

## Don't Just Vote, Know Who You Are Voting For

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney

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For those that are really concerned about the future of your city, communities and school districts, you should be aware that the November election candidates for Houston Mayor, 10 City Council district seats, 5 City Council At-Large seats, and 4 Houston Independent School District School board seats have been announced.

Incumbent Houston City Controller Ron Green and two-term District E City Council Member Mike Sullivan will have no opponent in the upcoming election.

Rhonda Skillern-Jones (HISD School Board), will be running unopposed as well, replacing incumbent Carol Mims Galloway who has decided to vacate the seat.

There is only one African-American City Council district incumbent that is running for re-election and two African-American City Council At-Large incumbents running for re-election. However, there are many African-Americans that are seeking to contest or fill seats that are currently occupied by African-Americans or being vacated by African-Americans.

It is extremely important that we exercise our right to vote. This right to vote was and is a vote fought for by those that endured the struggle.

We must also understand who we are voting for and each position. All of these elected offices impact you in some way and to simply ignore them is not prudent.

Most of us know the role of the mayor within the city, but most people don't realize the importance of city council and school board members.

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The city of Houston has a Mayor and a City Controller and there is a system of checks and balances in place to ensure there is a proper tracking of where and how city dollars are spent. The city also has district city council positions that represent the constituents and the interests of a respective district. But the At-Large City Council positions represent all the residents within the city of Houston and their interests. As they say, the squeaky wheel gets the grease, so whoever gets the attention of those At-Large candidates the most, typically gets the most attention and response. Think about that for a minute.

Your city council representatives make decisions on many things such as: how your tax dollars are spent and where, who receives contracts with the city, social services, sewage/water/drainage, infrastructure needs, streets and roads, whether to raise or reduce your taxes, police and fire safety, etc.

The same thing applies to the HISD School Board. These representatives make decisions about everything that impacts the schools within the city of Houston such as: how your tax dollars are spent and where, who receives contracts with HISD, whether to raise or reduce your taxes, school infrastructure needs and how bond dollars are allocated, etc.

Take a minute to think about what your current elected officials have done on these major issues and how they have represented your constituent needs when deciding who to vote for. Have they taken care of your community? Have they responded to your needs? Have they done what is in the best interest of your neighborhood or schools?

This is too important of an election to overlook and ignore. Start doing your homework TODAY!

*Jeffrey L. Boney is a dynamic, international speaker and a Next Generation Project Fellow. Jeffrey is the Founder and CEO of the Texas Business Alliance and is an experienced entrepreneur and adjunct professor in Houston, Texas. If you would like to request Jeffrey as a speaker, you can reach him at [jboney1@texasbusinessalliance.org](mailto:jboney1@texasbusinessalliance.org).*

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