

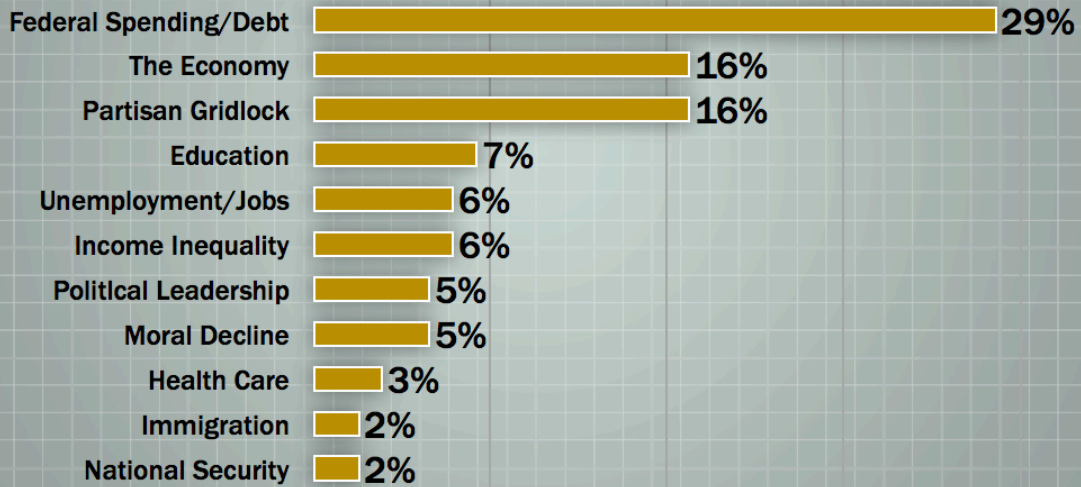
“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

Sponsored by: **Hahn, Texas**

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of February 25*

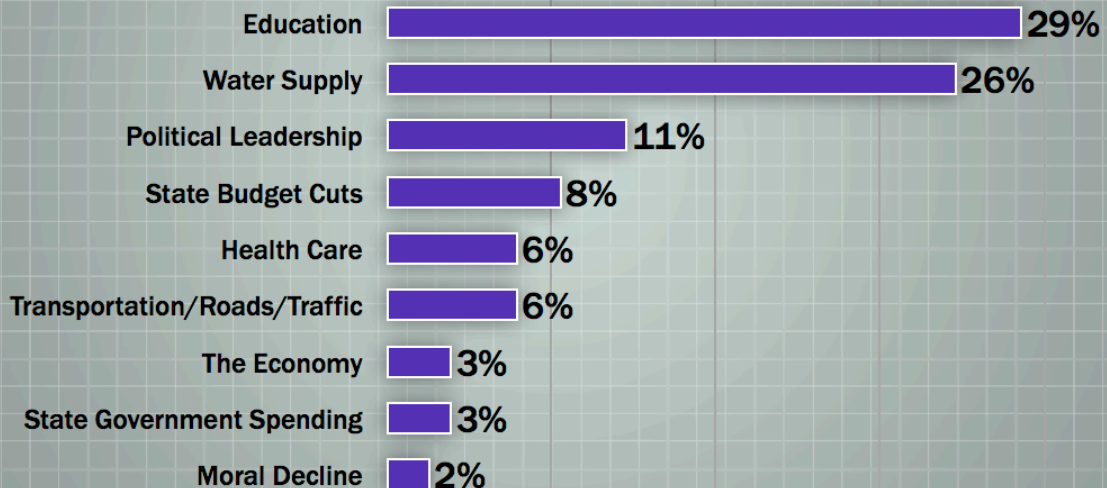
INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

What's the most important problem facing the country?



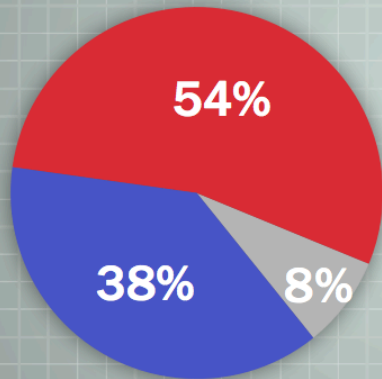
INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

What's the most important problem facing the state?

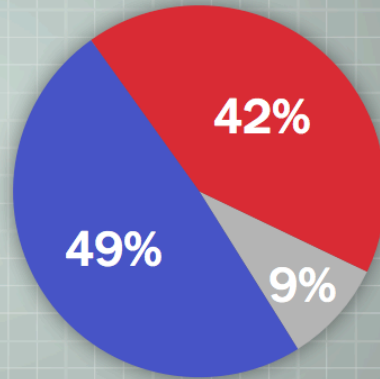


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Direction of the country?



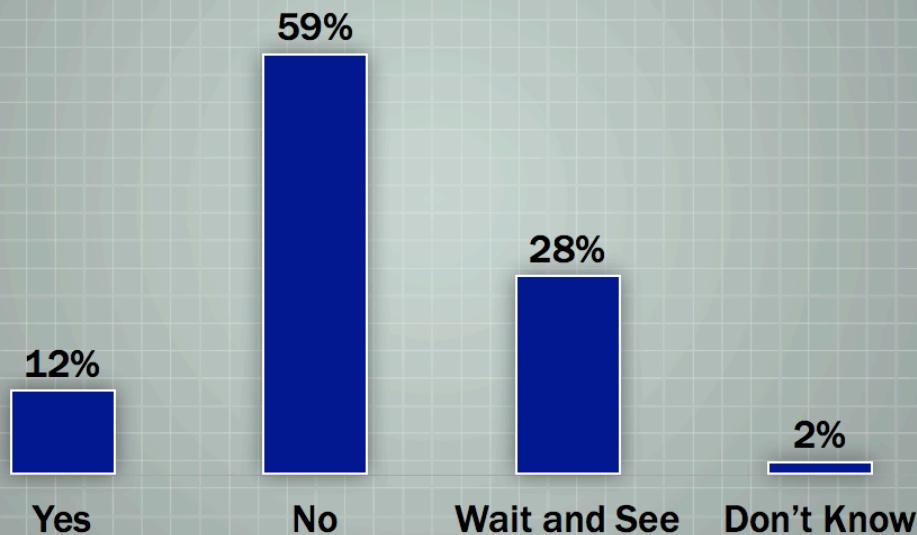
Direction of the state?



● Right Direction ● Wrong Track ● Don't Know

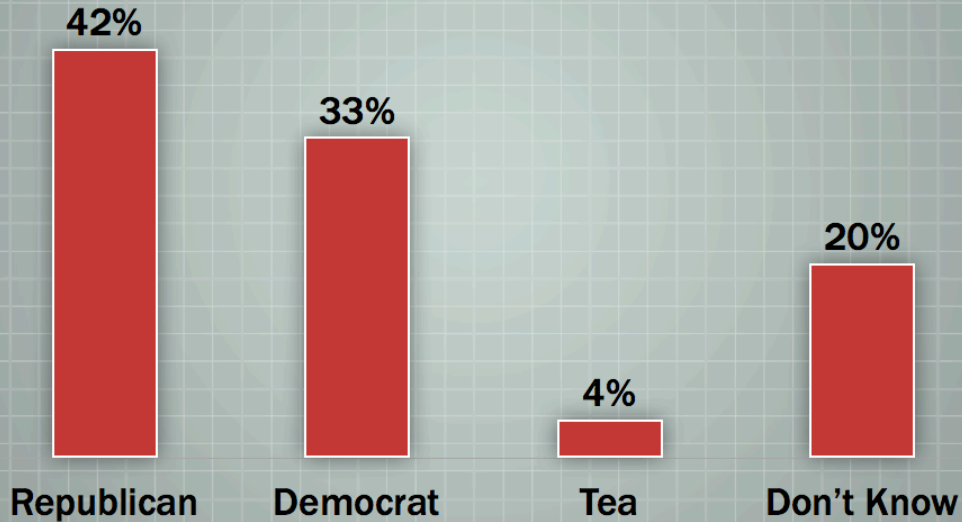
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Would you vote to re-elect Gov. Perry in 2014?



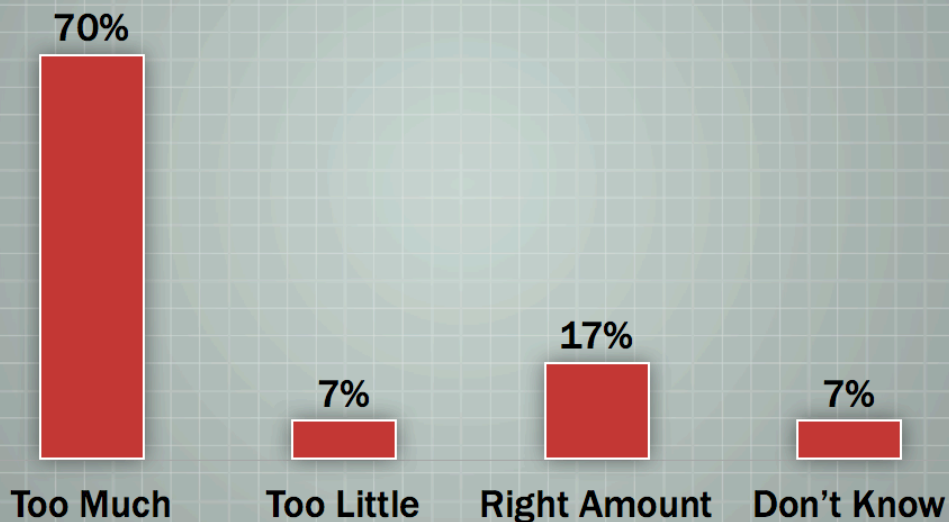
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How would you vote in a congressional race with an official Tea Party?



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Your assessment of Tea Party influence?



What would you say is the most important problem facing this country today?

- "These are all important but there seems to be a failure of both parties to want to tackle problems in other than a partisan manner. This seems especially true at the national level."
- "Until policy makers act like grown ups, we cannot effectively address any of the substantive issues."
- "How about a confluence of taxes, social welfare programs, moral decline, and partisan gridlock? Too many taxes to pay for too much social welfare due to moral decline because too many people are immoral and not self-responsible, and our leaders lack the moral backbone to overcome their silly partisan differences to be responsible for the problem."
- "The existential threats to our society come from the disintegration of the nuclear family and parents' abdication of their role to the state. Everything else is secondary."
- "There will be a tipping point when it comes to spending. As a country, we can no longer be complacent of the status quo, however, this doesn't mean all the blame goes to the politicians. We as a society will have to decide what is important and how do we fund what is important."
- "Our brainpower will be the key in determining our ability to thoughtfully and responsibly address all other issues. Our forefathers figured that one out when they wrote of an 'enlightened citizenry.'"
- "If you let me check two items, I would have checked EDUCATION"
- "If we don't get people back to work we won't be able to solve our long list of problems"
- "The capital markets are staying on the sidelines because of the uncertainty surrounding the administration's runaway tax and spending proposals!"
- "The greed that infects this country threatens to turn this nation into a third world nation capable of doing nothing extraordinary other than killing people at home or abroad"
- "I really mean cultural decline in that we don't broadly have the discipline, high standards, work ethic, hunger to excel we need to grow opportunity for future generations. Bad leadership and bad citizenship compound the problem."
- "The real answer is a combination of economic growth, education, and income inequality."
- "Cut 'entitlement' spending. And stop referring to it as 'entitlements'. Nobody should be 'entitled' to free groceries, cell phones or cable TV. A safety net is one thing but generational dependence on taxpayers to support your cost of living is something else."
- "If income inequality means class divisiveness, then that's it. If it means something else, I think the big issue facing the country today is the division between perceived "haves" and "have nots" in terms of those that think some have too much of whatever and those that think that

some have no desire to do anything other than take what they haven't earned. Sort of a 'coming apart' (the book) mentality"

- "You left off governance, political leadership, from when all this flows"
- "We are on the verge of government paralysis."
- "Closely tied to national debt issue"
- "It is the inability of reaching a compromise on anything."
- "The level of knowing indifference to both borderline and blatant ethical misconduct on the part of both parties has lessened the confidence of the public in its institutions to dangerous levels. While corruption has been a part of politics since the beginning, the intensity is unmatched. Identity politics produced a culture where it's easier to pay people off, co-opt the issue by having a token of the opposition, and just flat-out scam the public than ever before."
- "Your list is too damn long! It is indicative of a fundamental lack of understanding."
- "Dependency. We'll just vote for free stuff and dance away our days on sun-dappled hillsides. That 1971 Coca-Cola ad was a documentary, right?"
- "Nobody is serious in Washington about reigning in our national deficits"
- "Is everyone on the take in DC?"
- "Why can we only choose just one. Partisan gridlock may be the reason

none of our problems are solved, but it is hard to say it is the most important problem we face."

- "Tough question as many problems are so intertwined. I picked immigration because the time is right to fix the issue."
- "We don't need more jobs. We need jobs that pay a wage one can buy a home, raise a family, and secure their future on."
- "First place is growing income inequality, which is strangling our economy. Second place goes to uncompetitive electoral districts, which are strangling our polity."
- "Even us Democrats will agree that government has become too big, but with the partisan gridlock there doesn't seem to be the will to really fix things. It is all about getting reelected and fixing problems is subordinate to good policy."
- "Republican driven, hate-based refusal to compromise."
- "Bankruptcy will surpass these other issues."
- "The gridlock has overtaken real issues."
- "We could solve serious problems if we dealt with issues instead of the next election."
- "Maybe I missed it (and it's a long, long list) but the fact that the average voter reads at a 7th grade level is a doozy."
- "It's always the economy, stupid."

- "It's the debt!!!!!!!!!!!"

What would you say is the most important problem facing the state of Texas today?

- "Infrastructure to support a growing state must have transportation systems as well as water and education."
- "Too much pay to play. Not enough transparency in budgeting or responsible budgeting."
- "There really is NOT an adequate water supply system in Texas for our continued rate of growth. Next to air, running low on water is serious."
- "Businesses, communities, and people need water to thrive. If we don't get a handle on it, the Texas landscape will be dotted with ghost towns."
- "Our education system is broken and there will come a time when companies will leave Texas because they cannot find an educated workforce."
- "The lack of leadership to put people first over ideology is killing us slowly."
- "I would have put EDUCATION and WATER SUPPLY had you allowed me to check more."
- "Education is low hanging fruit for the legislature. Consistently they try to move on education by cutting funds and changing the benchmarks but without a clear vision for true, educational reform. The governor seems to hyper charge this issue every legislative session."
- "The economy of Texas withers without an infrastructure designed to keep up with mobility requirements"
- "Unwillingness to tax and spend wisely for the benefit of all Texan's future"
- "Same ad above."
- "The Tea Party"
- "Water is a necessity. Increasing population is creating visible strains on our water supply. If the water issue is not addressed, everything else will become unimportant very quickly."
- "Texas's future is compromised by a willful blindness to the educational policy responses that might smooth the demographic change that the state is undergoing."
- "Our educational system is BROKEN and in desperate need of an overhaul. We MUST go back to a three-tiered educational system - Vocational, Foundations and College Prep/Honors. Every child in Texas is NOT going to college - many do not wish to go to college, however, affording them an opportunity to graduate from high school with some sort of SKILL can aid them in getting a job."

- "I would add all infrastructure including water, roads and electric generation and distribution."
- "Poor education, or better the waste of young minds, is the rot of all the other issues."
- "See #1 response"
- "The focus on 'right or left' instead of 'right or wrong' in all of the areas listed above."
- "Realistically funding water, infrastructure and education. Same as it ever was."
- "See above times at least 2."
- "A ridiculously long list! Immigration is number 1 because it remains as the linchpin between jobs, taxes, government, spending, and transportation AND a host of other minor issues on your list."
- "Water is a huge problem but then so is transportation/roads/traffic. Don't forget that most media reporting is biased toward liberalism"
- "So, I believe in a federal society. Texas doesn't need the federal government telling us how to provide health care to our citizens, especially through insurance when medical costs haven't even been addressed. But Texas needs to get with it on solving the problem and not just kicking the can down the road."
- "The unchecked power of the executive branch coupled with hopelessly one-sided districts has created an embarrassing failure on every major indicator of a successful society."
- "It's so cute that we regard Texas as significantly different from the rest of the United States but it ain't. Here too, first place is growing income inequality, which is strangling our economy. Second place goes to uncompetitive electoral districts, which are strangling our polity."
- "It is a hard choice between education and water. The current legislative mindset, however, is to let public education go the way of the dinosaurs and let charter schools (read culturally correct) take its place."
- "If the federal government goes bankrupt, then Texas needs to have the funds to go it alone."
- "Infrastructure in all forms-- transportation, water, electricity, etc. That's what happens when you don't invest for the better part of 2 decades, I guess."
- "If the Lege doesn't restore funding to certain programs, then education, jobs, water, transportation, etc., won't stand a chance of proper survival."
- "If we don't fund education, nothing else matters."
- "There's nothing wrong with Texas that a Rick Perry donor can't get paid to make worse."
- "The economy is in good shape, but if we don't invest in water and transportation infrastructure, the Texas Model will steadily decline in the coming years."
- "The most important issue is redistricting and the lack of competitive maps... creates a situation where the legislators don't have to

care about the give and take of all the issues listed above."

- "Leadership!!!!!!!!!!!"

Thinking about the country, do you think that things are headed in the right direction, or do you think that things are headed off on the wrong track?

- "Too much spending and debt."
- "If Republicans don't gain control of the conversation, 'American Exceptionalism' will become a quaint, historical notion."
- "Hard to say wrong track with the stock markets at all-time highs, but can't shake that nagging little 16 trillion debt."
- "We are playing a game of chicken and it looks like our country will be the biggest loser. Time is running out. Those with the knowledge on how to get us back on track are resigning at all levels of politics. It's not going to be pretty."
- "Sort of, gently, kind of in the right direction."
- "Long term especially."
- "Slowly"
- "The country is heading in the right direction despite roadblocks thrown at every turn by Republicans attempting to steer us off course and force us back to the fifties."
- "Duh. Voters have rejected the belief that we coexisted w/ dinosaurs, that gays can't marry, that we should build a berlin wall along the borders, that rape is victim precipitated, that global warming is an anti-big oil conspiracy,

and school teachers and college students should be armed, to mention just few more than 3."

- "A lot doesn't feel right just now."
- "8 percent unemployment, inflation coming, trillion dollar debts for eternity = European-style debt crisis"
- "We are going to spend ourselves into oblivion and the less wealthy will look at living in other countries to save their retirement."
- "{Insert baseless, knee-jerk Obama attack here.}"
- "Inflated prices. Closed business. The economy is on the WRONG track."
- "We literally can't spend ourselves into prosperity, despite what the President thinks."
- "We argue about guns and social issues instead of tackling serious issues."
- "Wrong, wrong, wrong track. 'Sixteen tons, and what do you get? Another day older and deeper in debt...' Yes, we're all singing the same tune as Congress digs our way to eventual collapse."
- "As long as time moves in its usual linear direction, we're good."

Thinking about the state of Texas, do you think that things are headed in the right direction, or do you think that things are headed off on the wrong track?

- "It's going in the right direction unless the privileged class are able to dismantle the education system."
- "Texas is much better than the feds, but an overwhelming part of our state budget and programs are dictated by the feds."
- "Texas is America's, 'shining city on the hill.' We need to do more to export our ideas and our world view to the rest of the country."
- "We are at the fork in the road where legislators and the citizens of Texas need to support the right policies. It's not too late, but we are quickly running out of time."
- "Will be interesting to see our job situation in 12 years after 12 years of failing to courageously and honestly invest in the health and education of Texas children."
- "Increasingly polarized legislature and elected state leadership are harming this state more than we even know."
- "We've been on a better track than the country, but we're losing it, too."
- "Hopefully the business Republicans will take back the Party."
- "When our governor is determined to bring down the flagship in the state because of a personal vendetta against the President of the institution - that lets you know the governor has been in office too long! When his legislative priorities are not education, infrastructure and the like, but instead focus on some CRAZED social agenda, then our state is far down the wrong path and in dire need of a new direction."
- "Almost a polar opposite of the wrong track at the federal level."
- "Does the current guvmint go the way of the dinosaur and our leaders the way of Illinois politicians or do we go over the cliff"
- "There is no political leadership in this state and no vision. There is a biblical verse that states that where there is no vision the people will perish!"
- "We need solutions not speeches."
- "Texas is leading the nation economically"
- "Too soon to tell if the legislature will help education, water and transportation to make us a great state that we think we are"
- "I'm an eternal optimist. Though I don't feel like we are on the 'right track' yet, I can't bring myself to say 'wrong track' just yet."
- "The cuts we make today in education and healthcare will cost us 10x that in prison, welfare, and lost

economic development opportunities in the future."

- "Don't become wobbly."
- "Depends on the issue."
- "Depends on what happens this session and in specials."
- "If we can pay for education we will thrive as a state. People don't want to

waste tax dollars, but most want a first class education system."

- "Meh. We're better off than most, but that's not the ideal comparison, is it?"
- "Rick Perry's gotta die some day. I'll count that as the right direction."
- "See 5"

If Rick Perry were to run for governor again in 2014, would you vote for him, would you vote against him, or would you need to wait and see who is running against him?

- "Yes, he's been there a long time (and the media is fatigued) but hasn't the State been better for it?"
- "Let me tell you a little secret; RP is not running for governor in 2014."
- "Give him credit-great politician. Does not translate into leadership for our state."
- "I have had enough of the Governor for life and his crony conservatism that punts the states issues down the field as opposed to addressing them. If the GOP cant or wont say goodbye he will be the last Republican governor for a decade at least."
- "He's made the history books so let someone else come in and lead our great state."
- "I'd prefer fresh leadership, but I don't anyone who'd be better."
- "Never been a huge fan but it's difficult to fire someone whose state is outperforming the rest of the nation in

job creation, property values and affordable living."

- "Triple duh"
- "It's been long enough. Texas is suffering from Perry fatigue!"
- "But would prefer Abbott"
- "Been there too long. Time for Abbott"
- "The only relevant question in politics is 'compared to what.'"
- "Voting for or against Rick Perry is the wrong question. We don't have gubernatorial retention elections. The question is 'Who would you vote for over Rick Perry'"
- "Where is Kinky when we need him?"
- "There is no rationale for ANY Governor to serve a fourth term, period. Not for ANY Democrat or ANY Republican, ever. Is there such a

dearth of leadership in Texas that Mr. Perry is the ONLY leader for our state government? No. It's past time for a change. New leadership, new ideas,

new staff, new appointees, new opportunities...get the picture?"

- "I'd vote for Steve Perry before I'd vote to re-elect Gov. Oops."

Suppose the Tea Party movement organized itself as a political party. When thinking about the next election for Congress, would you vote for the Republican candidate from your district, the Democratic candidate from your district, or the Tea Party candidate from your district?

- "An organized, standalone Tea Party would be a disaster for conservatives and must be stopped at all costs."

- "Not convinced the Tea Party has learned how to negotiate, otherwise it might be a formidable force"

- "The Tea Party is not a Party, its a movement within the Republican Party."

- "Honestly, as an independent voter I really would have to see what these individuals stand for, what they bring to the table and how they could help out our community. I'm not voting for someone just because they have an 'R' or a 'D' after their name."

- "I would vote for the best candidate between the Republican and Democrat."

- "At this point we're back in yellow dog territory"

- "I vote for the best candidate regardless of party!"

- "I would vote for the candidate who stands for something, not against

everything. So far, the Tea Party has advocated for more services for some people while reducing taxes"

- "Depends on the candidates"

- "Is the Republican Party going to reinvent itself and come back to its federalist roots? If so, Republican. If they keep on this social conservative track...sheesh, I might not vote at all."

- "Dixiecrats=Wallace=Perot =Tea Party"

- "Republicans must recruit and elect more like Senator Cruz."

- "You assume I vote."

- "Four years ago, I would've voted for Tea Party. Now that I've seen the 'quality' of some of the Tea Party-infused Republicans coming to the Capitol, I shudder to think how badly I would have regretted that initial vote. They simply aren't ready for prime time."

- "I do know that I will not vote for the Tea Party candidate."

- "Have to see who it is first..."

Do you think the Tea Party movement has too much influence, too little influence, or the right amount of influence in the Republican Party?

- "To be more than fair, advocating for reduced federal taxation and spending as well as preserving state's rights under the ninth and tenth amendments is good but the wackadoodles who have taken over the Tea Party and who want to impose their own religion on others through the power of government are wrong as well as dangerous. Their claim that our founding fathers were Christians who established a Christian country is just wrong. Some of them were Christians but most were Deists (Witness the Jeffersonian Bible wherein he preserved the moral teachings of Jesus but deleted the miracles) who believed in God but thought everyone should have the right to worship (or not) in his or her own way. THAT is in the constitution NOT a government sanctioned religion."

- "Their litmus tests tend to drag candidates too far away from right-center voters. Dangerous when running statewide or nationally."

- "It's a small part of a small part of the overall population that determines who represents us in office. Until the Ds reorganize as a viable electoral force, it's going to be tough to dislodge the Tea Partiers as a force."

- "They have perceived power, but not real. It's a movement that is dying off."

- "It's the mean, angry, primarily older, white crowd who hate

government of any kind, even their own locals who have to adopt balanced budgets."

- "Like all other 'movements' whether it be the Prohibitionists, the Suffragists, the Anti-Masonic or the Bull Moose, once their issue is spent or fails, they'll fizzle out. For a new party to make it, you've got to be for some things, it so hard to keep up the pace, being against everything."

- "Ted Cruz is the poster boy for bad behavior, yet somehow he is already being talked about for 'higher' office??"

- "Being conservative and obstinate don't have to go together"

- "From the 'country club' to the 'road house.' My, has time taken its toll on the Republican Party."

- "In some ways, good, but increasingly bad."

- "As usual, silly question...at least you should include a 'Don't Care' box"

- "Let them gain all the power the possibly can and split the Texas Republican party wide open!!"

- "For me, any influence is too much influence. But in order not to give them a false impression of their importance, I won't be picking Too Much Influence in your survey."

- "But they will tell Mucus, Limbaugh, Beck et al to pound sand when (wait for it) shrimp learn to whistle, pigs can fly, ducks carry guns, etc. etc."

- "All hat, no cattle."

- "They make their voices heard -- that is the goal of every organized group that descends on the Capitol every day. The Tea Party's only crime is that they are effective. Do you think teachers or trial lawyers have too much influence on the Democratic Party?"

- "Tea baggers suck!"

- "As a Democrat, I want them to have more influence so we can start winning some races in November."

- "What is the Tea Party? They can't even define themselves. Trying to organize them into a political party would end up in a chaotic mess."

- "As much as I'd like to just giggle and smirk about the way the

corporate 'Tea Party' pseudo-movement is sucking the life out of the Republican Party, I don't think any of us have been or would be well-served in a one-party state or nation."

- "Dump Rove."

- "If the Republican Party thinks it can solve its Hispanic problem through the vestiges of Tea Party policy it has another thing coming...good luck with that."

- "Too much. Not in regard to fiscal conservatism, which is needed, but because of all the other crackpot baggage they seem to carry-- nullification, birther-ism, xenophobia, etc."

- "I'm not sure there's a difference anymore."

- "I yearn for the days of the Country Club Republican and moderate Democrat."

- "None..."

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