

ELECTION 2008

INSIDE
How each Houston-area county voted in Tuesday's election. **PAGE B2**

OBITUARIES | EDITORIALS | OUTLOOK | WEATHER

LOCAL RACES FOR CONGRESS

Olson wins, reclaiming House seat for GOP

Lampson loses DeLay's old spot; Culberson takes re-election bid

By **STEWART M. POWELL**
HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Republicans on Tuesday reclaimed the suburban Houston congressional district once held by House Majority Leader Tom DeLay. The victory deepened Republicans' domination of Texas' congressional delegation at a time when Democrats broadened their control of both the House and the Senate.

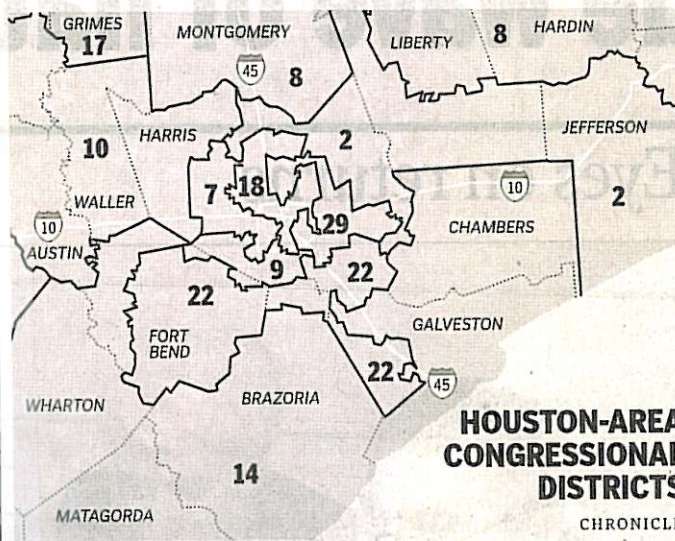
"I feel so awed standing in front of you as your next congressman," challenger Pete Olson told supporters after claiming victory over U.S. Rep. Nick Lampson, D-Stafford. "I am humbled and honored to be elected to represent you in Washington."

Please see **CONGRESS**, Page B5

ELECTION 2008 | CONGRESS

*** HOUSTON CHRONICLE B5

CONGRESS: Several incumbents win



MELISSA PHILLIP : CHRONICLE
WINNER: Caroline Culberson, 12, hugs her father, U.S. Rep John Culberson, as her mother, Belinda, watches at a party at Maggiano's.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1

Lampson was the only member of Texas' 32-member congressional delegation to lose his \$169,300 a year job in the House.

His loss returned the seat to GOP control after two years in Democratic hands.

Republican incumbents won two other highly contested local congressional races. Rep. John Culberson, 52, defeated Democratic challenger Michael Skelly to win election to a fifth term from a Harris County congressional district once represented by George H.W. Bush.

Culberson vowed to return to Washington to "do my part as your congressman to lead the fight in Washington to fight these far-left socialists," a reference to Democrats.

Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Austin, 46, beat back an aggressive challenge by Democrat Larry Joe Doherty, a trial lawyer and former television judge, to secure a third term.

Six members of the Houston-area's congressional delegation handily won re-election: Reps.

Ron Paul, R-Lake Jackson; Kevin Brady, R-The Woodlands; Ted Poe, R-Humble; Al Green, D-Houston; Gene Green, D-Houston; and Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Houston.

The GOP will now control 20 of Texas' 32 House seats. The delegation is led by Republican Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchison and John Cornyn.

Lampson, 63, who had served in Congress for eight years from a nearby district, had been banking on the nation's economic free fall, disaffection with President Bush and the popularity of Barack Obama to help carry him to a second term.

But Olson, 45, a lawyer and former Navy pilot, presented a formidable challenge after serving on the U.S. Senate staffs of Phil Gramm and Cornyn for nine years.

Lampson won the seat two years ago against write-in Republican candidate Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, who represented the district briefly. She replaced DeLay, a Sugar Land Republican who served in the vanguard of the GOP takeover of the



STEVE UECKERT : CHRONICLE
SEEKING VOTES: Congressional hopeful Pete Olson tries to get a hand slap from Chelsea Mills after her mother, Renee Mills, voted in Pearland.

House in 1994 but stepped down in mid-2006 amid charges of campaign finance violations.

DeLay had been instrumental in reshaping the district's boundaries to make it more reliably Republican. District voters supported George W. Bush by wide margins in the previous presidential races.

Lampson's loss could have

an impact on NASA's Johnson Space Center. Lampson had been promised the chairmanship of the House subcommittee that has jurisdiction over NASA.

Chronicle reporters Mark Carreau, Purva Patel and Tom Fowler contributed.

stewart.powell@chron.com