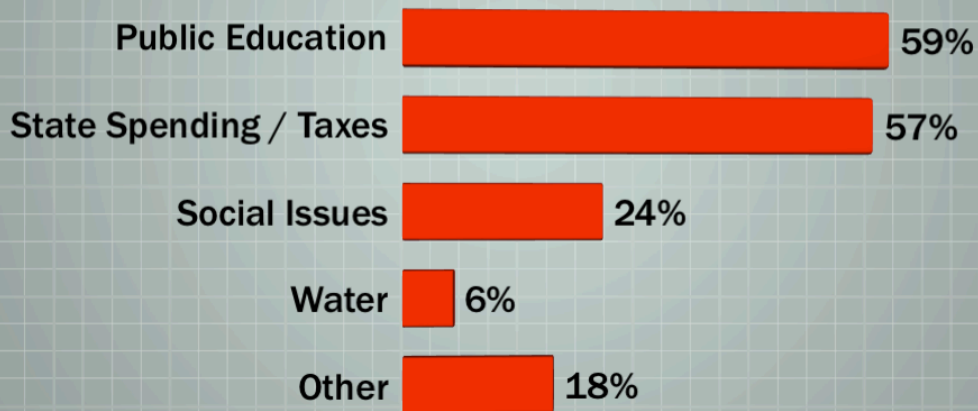


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of December 5.*

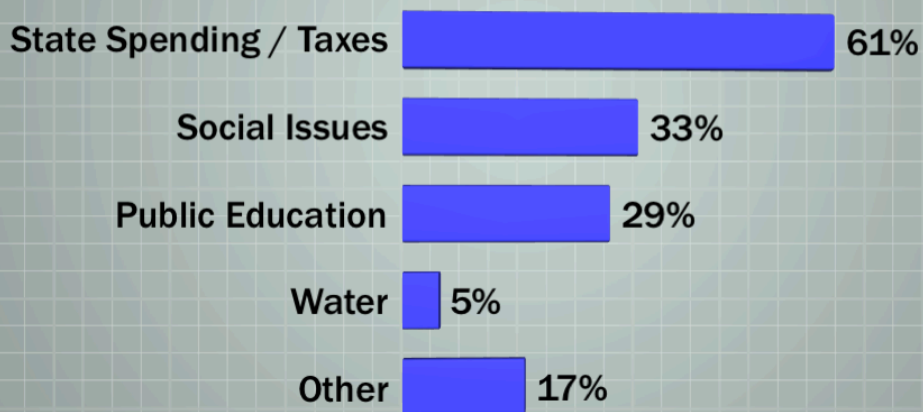
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Top Issues in the Republican Primary?

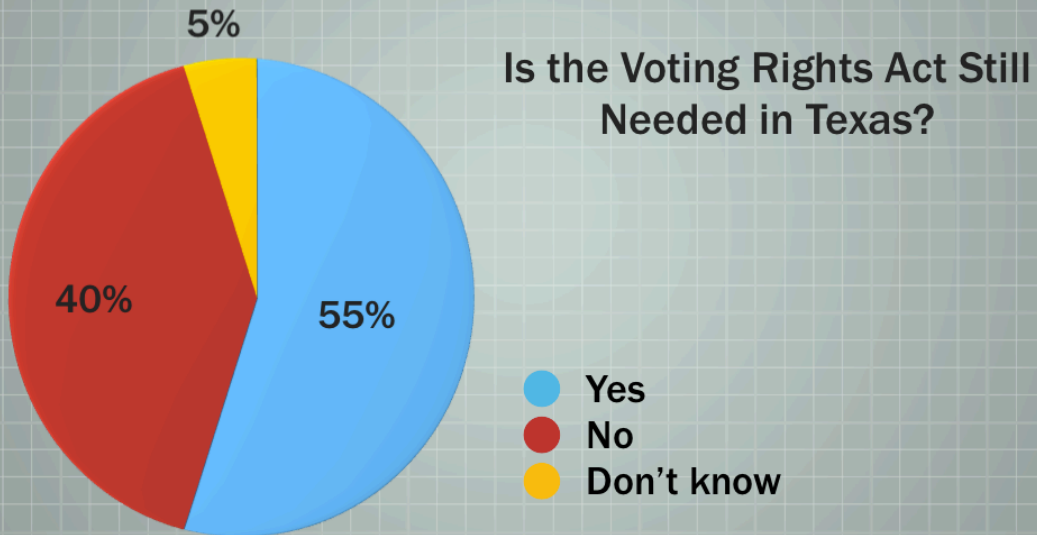


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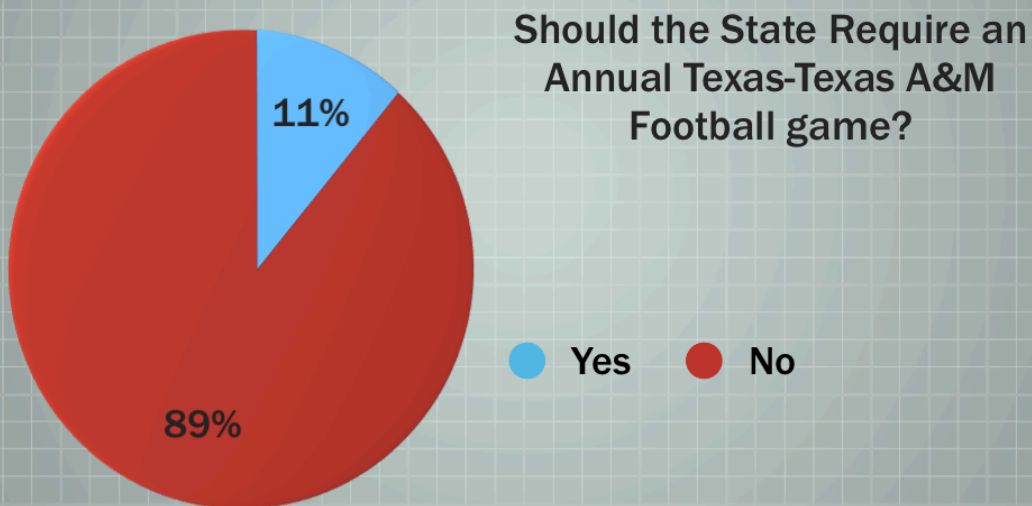
Top Issues in the Democratic Primary?



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What issues will expose the most significant differences between Republican primary candidates?

- "Immigration obviously"
- "There will always be a fair amount of necessary catering to the crazies (social & tea baggers) but with increased Presidential year turnout their importance will be diminished."
- "State spending / taxes is what the voters in the Republican Primary will care most about; public ed is a subset of that. Candidates with records will have to defend their record on spending and tax policy positions. Candidates without records will be able to cater their campaign to their electorate and draw the contrast they need with their opponent."
- "I suspect most of the candidates will be singing out of the same hymnal."
- "None"
- "Taxes: specifically possible changes to existing exemptions and modifying the margins tax"
- "As the economy generally warms back up, R base voters will regress to thinking partial-birth abortion and evolution are of top concern."
- "Speaker's race vote in the house."
- "Manmade Global Warming, Socialized Medicine"
- "This will be a battle for the future of Texas and what the vision is for our continued growth."
- "The defenders of liberty will fall out between economic liberty (no taxes) and personal liberty (gay rights, reproductive rights)"
- "Surely they will notice what any 6th grader notices"
- "God help Republican candidates who have to defend their votes on the budget and its accompanying cuts to public education. Soccer moms notice when little Janie's math class has 10 more students than last year."
- "Promises of "now new taxes" and the most conservative position on social issues will carry GOP candidates. We have returned to the 1950's on race and personal rights."
- "To me, spending / public ed are one in the same. The School Board Republicans will beat up the Tea Partiers over public ed cuts. The Tea Partiers either won't call them out or know enough to call them out on the enormous reserves many school districts sat on while crying that the Lege didn't spend any Rainy Day money."
- "Common sense?"
- "It's all about the money . . . and the cuts to public education . . . and how to pay for "my" priorities without raising "my" taxes."
- "Unfortunately, the out of context words from the Speaker will be a line in the sand for these candidates. They will want LESS spending and LESS taxing."
- "Tea Party influence will dilute the importance of social issues."

- "Rs will all be for low taxes and against spending. Public ed--whether to increase funding--will be the only difference between them (on the list)."

- "There will be no differences. Candidate will stick to the winning

formula; sound bites that matter to the base. "A Conservative who will Cut taxes, Reduce Spending, and Get Government out of the way."

- "Border control and illegal immigration"

What issues will expose the most significant differences between Democratic primary candidates?

- "Race"

- "Republicans are going to have to get serious about education and not just their own kids in their own suburban districts or we can do long range criminal justice planning to house the millions of uneducated who turn to crime out of necessity. The long-term consequences to business in Texas will dictate serious focus on education. Texas can't be a beacon if there are no qualified applicants to hire."

- "Same for Ds, though Ds will not have the pressure of holding the line on spending, but rather will be expected to be knowledgeable and explain how they will target/prioritize/advocate for health and education spending."

- "These are all fundamental differences."

- "Tort Reform"

- "Whomever positions himself too early for the General will pay the price in the primary. The millionaire & billionaire 1% argument polls so well among Democrats that not adequately supporting it will spell political death."

- "N/a"

- "National Sovereignty, American Defense"

- "Some will be honest enough to speak about the need for more revenue; others won't dare."

- "I don't see Democratic primary candidates having too many disagreements on the important issues."

- "Immigration"

- "They'll want more money but will be afraid of job-destroying tax increases."

- "I don't think there will be enough D primary battles to get a good sample on this question."

- "See #1, above"

- "How to develop an Agenda that plays to the majority of Texans?"

- "Unfortunately, the out of context words from the Speaker will be a line in the sand for these candidates. They will want MORE spending and MORE taxes."

- "Rural Democrats and Valley Democrats will enjoy if Annie's list or any other liberal group gets involved with their opponents. These are still conservative voters who are pro-life and pro-business."

- "Tort reform"
- "The current crop of D candidates won't vary much on the big issues."
- "Little"

Is the Voting Rights Act still necessary to protect minority voters' rights in Texas?

- "Yes, as long as Republicans continue to fight Hispanics rather than embrace our mutual interests."
- "Probably so."
- "Before the redistricting bills I would have said the voting rights act had accomplished its mission. The Texas Republican legislature proved me wrong."
- "All evidence indicates that the only people they need ongoing protection from are Texas Republican map drawers."
- "A panel of federal judges, the justice department, and the plaintiffs think so too."
- "With the state fast becoming a "majority minority" state there will be fewer and fewer reasons to justify continued review of voting rights. Watch out for disputes between Hispanics and African-Americans over protected classes!"
- "Isn't it obvious?"
- "I think the Texas Legislature is living proof that left to their own devices they would limit the franchise and pour Clorox over the capital."

- "As long as Republicans are willing to ignore demographic realities, the VRA will be necessary."
- "Not the part where judges come in and protect partisan interests, as opposed to voters rights."
- "I shudder to think what would happen if the Texas Legislature were given absolute freedom to draw lines without consideration of the VRA."
- "Minority voter disenfranchisement through force of law began to be dismantled less than 50 years ago and widespread disenfranchisement by elected and appointed public officials continued long after the enactment of the Voting Rights Act. Repression of minority group members continues to be a major feature of American society and economy. Sadly, I expect the need for protecting minority voters' rights will not disappear in my lifetime."
- "Districts are not being drawn to prevent minorities from being elected. They are being drawn based on partisan outcomes."
- "Couldn't be more obvious than this year!"

- "If the GOP continues to offer legislation aimed at reducing minority votes, it is."
- "Districts are drawn by legislators who are held accountable by the voters."
- "The redistricting debacle this year is evidence that the VRA is still needed. The Republican supermajority just couldn't help themselves, not that anyone expected anything different. Diluting the voting power of minorities can only be prevented with this type of law in place."
- "Clearly."
- "It is necessary if you believe racial identity is important in government."
- "Duh. Look at the legislatively-approved maps!"
- "Not my area of expertise . . ."
- "The State's diversity is like that of most of those not subject to the Act, but the minorities are mired in the past, so we get to have a different kind of miscarriage of justice transpire every decade."
- "They need to protect minorities from themselves. It seems you can't be

conservative and be a minority anymore these days."

- "The chief justice is black. I mean, really, we still need the a-ok from DC here? Plus, don't forget the significant investment by Rs to recruit and elect minorities."
- "Any doubts that the VRA was still necessary were erased by the Republican Party's failed redistricting gambit this year."
- "Obviously there is a double standard on who the VRA is protecting. It is "OK" to protect an Hispanic Democrat, but apparently "NOT OK" to protect an Hispanic Republican. If minorities voted in the same numbers as they are registered, we wouldn't be discussing this issue."
- "If Republicans would stop violating the Voting Rights Act, it would probably lend more credence to their contention that we don't need the Voting Rights Act."
- "After this redistricting, yes."
- "Not in its current form and not with the current emphasis. The Act could be updated to reflect more current practices that inhibit voter participation. What a political fight re-writing the VRA would be..."

Should the state require Texas to play Texas A&M in an annual football game?

- "Playing the game helps A&M more than it helps UT, if A&M wants to stand on its own, this is the first major step."
- "Hell no! Texas lawmakers need to stick to their core mission and not meddle in internal decisions regarding athletics. The problem with govt at the state and federal is mission creep. The leaders at UT and A&M

will work it out over time, if it is best for them."

- "A pox on both their houses."
- "But they should play anyway."
- "Idiotic question considering economic and political issues at stake. This may very well be the most important election nationally since 1860"
- "The Aggies made their choice."
- "It isn't the job of the state to force Dodds to have an appreciation for history and tradition."
- "Special session!"
- "Dumb Idea"
- "Rick and Kay should face off in a cheer/yell/hair contest each year they do not play. Not to be confused with a debate, which the Governor -- well you know."
- "If the schools can't resolve it's not a matter for government to solve."
- "Tradition isn't just for Jews."
- "But they will jawbone them after awhile and they will be playing each other within 5 years or whenever DeLoss Dodds retires"
- "Even as a marginal sports fan, I'm outraged that Texas A&M chose short-term financial gain over a century old cultural institution. Shame. Shame. Shame."
- "If a public university's sports program (football isn't the only game in town by the way) is the legislature's

business, then the legislature should have prevented Texas A&M from leaving the Big XII. There would be no scheduling problem."

- "The Legislature should probably stay focused on the real issues of importance for Texas.... water, taxes, public education, transportation, etc. Deal with those first and then weigh in on the lesser matters. Plus who would want to mess the wonderful outcome of the last game! Hook'em!"
- "Hey, these guys have to get laid somehow? Of course, UT could just pay the players more than they do already!! Yeah, I know."
- "Once the state solves issues related to revenue, education (learning not sports), health care, child services, prisons, criminal offenses, immigration and the border, and 40 other areas of concern, then and only then should they spend time deciding what we should watch on TV on Thanksgiving."
- "We won, Aggies. Get over it. And while I love the annual tryptophan-induced-coma tradition, it would be silly for the state to mandate it."
- "But my heart says YES!"
- "But tread carefully, nothing is more dangerous in Texas politics than interfering w/ UT & A&M, especially when athletics is involved."
- "I hate that the game has ended for now but the Legislature shouldn't micromanage this. The marketplace will eventually return this game to both schedules."

- "Should have never let them leave. The financial losses to the state are huge."
- "I couldn't imagine a less important issue to occupy their time. So, of course, that means we'll blow weeks and weeks on it."
- "The Legislature has more important things to do."
- "Sheesh"
- "With all of the major issues the Leg tries to avoid - college football is just what they need to mess with."
- "I would hope not . . . unless of course it creates additional economic activity, and then perhaps there could be a "economic development" subsidy to make this happen. We may have an extra \$25 mil a year available from the F1 saga?"
- "The Aggies wish to go from a chance annually to be in the upper half of the Big 12 to finish each year aligned in SEC with powerhouses like Ole Miss, Vandy, & Miss. State-- so be it! There are reasons for Aggie Jokes!"
- "If the legislature spends one day on this issue like they did putting the NFL network on TV they should ALL be voted out of office."
- "Perhaps we can have an interim study on how many passing plays should be run during the first half!"
- "To hell with A&M."
- "Maybe another Executive Order by the Governor??"
- "Seriously? If this ranks as an important or pressing issue, all must be right in the world."
- "Why would the state require them to play the game? They certainly did not REQUIRE the Aggies to stay in the same conference as Texas or other Texas teams! If they were so concerned, they should have stepped in and prevented A&M from bolting to the SEC. The alumni of A&M did not want to leave and toss away a 118-year-old rivalry, but the big shots at A&M did. I am sure their "rivalry" with LSU will be a GREAT one!"
- "Are you kidding?"
- "The state should focus on addressing the issues that impact the majority if Texans."
- "Seriously??"
- "Dammit! I don't avoid state taxes so these guys can avoid playing each other. It's more important to pass a law forcing them to play a football game every year than it is to make tuition to those schools affordable for the less athletically gifted, dadgummit!"
- "Don't let the door hit them in the ass."
- "Dumb, dumb and dumber...."
- "Let it go people. UT brought this issue and the problems it will bring upon themselves. A&M will depart to a better conference and UT will deal with a conference of nothing"
- "The state has no business in such affairs. As an Aggie, I say to hell with them anyway."

- "In case somehow it is not a joke, the correct answer is (b) NO, instead they should require the respective boards of regents of the 2 schools to engage in an Emperor's Club-style display of academic prowess."
- "Politicians should eschew sports"
- "The state should not require the game, but they should strongly encourage it."
- "Few things could be more unimportant."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Cathie Adams, Brandon Aghamalian, James Aldrete, Clyde Alexander, George Allen, Doc Arnold, Jay Arnold, Louis Bacarisse, Charles Bailey, Reggie Bashur, Walt Baum, Dave Beckwith, Rebecca Bernhardt, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Hugh Brady, Steve Bresnen, Chris Britton, Andy Brown, Kerry Cammack, Marc Campos, Jaime Capelo, Snapper Carr, Janis Carter, Tris Castaneda, Corbin Casteel, William Chapman, Elizabeth Christian, George Cofer, Rick Cofer, John Colyandro, Harold Cook, Hector De Leon, June Deadrick, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jeff Eller, Jack Erskine, Alan Erwin, Terry Frakes, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Eric Glenn, Kinnan Golemon, Kathy Grant, John Greytok, Michael Grimes, Anthony Haley, Bill Hammond, Adam Haynes, John Heasley, Ken Hodges, Steve Holzheuser, Billy Howe, Laura Huffman, Shanna Igo, Deborah Ingersoll, Richie Jackson, Jason Johnson, Mark Jones, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Nick Lampson, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Donald Lee, Luke Legate, Leslie Lemon, Homero Lucero, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Bryan Mayes, Dan McClung, Parker McCollough, Robert Miller, Lynn Moak, Bee Moorhead, Steve Murdock, Craig Murphy, Keir Murray, Pat Nugent, Sylvia Nugent, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Bill Pewitt, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, John Pitts, Royce Poinsett, Kraege Polan, Jay Propes, Ted Melina Raab, Bill Ratliff, Tim Reeves, Jason Sabo, Luis Saenz, Mark Sanders, Andy Sansom, Jim Sartwelle, Stan Schlueter, Bruce Scott, Steve Scurlock, Dan Shelley, Bradford Shields, Dee Simpson, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Todd Smith, Larry Soward, Dennis Speight, Jason Stanford, Bob Strauser, Colin Strother, Michael Quinn Sullivan, Sherry Sylvester, Russ Tidwell, Trent Townsend, Trey Trainor, Jill Warren, John Weaver, Ware Wendell, Ken Whalen, Ellen Williams, Michael Wilt, Seth Winick, Alex Winslow, Lee Woods, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.