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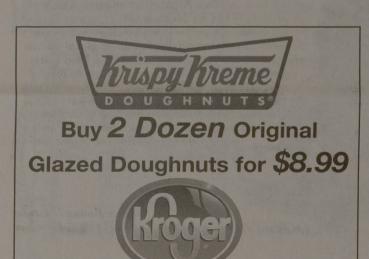
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Thursday, September 25,2

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California Secretary of State Kevin Shelley talks to the media in panel of the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to allow San Francisco on Tuesday after the decision by an 11-member

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the governor recall election to proceed on October 7

Senate tentatively approves redistricting map

By April Castro THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — A congressional redistricting bill has emerged from the Texas Senate for the first time since the battle over redrawing political lines began four months ago.

The bill was approved 18-13 late Tuesday night, largely along party lines and is expected to get final approval Wednesday. Sen. Teel Bivins of Amarillo was the lone Republican to vote against the bill.

The House adopted a different map last week. Once the Senate map is given final approval, the two chambers will come together in a conference committee to try to work out differences between the two maps.

now ruled 17-15 by Democrats. During nine hours of floor debate, Democrats ardently fought the plan, proposing

amendments, giving lengthy speeches, peppering the map's author, Sen. Todd Staples, R-Palestine, with questions and trying parliamentary maneuvers to postpone debate.

One of two adopted amend-ments, would split Webb County into two congressional districts. The change angered Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo.

"It dilutes the voting strength of Webb County by dividing it," Zaffirini said. "What I hope is that will be changed in conference committee.

Sen. Leticia Van de Putte, D-San Antonio, also opposed the amendment by Sen. Jeff Wentworth, R-San Antonio, ecause the change to Webb

sides for "working together in a respectful way.

Today was the Senate doing it's respectful deliberations on a very tough subject," Dewhurst said.

Democrats vowed not to let Republicans pass a map without a fight, but they acknowledged that they do not have the numbers to block the bill.

Republicans, who rule the Texas House and Senate and occupy each statewide-elected office, say the state should have more Republicans representing it in Washington. Democrats hold a 17-15 advantage in the Texas congressional delegation.

The map was approved by the Senate Jurisprudence Committee last week.

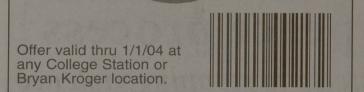
Staples presented the GOP plan to the full Senate as a "fair and balanced" proposal that districts and two black distri and that it will withstan

Democrats have been fig ing Republican redistrict

House Democrats blocked bill during the regular legisla session when 51 of them fled Oklahoma to break a quorum

During the second special leg blocked a quorum by fleeing New Mexico. They reluctant returned last week at the start of the third special legislative set sion after one Democrat but away and decided to Republicans a quorum.

More sparks could fly in as Duncan and House Speak Tom Craddick of Lubbock d agree on how West Texas sh



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tions, nongovernmental research and/or educational organizations, and public-service oriented nonprofit organizations

such as those whose primary purposes are to help needy or disadvantaged persons or to protect the environment.

The Senate map marks the first time this year redistricting has been debated on the Senate floor, after a monthlong warfare that included two Democratic walkouts and two fruitless special sessions.

Republicans say the map could give the GOP an additional three to five seats in the state's congressional delegation that is

County also would be reflected in Bexar County.

The other amendment would change northeast Texas so that the rural district would not be represented by a suburban Dallas congressman.

After a 45-day boycott of the Texas Legislature by Senate Democrats, Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst commended both the federal Voting Rights Act.

Democrats were quick to

Zaffirini told Staples that the nine minority senators, who are Democrats, believe the map discriminates against minorities.

Staples said the plan preserves all nine minority districts in the state — seven Hispanic be designed. The House bill puts Mida and Lubbock in two different districts. The Senate plan; mea while, keeps the cities in t same district represented U.S. Rep. Randy Neugebauer

The conference committee will have to devise a final bi before it goes back to ea chamber for final approval.



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By Kelle THE ASSO

AUSTIN Legislature's vere on a Thursday as