

# THE BLAST

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## THE BLAST: FOR YOUR RADAR

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*The Texas Tribune*

*February 11, 2021*

### NEW THIS AFTERNOON

Gov. Greg Abbott said earlier today that more announcements could be “coming soon” about relaxing COVID-19 restrictions in the state as cases and hospitalizations continue to drop. The Trib’s Megan Menchaca has more here.

### TEXAS SENATE WATCH

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said today that his full list of legislative priorities will be out next week. Patrick was speaking virtually at the [Texas Business Leadership Council’s policy summit](#). While Patrick has also named a few priority bills — more here and here — he said today that another top piece of legislation will be a measure preventing state business with Wall Street companies that are turning their backs on the oil and gas industry in Texas.

### PAXTON WATCH

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton this morning announced two new hires: Murtaza Sutarwalla as deputy attorney general for legal counsel and Brent Dupre as the director of law enforcement at the Texas attorney general’s office. Dupre previously served with the Austin Police Department, where he retired as an assistant chief.

The agency’s former deputy attorney general for legal counsel, Ryan Vassar, and its former director of law enforcement, David Maxwell, were fired late last year. Both were among several top aides who alleged that Paxton broke the law in doing favors for a political donor.

### TEA WATCH

Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath spoke with the Trib’s Evan Smith today about educating students during a pandemic. The Trib’s Aliyya Swaby has more here.