va poder decir que el o ella no sabia que las elecciones se estan llevando acabo.

Con los millones que han gastado los candidatos en los varios niveles de gobierno, es casi imposible que diga un persona que no sabia que es lo que estaba pasando o que es lo que pasar el 4 de noviembre.

Aquí en el condado de Brazoria hace mucho tiempo que no se ha visto los votantes con ganas de salir a votar. En marzo, si se vio casi 30 mil personas que salieron a votar en la primaria demócrata. Ahora, eso si fue una sorpresa para todos.

Y porque la gente se esta saliendo a votar? Creo yo que la repuesta es que la gente esta enojada. Creo que la gente que han perdido dinero en el mercado quieren hecharle la culpa a alguien por sus perdidas. Muchos de ellos tal vez ven el hecho de votar como una manera de culpar a aquellos de se les han robado su dinero.

**Editorial**

**Alfredo R. Santos c/s**  
**Editor & Publisher**

Unos de van a salir a votar o que ya han votado, piensan que los politicos van a poder arreglar sus problemas financieras. Tal vez si y tal vez no. Yo por mi parte no creo que los politicos van a poder regresar a ciertas gentes dinero que han perdido en el mercado.

Vamos a tener que esperar todos para ver que fin va tener todo esto de la economia. Por lo pronto, lo unico que puede hacer uno es estar al tanto de todo de lo que esta pasando. Por que si acaso se presenta algunas oportunidades, el que esta listo es el que se va poder aprovechar.



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# The Taxes You Pay

During this election season there is much talk about taxes and who pays them. Some of the candidates say that their opponents are going to raise your taxes. Other claim if you vote for them, they will reduce your taxes. Here is the question that I have: What taxes are we talking about? The presidential candidates talk about income taxes, capital gains taxes, corporate taxes, inheritance taxes, and payroll taxes. On this page we want to share with you just a little bit about the taxes many people already pay.

## Federal Taxes

### INCOME TAXES

As of June 2001, the income tax forms the bulk of taxes collected by the U.S. government. An income tax is a tax levied on the financial income of persons, corporations, or other legal entities. Various income tax systems exist, with varying degrees of tax incidence. Income taxation can be progressive, proportional, or regressive.

### SOCIAL SECURITY TAXES

The next largest tax is Social Security tax formally known as the Federal Insurance and Contributions Act (FICA). This contribution or tax is 6.2% of an employees' income paid by the employer, and 6.2% paid by the employee. This tax is paid only on earned income and, as noted above, only up a threshold income for calendar year 2006 of \$94,200.

### MEDICARE TAXES

The Medicare tax funds the Medicare program, a health insurance program for the elderly and disabled. 1.45% of the employee's income is paid by the employer as Medicare tax, and 1.45% is paid by the employee. Unlike Social Security, there is no cap on the Medicare tax. For Self-Employed people, Medicare taxes are fixed at 2.9% on all earnings.

### OTHER PAYROLL TAXES

The U.S. has a payroll tax to support unemployment insurance. This is 1.2% of the first \$7,000, but coordinated with state unemployment agencies and taxes in such a way that most employees are not double taxed in states that have unemployment insurance. The U.S. also has a tax to pay for retraining of displaced workers, but it is only 0.1% of the first \$7,000 of income, and it is assessed only on employers. The government tracks tax payment by an account number and payment date. For the IRS, the account number is a Social Security Number, Individual Taxpayer Identification Number, or Employer Identification Number.

### CORPORATE TAXES

Corporate tax in the United States is imposed both by the federal government and by most state governments. The federal income tax on corporations is the more significant tax, in terms of the tax rates, the number of entities affected and the complexity of its rules.

### TRANSFER TAXES

The transfer tax generates roughly 1.5% (\$30 billion) of the federal government's annual revenue (\$2 trillion). It consists of the gift tax, the estate tax and the generation-skipping transfer tax ("GSTT"). Opponents of the transfer tax label these taxes "death taxes". The term "death tax" was popularized by Frank Luntz, a Republican political consultant, but its use goes back to at least the 19th century.[31]

The gift tax is a tax levied on wealth transfers during the transferor's life while the estate tax is levied on transfers made after the transferor's death. The GSTT is a tax in addition to the gift and estate tax and is levied (in rough terms) on transfers made during life or after death to individuals removed by more than one generation from the transferor, for example, from a grandmother to a grandson. Usually transfer tax liabilities are paid by the transferor or the transferor's estate. Payment of transfer taxes by the transferor when the liability is due from the recipient is also a taxable gift.

### EXCISE TAXES

The U.S. also maintains federal excise taxes on gasoline and other fuels used by vehicles. At this time (2005) they are 18.4¢ per gallon (4.9¢/l) for gasoline and 24.4¢ per gallon (6.4¢/l) for diesel (for highway use). Higher profile excise taxes exist on distilled spirits, tobacco products, and some firearms.

## State Taxes

### PROPERTY TAXES

In addition to the Federal Government taxes, each state has its own tax system. Typically there is a tax on real estate, usually called "property taxes". Real estate taxes are often imposed on the value of real estate by reason of its ownership. For example, in Texas the real estate tax is imposed on the real estate and in particular on the owner of the real estate as of January 1 of each tax year. The tax is computed by applying a tax rate to the appraised value of the real estate as of the tax date. Some states like New York also have a real estate transfer tax.

There may be additional income taxes, sales taxes, and excise taxes (including use taxes). Taxable income for state purposes is usually based on federal taxable income with certain state specific adjustments. For example, some states tax municipal bond interest derived from other states that are otherwise exempt from federal income tax. Thus, this income must be added to the federal taxable income to compute the income amount for state income tax purposes.

### SEVERANCE TAXES

Oil and mineral producing states often impose a severance tax, similar to an excise tax in that tax is paid on the production of products, rather than on sales. Similarly, most New England states have yield taxes on timber/firewood cutting, payable as a percentage of the value cut, not the profit.

### PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES

Many states also levy personal property taxes, which are annual taxes on the privilege of owning or possessing items of personal property within the boundaries of the state. Automobile and boat registration fees are a subset of this tax; however, most people are unaware that practically all personal property is also subject to personal property tax. Usually, household goods are exempt; but virtually all objects of value

(including art) are covered, especially when regularly used or stored outside of the taxpayer's household.

### SALES TAXES

A sales tax is a consumption tax charged at the point of purchase for certain goods and services. The tax is usually set as a percentage by the government charging the tax. There is usually a list of exemptions. The tax can be included in the price (tax-inclusive) or added at the point of sale (tax-exclusive).

Most sales taxes are collected by the seller, who pays the tax over to the government which charges the tax. The economic burden of the tax usually falls on the purchaser, but in some circumstances may fall on the seller. Sales taxes are commonly charged on sales of goods, but many sales taxes are also charged on sales of services. Ideally, a sales tax is fair, has a high compliance rate, is difficult to avoid, is charged exactly once on any one item, and is simple to calculate and simple to collect.

Delaware, Oregon, Montana and New Hampshire have no state or local sales tax. Alaska has no state sales tax, but allows localities to collect their own sales taxes up to a state-specified maximum.

### OTHER TAXES

States permit the creation of special assessment districts (typically for provision of water or removal of sewage, or for parks, public transit, emergency services or schools) whose boundaries may be independent of other boundaries and whose income may be from one or more of service assessments, property taxes, parcel taxes, a portion of road or bridge tolls, or an additional increment upon sales taxes in addition to the non-tax fees for services provided (such as metered water). State government is financed mainly by a mix of sales and/or income taxes and to a lesser extent by corporate registration fees, certain excise taxes, and automobile license fees.

# Overview of Texas Taxes

The Texas Comptroller's office serves the state by collecting more than 60 separate taxes, fees and assessments, including local sales taxes collected on behalf of more than 1,400 cities, counties and other local governments around the state. State taxes and fees will generate an estimated \$77.5 billion in the state's 2008-09 budget period.

1. 911 Emergency Service Fee

2. 911 Wireless Emergency Service Fee

3. 911 Equalization Surcharge

4. Automobile Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (ABTPA) Assessment

5. Automotive Oil Sales Fee

6. Bank Franchise

7. Battery Sales Fee

8. Boat & Boat Motor

9. Cement Production

10. Cigarette

11. Cigar, Tobacco Products

12. Cigarette/Tobacco Advertising Fee

13. Coastal Protection

14. Coin Operated Amusement Machine Tax

15. Controlled Substances

16. Crude Oil

17. Diesel Fuels

18. Fireworks

19. Franchise

20. Gasoline

21. Hotel

22. Inheritance

23. Insurance Maintenance Tax - Workers' Compensation Research

24. Insurance Maintenance Taxes - Texas Department of Insurance

25. Insurance Maintenance Tax - Division of Workers Compensation/Office of Injured Employees Counsel

26. Insurance Premium Tax - Independently Procured

27. Insurance Premium Tax - Licensed Insurers

28. Insurance Premium Tax - Surplus Lines/Purchasing Groups

29 Insurance Premium Tax - Unauthorized Insurance

30. International Fuel Tax Agreement
31. Liquefied Gas

32. Loan Administration Fee

33. Local Property

34. Local Sales & Use

35. Manufactured Housing

36. Miscellaneous Gross Receipts

37. Mixed Beverage Tax

38. Motor Fuels Transporters

49. Motor Vehicle - Gross Rental Receipts

40. Motor Vehicle - Local Sports and Community Venue Sales and Use

41. Motor Vehicle - Sales and Use

42. Motor Vehicle - Seller-Financed Sales

43. Motor Vehicle - Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) Registration Surcharge

44. Motor Vehicle - Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) Surcharge

45. Natural Gas

46. Office of Public Insurance Counsel (OPIC) Assessment

47. Oil & Gas Well Servicing

48. Oyster Sales Fee

49. Pari-Mutuel

50. Petroleum Products Delivery Fee

51. Property Tax

52. Public Utility Gross Receipts Assessment

53. Retail Charge Account Delinquency Fee

54. Retaliatory Tax

55. Sales & Use

56. School Fund Benefit

57. Sexually Oriented Business Fee

58. Sulphur

59. Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) - Off Road Heavy Duty Diesel Equipment Surcharge

60. Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Fund Assessment

## Specific Examples of Texas Taxes

| Cigarettes  | Fireworks  | Mixed Beverages   | Battery Sales Fee   |
|---|--|---|---|
| For a conventional package of 20 cigarettes, the tax is \$1.41 cents per pack.  | 2% (in addition to sales tax)  | The mixed beverage tax is imposed on the person or organization holding the mixed beverage permit and not the customer. It may not be added to the selling price as a separate charge and may not be backed out from the amount received. | A fee is imposed on the sale, storage, use or consumption of new or used lead-acid batteries, not for resale in Texas.  |
| For a package of 25 cigarettes, the tax is \$1.7625 cents per pack.   | <b>Motor Vehicle Gross Rental Receipts Tax</b>   | 14% (.14) of gross receipts.  | The battery sales fee is deposited into the Hazardous and Solid Waste Remediation Fee Account and funds the Superfund program administered by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). |
| <b>Gasoline</b>   | A gross rental receipts tax is imposed on motor vehicle rentals. The percent of tax imposed is based on the length of the rental contract. | <b>Oyster Sales Fee</b>   | \$2 per battery of less than 12 volts. \$3 per battery with a capacity of 12 volts or more.   |
| Twenty cents (\$.20) per gallon on gasoline   | 10% (for contracts of 1-30 days) of gross receipts, less discount and separately stated fees for insurance, fuel, and damage assessments.  | A fee is imposed on the first certified shellfish dealer who harvests, purchases, handles, stores, packs, labels, unloads at dockside, or holds oysters taken from the water of this state.   |   |
| <b>Hotels</b>   | 6 1/4% (.0625) for contracts exceeding 30 days but no longer than 180 days.  | \$1 per 300lb-barrel of oysters taken from Texas waters.  |   |
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1:00pm to 6:00pm

October 27th to 31st  
and Election Day  
November 4th  
7:00am to 7:00pm

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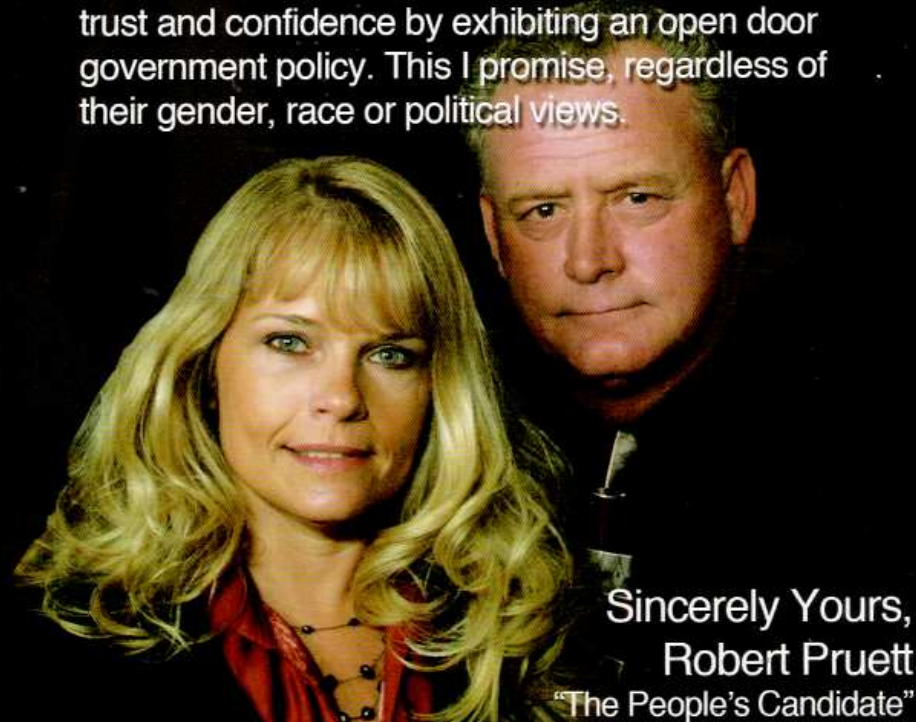


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- ★ I will address and remedy the millions of dollars being spent in overtime to meet the state mandated inmate to guard ratio.
- ★ I will re-classify detention employees and put more Deputies on the street by freeing up the jails.
- ★ I will double the Patrol Deputies in the Pearland and Manvel areas addressing the tremendous population growth.
- ★ I will have all Patrol Deputies trained and certified in Field Sobriety and Intoxilizer operations to eliminate the dependence on other police agencies to perform these crucial tests at drunk driver accident and traffic stops.
- ★ I will re-organize and re-invigorate the Investigations Division in the solving of (3C) cold case homicides.
- ★ 'I will bring the leadership needed to the Brazoria County Sheriff's office by executing my duties in a fair and impartial manner. I will restore the people's trust and confidence by exhibiting an open door government policy. This I promise, regardless of their gender, race or political views.



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"The People's Candidate"

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First Year BC Student



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BC also has many programs and degrees that help students like me further my education. BC is one of 3 Texas community colleges that offers a 4-year degree; the Bachelor of Applied Technology!

Thank you Brazosport College for helping me shape my future!  
-Yesenia Silva



# Celebrating the Day of the Dead

In many places of the Southwest, people of Mexican descent still observe and celebrate a unique Mexican Holiday called "El Dia de los Muertos" or the Day of the Dead.

This is a custom, that many native people in Mexico still observed. Before the Spaniards came and is a holiday that takes place in the fall. The native people believed that in that day the spirits of family members who have died are allowed to return from their afterlife to visit the family. Although they cannot be seen nor heard, they will take comfort in knowing they are remembered.

In order to celebrate the holiday, an ALTAR is made in the home. The altar is made from tables and boxes in the shape of a pyramid and decorated with a tablecloth. Traditional items, food and articles which belonged to the person who died. People often decorate their altar with paper cutouts called "Papel Picado," candles, skeleton toys and sugar candies made in the shape of skulls. Fresh fruits and vegetables, favorite foods and something to drink are also left overnight on the altar.

The belief is that those who have died visit in the evening of November 1st. The family prays and burns candles to "light the way for the spirit", It is said that tears will only make the spirit's path slippery. The next day, "El Dia de los Muertos" the family and relatives come together for a meal. After the holiday is over the altar is taken down. In some towns in

Mexico, the family goes to the cemetery and celebrates the holiday at the graveside.

Besides the serious side of "El Dia de los Muertos" there are many humorous customs. This is very much a holiday for children.



The markets in Mexico have many toys for children made of wood in the form of skeletons which dance and do tricks. There are also candies in the form of sugar skulls, with names written across their foreheads, that children buy to give their friends, similar to our custom of chocolate – covered Easter eggs or candy hearts.

This holiday takes place just a day after Halloween and at first seems to be like Halloween with all the skeleton images. But it is not scary like Halloween. Children do not dress up in costumes, and the skeletons are more like clowns. "El dia de los Muertos" is a time to remember that death is real and will come to everyone.

# Celebrando el Día de Los Muertos

En muchos lugares del Sureste de los Estados Unidos, la gente de descendencia Mexicana aún observan un día de fiesta muy original llamado " El día de los Muertos."

Esta es una costumbre que la gente nativa de Mexico observaba

colorean frutas, legumbres y algo para tomar y se dejan toda la noche sobre el altar.

Se cree que esos que han muerto visitaran la noche del primero de Noviembre. La familia reza y prenden velas para alumbrar la senda del espiritu. También se dice que lagrimas so lo sirven para hacer el camino resvaloso. Al siguiente dia, "El día de los Muertos" todos los familiares se juntan para una comida. Cuando ya pasa este dia, se quita el altar. En algunos pueblos de Mexico, la familia va la cementerio y celebra wste dia junto a las tumbas.

Aparte del aspecto serio de "El Dia de los Muertos, hay muchas costumbres comicas. Este es un dia de fiesta para ninos. Los mercados en Mexico venden juguetes hechos de madera en forma de esqueletos

antes que llegaran los Españoles y es un día de fiesta que se festeja en el Otoño. La gente indigena tenia la creencia que en este día los espiritos de los miembros de familia ya fallecidos se les permitia regresar del más allá para visitar a sus familiares. Aunque no se pueden ver ni oir, se conforman al saber que son recordados.

Para celebrar este dia, se hace un altar en la casa. El altar se construye con mesas y cajas en forma de un piramide y se decora con un mantel, articulos tradicionales, comida y en efecto que pertenecían a la persona fallecida. También se decora el altar con papel picado, velas, juguetes con forma de esqueletos y dulces hechos en forma de calaveras. Se

hechos de madera que bailan y hacen chistes. Se venden dulces en forma de calaveras de azucar, con nombres escritos en la frentey los compran y se los regalan a sus amigitos. Una tradición parecida a la nuestra de regalar dulces de chocolate en forma de huevos de la coneja a dulces en forma de corazón

Este dia festivo se lleva acabo un día después de Halloween y al principio parece que es Halloween con todas las imagenes de los esqueletos. Pero este dia no es un dia de espantos como Halloween. Los niños no se visten con trajes y disfraces y los esqueletos se parecen más a los payasos. "El Día de los Muertos" nos recuerda que a todos nos llegara el día de nuestra muerte.



# M. ATIQ DADA, M.D.

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Hypertension  
Board Certified Internal Medicine

Matagorda General Hospital is pleased to announce the addition of nephrologist M. Atiq Dada, M.D. to the medical staff.

Dr. Dada received his medical degree from St. George's University, School of Medicine graduating with honors in 2001. He completed his residency at the University of Connecticut Health Center in Farmington, Connecticut. He continued there as Chief Medical Resident and then Assistant Professor of Medicine. He completed his two year nephrology specialty training in June 2008.



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y hipertension  
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El Hospital General de Matagorda en Bay City con orgullo presenta la adición de Nefrología al Doctor Atiq Dada, M.D. a la facultad médica.

El Dr. Dadá recibió su bachiller médica de la Universidad de St. George, escuela de medicina con honores en 2001. Completó su residencia en la Universidad de Centro Médico de Connecticut en Farmington, Connecticut. Continuó como Jefe residencia médica y luego como asistente profesor de medicina. Completó su dos años de Nefrología en junio 2008.

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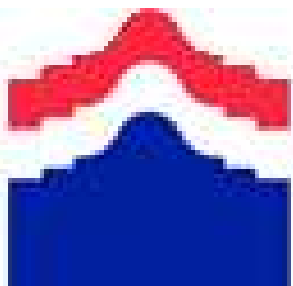


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# How is the President Elected?

Contrary to popular belief, We the People, do not directly elect the President of the United States. When the founding fathers put together the United States Constitution, they basically didn't trust the regular folks to do the right thing. So founding fathers came up with device called the Electoral College. Here is the story.

The **Electoral College** consists of 538 popularly elected representatives who formally select the President and Vice President of the United States. In 2008, it will make this selection on December 15. The Electoral College is an example of an indirect election.

## Rather than directly voting for the President and Vice President, United States citizens cast votes for electors

Rather than directly voting for the President and Vice President, United States citizens cast votes for electors. Electors are technically free to vote for anyone eligible to be President, but in practice pledge to vote for specific candidates and voters cast ballots for favored presidential and vice presidential candidates by voting for correspondingly pledged electors. Most states allow voters to choose between statewide slates of electors pledged to vote for the presidential and vice presidential tickets of various parties; the ticket that receives the most votes statewide 'wins' all of the votes cast by electors from that state.

## U.S. presidential campaigns concentrate on winning the popular vote in a combination of states that choose a majority of the electors

U.S. presidential campaigns concentrate on winning the popular vote in a combination of states that choose a

majority of the electors, rather than campaigning to win the most votes nationally. Each state has a number of electors equal to the number of its Senators and Representatives in the United States Congress. Additionally, **Washington, D.C.** is given a number of electors equal to the number held by the smallest states. U.S. territories are not represented in the Electoral College.

## Each elector casts one vote for President and one vote for Vice President.

Each elector casts one vote for President and one vote for Vice President. In order to be elected, a candidate must have a majority (at least 270) of the electoral votes cast for that office. Should no candidate for President win a majority of the electoral votes, the choice is referred to the House of Representatives. Should no candidate for Vice President possess a majority of

the electoral votes, the choice is given to the Senate.

## The Constitution allows each state legislature to designate a method of choosing electors.

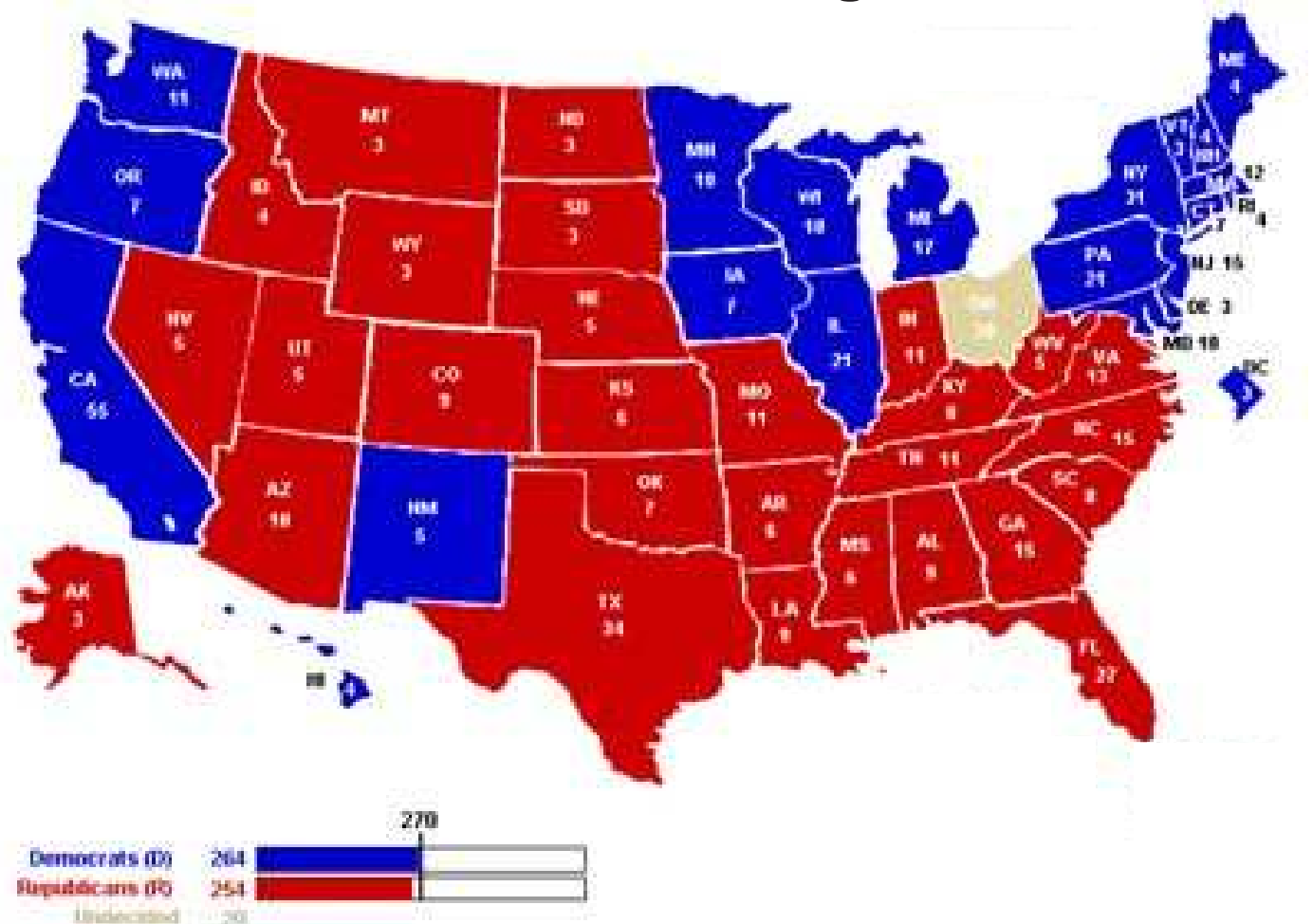
The Constitution allows each state legislature to designate a method of choosing electors. Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia have adopted a winner-take-all popular vote rule where voters choose between statewide slates of electors pledged to vote for a specific presidential and vice presidential candidate. The candidate that wins the most votes in the state wins the support of all of that state's electors. The two other states, **Maine** and **Nebraska**, use a tiered system where a single elector is chosen within each Congressional district and two electors are chosen by statewide popular vote. U.S. presidential elections are effectively an amalgamation of 51 separate

and simultaneous elections (50 states plus the District of Columbia), rather than a single national election.

Candidates can fail to get the most votes in the nationwide popular vote in a presidential election and still win that election. This occurred in 1876, 1888 and 2000. Critics argue the Electoral College is inherently undemocratic and gives certain swing states disproportionate clout in selecting the President and Vice President.

Adherents argue that the Electoral College is an important and distinguishing feature of the federal system, and protects the rights of smaller states. Numerous constitutional amendments have been introduced in Congress seeking a replacement of the Electoral College with a direct popular vote; however, no proposal has ever successfully passed both houses.

## The Electoral College



This map shows how the Electoral College voted in the 2000 Presidential Election.





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## Word Power

# En Palabras Hay Poder

No one can ever argue in the name of education, that it is better to know less than it is to know more. Being bilingual or trilingual or multilingual is about being educated in the 21st century. We look forward to bringing our readers various word lists in each issue of *La Voz de Brazoria County*.

Nadie puede averiguar en el nombre de la educación que es mejor saber menos que saber más. Siendo bilingüe o trilingüe es parte de ser educado en el siglo 21. Esperamos traer cada mes a nuestros lectores de *La Voz de Brazoria County* una lista de palabras en español con sus equivalentes en inglés.

|                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| The time has come            | Ha llegado el tiempo          |
| for people to make a         | para que la gente haga una    |
| serious decision about       | decision muy seria sobre      |
| who they are going to        | por quien ellos van a         |
| support for President        | apoyar para Presidente        |
| of the United States.        | de los Estados Unidos.        |
| Everyone has by now          | Ya para este tiempo todos     |
| heard enough about           | han escuchado bastante        |
| each candidate. Everyone     | sobre cada candidato. Todos   |
| by now understands how       | ya entienden que tan          |
| important this election is   | importante es este elección   |
| going to be.                 | va hacer.                     |
| So without excuses, without  | Asi es que, sin excusas y sin |
| reservation, make plans to   | reservaciones, haga planes    |
| turn out to vote early or on | para salir a votar temprano o |
| November 4th for the         | en el mero dia 4 de noviembre |
| candidate of your choice     | para el candidato quien usted |
| That's all!                  | quiere. ¡Es todo!             |





## Noriega Closing the Gap with Opponent in Race for United States Senate Seat in Texas

The polls have him behind by six points. With another candidate in the race this year, **Rick Noriega** seems to have an even better shot at pulling off an upset on November 4th.

For the past 15 months **Rick Noriega** has been all over the state of Texas meeting and greeting voters in both big and little cities. He has spoken to small crowds and he

has spoken to large ones. But the message is the same: *"Send me to Washington and I will make sure that I put Texas families first."*

As a Democrat and Texas State Representative, Noriega has served the people of Texas for 10 years in Austin. He has built up a wide network of friends and supporters and he knows how to communicate his

ideas for implementing creative public policies.

A 1984 graduate of the **University of Houston** and a 1990 graduate of the **John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University**, **Noriega** brings a wealth of experience and insight to his bid to unseat **John Cornyn**.

With all 254 Texas counties turning out to vote on November 4th, **Noriega** hopes that the incredible interest in the Presidential race with **Barack Obama** and **John McCain** will help him to pick up enough votes to declare victory in what has been an historical race.





  
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