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Davis, Abbott Face Off In First Debate

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EDINBURG - The two candidates for Texas governor faced off in their first debate on Friday.

The debate was held in the Rio Grande Valley, where several of the questions focused on border security. Other topics the candidates discussed had to do with education and minimum wage.

Attorney General Greg Abbott, who is the Republican candidate for governor, said his border security plan will include sending 500 DPS officers to the border. In addition, he will add 20 Texas Rangers across the state.

He said his office is working on a potential lawsuit against the government regarding the money spent on this year's influx of undocumented immigrants.

"There are expenses that should not come out of the pockets of taxpayers in the state of Texas. The reason, because it wasn't McAllen or the Rio Grande Valley that caused this, the reason this happened it is all the president's fault," said Abbott.

"It is the case that is ultimately the government's responsibility to secure our border to pay ultimately the cost as a consequence for it. But as a governor, I believe the state should step in and help communities such as this one," said Democratic candidate for Governor Wendy Davis.

Davis said if she was in Rick Perry's shoes this year, she would have called a special session of Texas legislature to hear from local communities. She said she would like to hear from law enforcement and charities.

During the debates, both candidates agreed they want to boost the education system.

Davis asked Abbott to stop his appeals in order to adequately fund schools in Texas.

A judge declared Texas schools finance system unconstitutional in August. The Texas Legislature cut \$5.4 billion from public schools in 2011, which prompted for more than 600 school districts around the state to sue.

"The only thing right now coming between our children and appropriate funding of their schools today, it's you," said Davis.

"Senator Davis, there is actually another thing coming in between me and setting that lawsuit and that is law you voted on and helped pass in 2011 that removes from the Attorney General, the ability to settle lawsuits just like this," Abbott replied.

The candidates also discussed minimum wage. Abbott claims 94 percent of the companies in the state pay more than minimum wage already and the system is working.

However, Davis said the minimum wage should be raised.

The candidates also touched on releasing information about storage of chemicals like the ammonium nitrate that was at West fertilizer plant.

Davis blamed Abbott for not allowing Texans to know where chemicals are stored. However, he said he wants to uphold the Texas Homeland Security act to prevent information from getting into the wrong hands.

The second and last debate will be on Sept. 30.

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