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**TEXAS TRIBUNE FESTIVAL PRESENTS OPEN CONGRESS,
A FREE POLITICS, NEWS AND COMMUNITY FAIR
IN DOWNTOWN AUSTIN**

***Julián Castro, Kasie Hunt, Steve Kornacki, DeRay McKesson,
Lawrence O'Donnell, Annise Parker, Lawrence Wright, Sally Yates and more
to headline this year's Open Congress event on Saturday, Sept. 29***

AUSTIN, TEXAS (SEPT. 11, 2018) – For the first time ever, [The Texas Tribune Festival](#) will welcome the general public to Open Congress at The Texas Tribune Festival, a free politics, news and community street fair designed to make political engagement accessible to even more Texans.

[Open Congress](#), which will take over Congress Avenue between 8th and 11th streets on Saturday, Sept. 29, will bring even more Texans into the big public policy conversations taking place across the Tribune's signature three-day Festival. The event will feature three tents hosting premier programming with mass appeal — all free to attend, no RSVP required.

Some of the most anticipated programming at Open Congress will occur in the [NBC News and MSNBC South Tent](#), including conversations on everything from immigration and the family separation crisis at the border to gun policy and the role of activism in sports. These programs will feature high-profile speakers and be moderated by top NBC News and MSNBC talent, including MSNBC national political correspondent **Steve Kornacki**, NBC News Capitol Hill Correspondent **Kasie Hunt**, MSNBC Washington Correspondent **Garrett Haake**, host of MSNBC's "The Last Word" **Lawrence O'Donnell** and more. See the full lineup of NBC News and MSNBC talent at the Festival at festival.texastribune.org.

Just steps away in the [H+K Strategies North Tent](#), attendees can expect one-on-one discussions with thought leaders like U.S. Sen. **Amy Klobuchar**, D-Minn.; **Julián Castro**, former U.S. secretary of housing and urban development; author and The New Yorker staff writer **Lawrence Wright** and civil rights activist **DeRay Mckesson**.

The third Open Congress venue, the [Walmart Partner Tent](#), will feature original programming from trusted media brands throughout Texas, including the Austin American-Statesman, TIME Magazine, Community Impact Newspaper, Texas Standard, Univision, OutSmart and GateHouse Media.

The heart of Open Congress and The Texas Tribune Festival is the "[Festival Hub](#)" located at 800 Congress sponsored by Panacea Collection, home to Festival registration and help desks, charging stations powered by Centerpoint Energy, information on Texas Tribune membership, Festival merchandise and books. The Festival Hub will also serve as the premier venue for book signings with big-name authors like **Cecile Richards**, **Rick Wilson** and **Jason Kander**.

Open Congress attendees will also enjoy the best of Austin's food scene with a large offering of the city's most popular food trucks, including Mmmpanadas, Kebabalicious, Evil Weiner, Llama's Peruvian Creole, Chilaquil Mexican Eatery, Austin Land and Cattle, Steel City Pops and Stony's Pizza.

Open Congress has more to offer than programming. Get a 7 a.m. start with Yoga on the Capitol lawn, hosted by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas. Other sponsored activities include a Healthy Texas Tailgating Cooking Demo sponsored by the Texas A&M University System and an interactive art exhibition sponsored by the Texas Cultural Trust. Information on special sponsored events throughout Open Congress and The Texas Tribune Festival is [now available](#).

To take advantage of the full Texas Tribune Festival by purchase a conference pass for \$300, which includes access to three days of programming, unparalleled networking opportunities and special receptions. Special discounts are available for Texas Tribune members, students and educators. Volunteers are still needed and earn free access in exchange for their time. Registration, discount and volunteer information are available at festival.texastribune.org.

The 2018 Texas Tribune Festival is presented by Walmart and sponsored by Laura and John Arnold, AARP, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Anheuser-Busch, Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Ascension Seton, AT&T, Austin Community College, Barron, Adler, Clough & Oddo LLP, The Beer Alliance of Texas, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, Boeing, BP, Bumble Bizz, Center for Disaster Philanthropy, CenterPoint Energy, Chariot, Charles Koch Institute, Comcast, Deloitte, Educate Texas, Entergy, Equinor, Google, Greater Texas Water Company, Gulf States Toyota, Hatton W. Sumners Foundation, H-E-B, Hill+Knowlton Strategies, Houston First, Huston-Tillotson University, IBC Bank, JPMorgan Chase, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Lobby Days, Lumina Foundation, Lyft, The Meadows Foundation, The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, Messina Hof Winery and Resort, Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, The Cynthia & George Mitchell Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, NRG Energy, Oncor, Panacea Collection, Pearson, PepsiCo, Quest Diagnostics, Raise Your Hand Texas, Silicon Labs, Southwest Airlines, Spurs Sports and Entertainment, St. David's Foundation, St. David's HealthCare, Texas A&M University, The Texas A&M University System, Texas Association of Community Colleges, Texas Association of Realtors, Texas Bankers Association, Texas Central, Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, Texas Cultural Trust, Texas Education Grantmakers Advocacy

Consortium, Texas Exes, Texas Public Policy Foundation, Texas Secretary of State, Texas Southern University, Texas State Technical College, The Texas Tech University System, Tito's Handmade Vodka, Toyota North America, Uber, The University of Texas at Austin, The University of Texas Press, Upbring, UT Southwestern Medical Center, Valero, Walton Family Foundation, Zachry Group.

Media support is provided by the NBC News and MSNBC, Austin American-Statesman, Austin Black Business Journal, Austin Chronicle, Community Impact, CultureMap, GateHouse Media, Houston Public Media, Killeen Daily Herald, KLBJ, KLRU, KXAN, Outsmart Magazine, Rivard Report, Slate, Texas Monthly, Texas Standard, The Monitor, TIME Magazine, Think from KERA, Univision, Voice of Asia and The Washington Post.

More information about the Festival is available online at texastribune.org/festival, on Facebook at facebook.com/texastribune and on Twitter at [@TexasTribune](https://twitter.com/TexasTribune).

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ABOUT THE TEXAS TRIBUNE:

The Texas Tribune is a nonprofit, nonpartisan public media organization whose mission is to promote civic engagement and discourse on public policy, politics, government and other matters of statewide interest. For more information on The Texas Tribune, please visit texastribune.org. You can also follow The Texas Tribune on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), SnapChat (username texastribune) and [Instagram](#).