

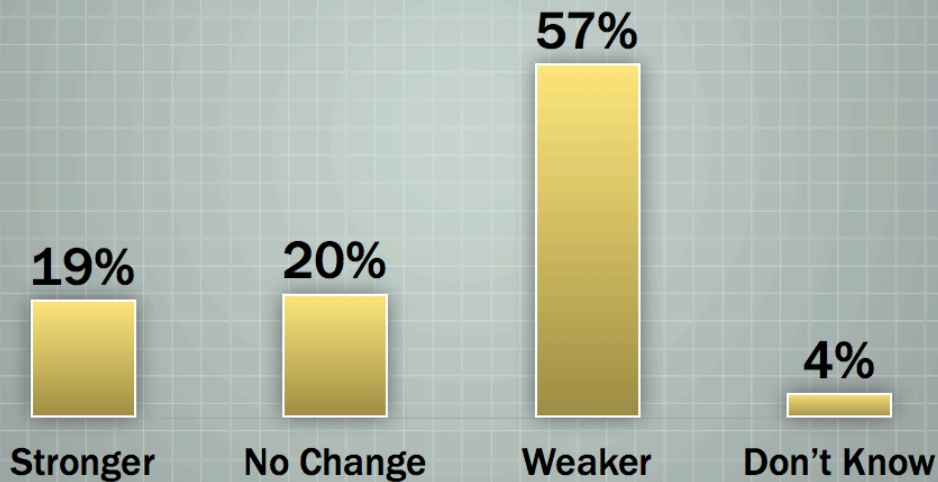
“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

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*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of May 27*

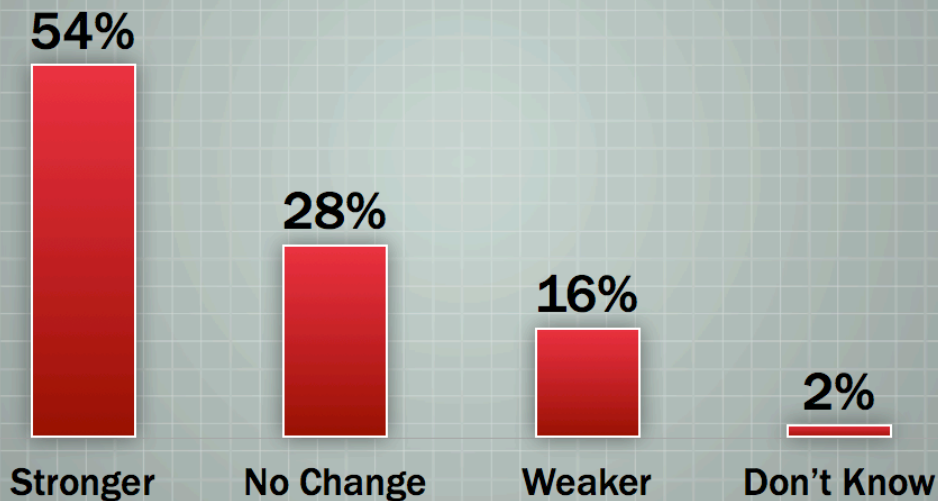
INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

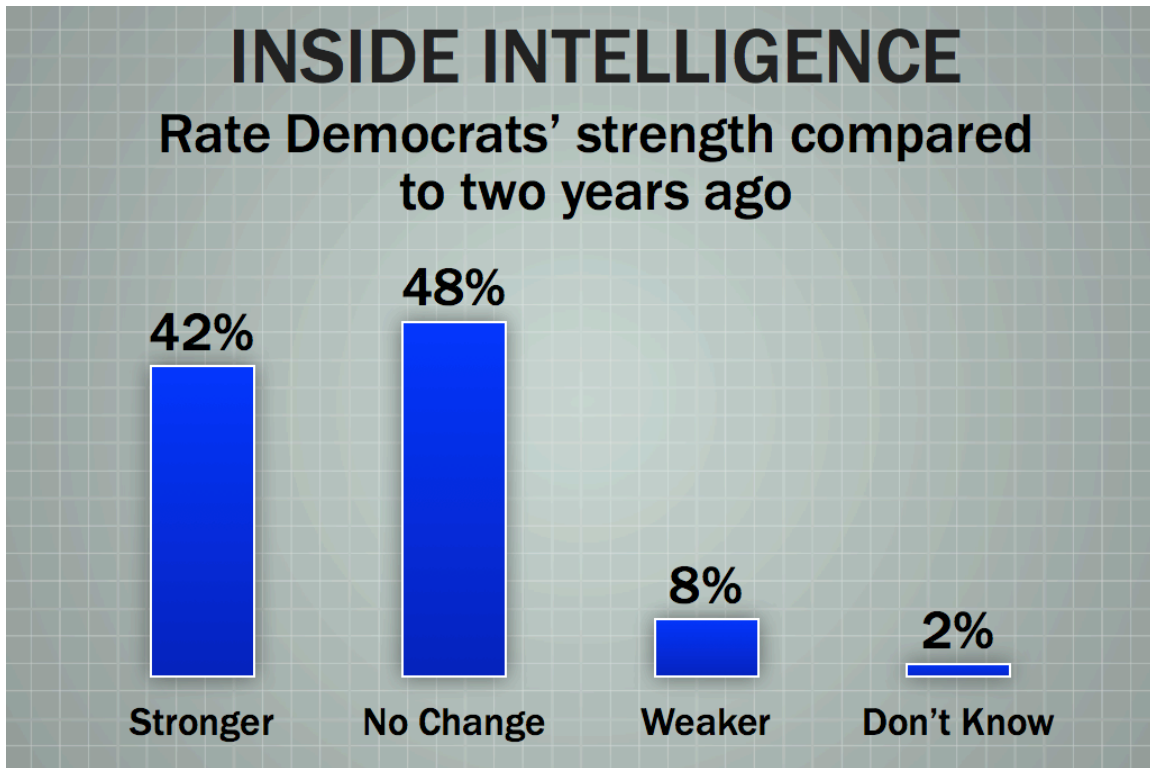
Rate the Tea Party's strength compared to two years ago



INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

Rate GOP moderates' strength compared to two years ago





How does the influence of the Tea Party wing of the GOP in the Legislature compare to two years ago?

- "This has been an unremarkable session all around. Everyone's influence is weaker, including the TEA Party."
- "Obviously leadership needed to grow some and they did. There were no primary red meat issues to force the speaker's allies to take hard votes. This was the session of the REAL REAGAN REPUBLICANS."
- "Without occasional confluence with Ds not sure what victories they have to show for their efforts."
- "They seem to have the allegiance with the Democrats on issues but for different reasons. Dewhurst is heavily influenced on legislation by tea party's perspective."
- "They still didn't take out Straus."
- "Still perceived as angry, mean and not interested in constructive governance. Still no regard for truth if it interferes with the message."
- "Couldn't topple Straus or stop Lege from spending more"
- "Tea Party members of the legislature appear to be on par with last session as to influence. The 'outside groups' appear to have less influence . . . most members of the legislature have apparently grown numb to the noise."

- "As always, you must foreground your flair for dumbing down an issue. Truly amazing how you can achieve this so consistently. Pure genius."

- "Some members are now elected. And more to come!"

- "There is no place to check 'different.' Hard-wired conservative principles continue to dominate the GOP - but the TEA Party has matured, sobered by Obama's re-election. They Texas TEA Party folks are focused on their roots -- fiscal conservatism, small government, etc. They've mostly stayed on track this session -- which makes them a bit stronger,"

- "Look not further than the rebellion over the Medicaid language and how fast it was pulled when the freshman republican members threatened to vote no."

- "You should have added dumber"

- "The Tea Party is the number one reason the Ds have any power this session. By creating a three-party system on the floor, the Tea Party gave the minority Ds control of the balance of power. So that's strong influence, although not for them"

- "Can you spell Ted Cruz?"

- "Not sure how much 'tea party' is a correct description, I think that there

are a lot of Repub party primary issues that get attributed to tea party, but are more traditional primary faithful issues than tea party."

- "Down in the House and up in the Senate so it balances out."

- "Stronger - but not by much. There's a core group of conservative House members (8-10) but that's really it."

- "I think in pockets it has greater strength like the Tarrant County guys that don't care about preparing for the future."

- "They are more organized and coming after the moderate Repubs this next election."

- "When gay college kids and school breakfast are your targets, you know you are in trouble."

- "Tea party buys Susan Combs, cut rate price"

- "Texas is the last redoubt of the TEA Party."

- "There's a tea party influence?"

- "I say overtly weaker but I have sensed a little stronger undertow this session than the rabble-rousing from last session."

How does the influence of the moderate wing of the GOP in the Legislature compare to two years ago?

- "By 'moderate' do you mean Speaker Straus? If so, he has been more ornery."

- "They governed like the wing with power."

- "Otto, Geren and others have been a balancing force this session"
- "Just a tad bit more running room for Speaker's team."
- "Pretty much every major conservative issue was addressed without controversy or fanfare...seems like they know how to legislate."
- "Actually understand that they are elected to work with others to confront state challenges. Always have to be watching the bomb throwers in their own party."
- "Straus decided to flex his moderate biceps."
- "The center is holding"
- "They appear to be doing what they believe is right for their constituents and for Texas . . . and are ignoring the outside noise."
- "See comment under #1, supra"
- "Mean as ever."
- "New moderate Republicans are emerging, but they will be aligning with the old moderates who have shown their weaknesses this session. Targeting MQS with that silly bill (which experts agree does nothing) was a low point for the old moderate wing. They may have passed that bill, but they squandered this session, trying to divide and conquer their own party. The fixation on MQS -- (MQS derangement syndrome?) is funny to watch."
- "Finally standing up to MQS and winning decisively"
- "They are afraid to get out in front on high-profile issues, since if they have to go moderate to get it passed, they risk being primaried, but if they move to the right to get votes there, they lose their identity."
- "What is the moderate wing of the GOP? Best I can tell, even Phil King is no longer conservative enough for some."
- "Several key moderates will leave the legislature...."
- "Straus' lieutenants learned the Eissler/Truitt lesson and are voting more conservatively. That said, what they're being allowed to vote on is more moderate."
- "The moderates are stronger to the extent that Straus has consolidated power in the House. It bears mentioning that 'moderate' is also a relative term in the bizarro world that is the Texas Legislature."
- "If by moderate, I assume you are referring to the leadership wing of the GOP? If so, they are much stronger."
- "It shouldn't be characterized as 'Moderate Wing of the GOP' as much as it should be characterized as leadership effectively promoting traditional conservative values and not wasting time fighting the 'Boogie Man'."
- "Definitely stronger but I believe the moderate wing has been pulled somewhat to the right."

How does the influence of the Democrats in the Legislature compare to two years ago?

- "I have seen TMF hangin' with more R's this session. Although, most of them were freshmen. Does that make him influential?"

- "I believe TMF has had a good session. He has learned how to govern by deal making and has kept an open line of communication with those in power."

- "Dems are still forced to use the rules since they do not have the numbers. However, they have been helped by the moderate R's often."

- "D's are still treading water."

- "Who? No, give them props for the budget play. Even if it doesn't hold."

- "Much calmer atmosphere but the combination of the libertarian freshman with D's gives them have more impact."

- "Still minority party using age-old tactics when out of power."

- "No real leadership"

- "Smart Dems have maximized their influence in the Senate, and enjoy some influence in the House"

- "Has certainly been more genteel . . ."

- "As long as Straus is Speaker, they'll stay stronger than their numbers."

- "It is still true that Democrats won't succeed in Texas until they expand their funding base beyond trial lawyers and teachers unions."

Democrats call themselves 'progressives,' but they are actually Luddites, completely beholden to their 'owners box' -- the teachers and the trial lawyers."

- "At the end of the day the democrats don't want to come back in a special session. I believe they learned their lesson after last years filibuster by Senator Davis."

- "But only because the Tea Party has siphoned enough votes on the Right that the Ds now matter. Plus: the Ds gained Wu while the Rs gained Donna Campbell."

- "Really only stronger in the context of being smarter, thereby accomplishing their mission with much less visibility. Seems that there was a deal with leadership to keep bad stuff off the floor if the demos were willing to get along. And it has worked as far as I can tell. The difference between TMF and Jessica, et al on the mic this year and last is huge. But the difference in what has been allowed to get to the floor is likewise substantial. Basically, no controversy in legislation, then no controversy over running the house."

- "Stronger only because they got five more House members."

- "The less combative approach will bring more victories on the floors."

- "Education dollars, enough said."

- "Last session, their power was from aggressively fighting. This session, they are working with other members"

to accomplish their objectives. The end result is the same - they're stopping what they really want to stop."

- "They are the minority party and have appropriate influence as such. Because they can't do anything in the Senate without Democrat support, they can't point fingers at Republicans for whatever tough decisions are made by the legislature this session."

- "Stronger because they have partnered up with more reasonable Republicans on some efforts. That has been a success."

- "The budget demands that the Ds have been able to pull off are impressive considering their inferior numbers."

What's the biggest issue this Legislature should have addressed and didn't?

- "Can I get back to you on this question in 4 days?"

- "Transportation"

- "Tax cuts for biz."

- "Moving the ball forwards on public education!"

- "They have once again punted on school funding. The state's economic power is slowly eroding into a gulf of an uneducated workforce."

- "Education is NOT fixed; it has NOT been improved in the slightest. We simply MUST get a grip on our educational system and how we plan to educate our work force in the future."

- "The acceptance of funds for Medicaid expansion under Obamacare"

- "The budget still ain't done."

- "MEDICAID. Well, it was addressed the way the mob addresses an

undercover cop the discover has infiltrated their organization."

- "Transportation infrastructure funding"

- "Transportation funding"

- "Transportation"

- "Transportation and Medicare--two big issues they utterly failed at solving"

- "Education"

- "Roads, highways, transportation"

- "Medicaid Waiver"

- "Roads"

- "Transportation. The infrastructure issues should have been emergency calls to the session by our governor."

- "Transportation"

- "The legislature did not fix education nor did it fund it accurately."
- "Increased transportation funding."
- "Transportation"
- "Sustainable highway and transportation funding"
- "Creating meaningful education reform."
- "Transportation"
- "New revenue stream to support transportation."
- "Taxes"
- "Transportation"
- "Probably transportation -- roads are poor at best and activity in energy-producing regions is only increasing."
- "Transportation funding"
- "Transportation"
- "Education funding"
- "Roads"
- "Payday lending."
- "Budget. Medicaid"
- "Too soon to know"
- "School vouchers. The Rs will never have this advantage again, so that ship has sailed for good."
- "American Laws for American Courts"
- "Expansion of health coverage for working poor"
- "Education budgeting"
- "Remains to be seen, but it looks like transportation."
- "More than token attention to water and roads."
- "We need to wait and see"
- "Transportation funding."
- "Transportation Infrastructure"
- "Growth of state and service needs."
- "Funds and redistribution of assets for transportation."
- "Transportation"
- "Broadening the use of the water fund."
- "Water funding"
- "Public education. The vaunted \$3.9 billion doesn't come close to getting schools back to where they were before the recession, but everyone is declaring victory."
- "None"
- "Transportation"
- "Transportation Funding"
- "Transportation Funding"
- "Institutional transportation funding"

- "It's still early, but water, if they don't address it."
- "Transportation funding"
- "ACA implementation - Medicaid expansion and exchange administration. Failure to address state management responsibilities leaves Texas with dual jurisdiction, shared with feds."
- "The legislature should have done a better job funding the state's infrastructure."
- "DLs for undocumented immigrants. They are creating a huge liability for Texas families. The folks that opposed it will be the first to grandstand on the issue when tragedy strikes."
- "Transportation"
- "Ethics"
- "Tax reform, special purpose districts"
- "Long term transportation"
- "Let you know next week"
- "Transportation"
- "Highway funding, and water if the current attempt, fails"
- "Not funding roads"
- "Good government"
- "Medicare Expansion"
- "Education reform"
- "Roads funding"
- "Railroad Commission Sunset - They can't address an agency that brings in billions of dollars to the state?"
- "Water"
- "Transportation"
- "Medicaid Expansion"
- "Highways and infrastructure.... but then they can always borrow more money.... that is the Republican way, spend and borrow!"
- "School finance - and no returning spending levels to those set by the 2007 does not count as equity."
- "Roads"
- "Transportation"
- "Transportation"
- "Name a big issue that the Legislature actually addressed."
- "More road funding"
- "Water"
- "Transportation infrastructures"
- "Probably will end up being highway finance"
- "Transportation funding"
- "Medicaid"
- "Redistricting."
- "Roads. They have more money now than they ever might, so things will be tougher in the future."

- "Infrastructure"
- "Highway funding"
- "Transportation"
- "Redistricting - now it appears there will be new court drawn maps that will put everything in flux as we head toward the primary season."
- "Medicaid reform"
- "Transportation"
- "Transportation Funding, increasing vehicle registration fees; motor fuel tax; hybrid vehicle road use."
- "Transportation"

What do you think this Legislature is going to be remembered for?

- "That it came after the 82nd, but before the 84th."
- "Having not acted on critical infrastructure needs when there was available revenues."
- "Do nothing but that is too cliché, so how about 'do not much.'"
- "No urgency, it's all good nothing to worry about; barely passing the budget!"
- "The Kumbayah session."
- "No major fights and not doing much."
- "Failing to accept \$100 billion dollars for Medicaid expansion"
- "Comity thanks to speaker Straus."
- "This legislature will be remembered for cutting taxes when we needed to spend money on real needs."
- "How boring and asinine they are and that they do whatever they want to do without regard to those that elected them to office."
- "Tight fiscal approach & setting stage for water infrastructure funding"
- "Major water funding"
- "A calm though ineffectual session."
- "Failing to opt in on Medicare"
- "Doing nothing session"
- "Water"
- "Nothing."
- "Pat Fallon being the worst freshman in the Leg."
- "Not passing any major piece of legislation. Most ineffective session in years."
- "Stickland and V. Taylor being a dipshits"
- "The legislature will be remembered for being more compassionate."
- "Seed money for funding the state water plan."

- "Improved tone, attention to meaningful policy questions and pushback on the executive branch."
- "The rhyme of the 83rd Legislature, water water nowhere and all our hopes did fade..."
- "It's successes and its failures to address long term state problems that threaten the states attractiveness to new business expansion and growth."
- "Two to five years from now: Major change to school assessment and curriculum, with water a close second."
- "I don't know but I wish I could forget this Legislature."
- "Not much. A little progress on major issues but no definitive resolution of any of them."
- "Not much. Seemed pretty tame though several big issues were tackled."
- "Putting me to sleep."
- "Very little, and leadership will take that as a compliment."
- "Avoiding conflict and insuring at least one special session"
- "Not passing a substantive transportation package to address the state's infrastructure problems"
- "Muddling through"
- "Nothing!"
- "Fewer bills passed . . . less acrimony."
- "Not much"
- "The Democrats finally figuring out how to leverage the process."
- "Engendering 7th grade level questions from wannabe pollsters? I kid, I kid. Most likely it will be remembered not for what it accomplished, but for what it ignored: transportation and water. We'll see how that goes."
- "Purple ties. That's about it."
- "Do nothing session. No leadership."
- "Water plan"
- "Nothing spectacular"
- "Contrasted to recent sessions, it is a love feast."
- "Virtually nothing, except lowering education standards and expectations."
- "Need to wait and see"
- "Not melting down, being amicable."
- "Purple Thursdays!"
- "Kicking the can down the road"
- "Who remembers any legislature except for us junkies?"
- "Lack of conflict and the smoothness of the Sunset process."
- "Nothing"
- "Restoring Education funding."
- "Not being as awful as last session."

- "This Legislature will be remembered because of how many freshmen there were, and how the new conservatives found out that in your face politics accomplishes nothing."
- "Water funding. Not much done. (Which is a very good thing!!)"
- "It isn't going to be remembered for much of anything."
- "Getting along to an annoying degree."
- "The do nothing session."
- "Probably 1) overhauling high school curriculum or 2) denying Medicaid expansion or both."
- "Very, very little. Primarily just how meager their attempt at legislating was."
- "Budget, hopefully water"
- "By the outsiders: water funding; by the insiders: the session that we didn't have a lt. gov."
- "Not much"
- "It's still a little early to tell if this legislature will be the legislature that will be remembered for finally funding a state water plan. If that fails, there is no reason to memorialize this legislature."
- "Not doing anything meaningful"
- "Harmony"
- "Perry and UT"
- "Not doing much"
- "Being a WHATS GOOD FOR ME leg instead of WHATS GOOD FOR TEXAS"
- "Water package and restoring some school cuts"
- "No drama"
- "Ending accountability for public education"
- "Pecan Pie and regulations on tanning beds."
- "Failure to address water and transportation infrastructure"
- "Hopefully it won't be."
- "Tea Party will complain about the lack of a conservative agenda."
- "Total lack of courage...."
- "2013 - The Year Wendy Davis Should Have Gotten a Four Year Draw"
- "Big budget"
- "Peace, love and happiness"
- "Do nothing"
- "The failure of the Republican leadership and majorities to address long-standing issues that are necessary to put Texas on a firm footing for the future -- namely, investments in education, transportation, and water."
- "Restoring some education money and funding partial water plan."
- "Lack of leadership in Senate."

- "Laid back schedule and lack of major conflicts."
- "Water"
- "A strong budget."
- "Hopefully passage of Charter School reform and giving options to kids stuck in poor performing schools, which ironically, are mostly located in Democrat districts."
- "The triumph of Joe Straus as an outstanding Speaker."
- "The session of no leadership. The process ran itself."
- "Water"
- "Budget negotiations. Senate finally rolled the House after years of trying."
- "Not funding highways"
- "UT / Perry Fight"
- "Water"
- "Rainy Day Fund use."
- "Education and water"s

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