

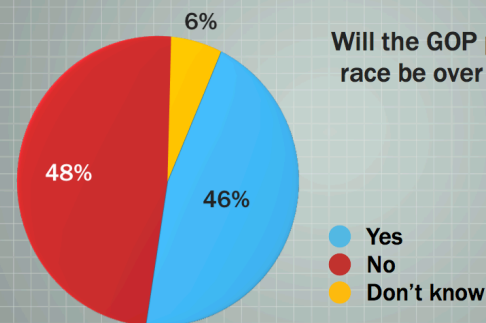
“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of February 6.*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE: The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll for 6 February 2012

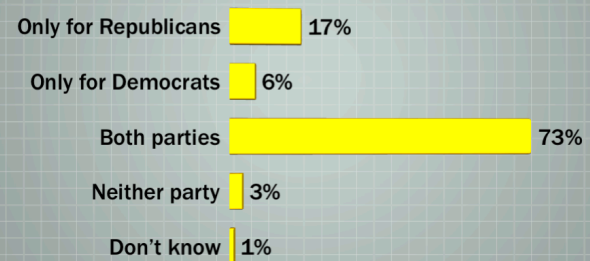
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Will the GOP presidential
race be over by April 3?



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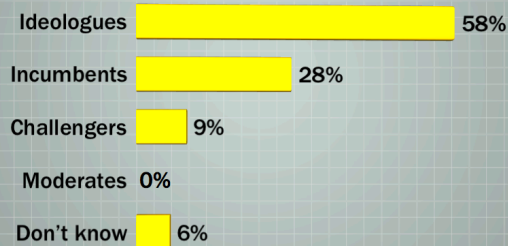
If primaries are split, will turnout suffer?



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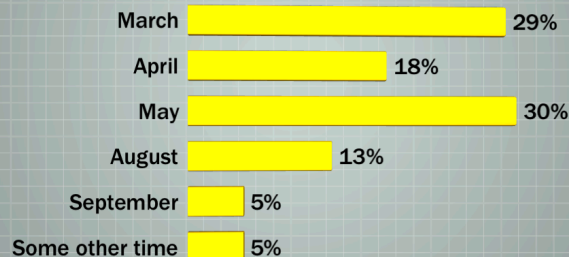
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Who would benefit from low turnout?



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When SHOULD Texas hold its primaries?



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Do you think the race for the Republican presidential nomination will still be undecided on April 3 — the current date for the Texas primary

- "Romney's got it. There is no white knight coming for the "conservatives," although the thought of Chris Christie on a horse is pretty humorous."
- "Until they're mathematically eliminated"
- "That said, Gingrich has pledged to stay in through the election, so he may not consider it decided."
- "Look back to '08 in the race between Obama and Clinton; it was well into June before Clinton decided to step aside and give up her delegates."
- "Depends on when Newt gives it up."
- "It's all over 'cept for the formalities."
- "It was decided in Florida."
- "Romney will wrap it up after Super Tuesday, March 6 -- the original date of the Texas primary"
- "It will drag on and on..."
- "Electoral votes won't be decided until as late as June."
- "It is clear that Fox News and Drudge have chosen their winner but the voters to date have shown they have a mind of their own"
- "Of course the Texas primary may be in September at this rate!"
- "I don't think it will be decided until he convention"
- "It appears Romney will not have the necessary delegates by April 3. But perhaps by the time Texas actually holds a primary---maybe by the end of
- "Romney may not have the necessary number of delegates officially won by then, but the race will be over in reality."
- "Technically, it will be undecided since Newt and Paul will still be in it. Practically, the race was decided last summer when Romney was the best thing to show up."
- "Perceived electability will rule. Majority of people have already decided that issue.."
- "Romney may not have the number of delegates necessary by that time, but others will not be able to stay in the game."
- "The race will effectively be decided, but there will be at least 3 other candidates."
- "Romney will be a persistent winner with victory sweeps in February and major wins in March, but proportional allocation of delegates can drag the race on."
- "Only on paper -- in that it won't be decided mathematically. However, I think Romney should be a shoe-in by then. The problem is that Ron Paul and possibly Gingrich won't concede

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May. But it will be decidedly entertaining no doubt all the way until the convention."

- "It depends on whether or not Gingrich stays in the race. While it is very unlikely he can win the nomination, he absolutely could drag the process out - particularly if Uncle Sheldon Adelman is feeling generous."

- "Yes, but all of us know that Mitt will still be the nominee."

- "The race will be over, but Newt may not have gotten the message by then."

- "But Mitt will be closing in on it."

- "Because no one will have a majority of delegates"

If the presidential primary is separated from the congressional and legislative primaries, will turnout suffer?

- "Turnout suffers most if primaries are pushed to the summer. But voter fatigue sets in with two primaries and a possible primary runoff for U.S. Senate."

- "Who is going to show up to vote for Obama in an uncontested single-office primary?"

- "Ain't all politics 'local'? Congressional and legislative races will hold their own."

- "Americans like voting for the Top Dog, not the pack."

- "Unclear to which turnout you are referring."

- "The anti-Obama wave will motivate Rs to turn out for multiple primaries. Not much to energize the Dems in the same way. Plus, asking unions and organizers for Dems to work their turnout magic twice is asking just a bit too much."

- "Duh."

- "Almost by definition, not as many people will vote twice"

- "Hard enough to get people out for one election...imagine 2 within a few weeks? Fuggetaboutit"

- "Ask yourself who does a split primary benefit and you'll know why we are likely to suffer two elections. And the answer is: incumbents!"

- "No question about it. Our 'presidential' primaries will have the turnout of gubernatorial primaries -- and likely worse (10-20%)"

- "Democrats don't have any races anyway"

- "Less national commotion means less grudge voting."

- "Duh."

If turnout in the primaries is relatively low, who'll benefit?

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- "Man, Dewhurst just wants this primary done, like yesterday."

- "Incumbents always hold the advantage."

- "Partisans are the group most motivated to vote."

- "True believers live to vote for their cause."

- "Too many unknowns still"

- "More time to raise money"

- "Incumbents and rightwing Ideologues."

- "A low turnout favors the most committed, who tend to be ideological"

- "Diehards will rule!"

- "The lower the turnout the bigger voice the crazies have in both parties in the legislative races, but in the judicial, it's less likely the crazies win (unless the Tea Parties want crazy judges -- wait a minute -- I just answered my own question)."

- "Specifically, lower turnout in the GOP primaries this cycle appear to benefit incumbents or establishment candidates. Florida had a notable drop in turnout and was very establishment oriented of the early primaries. While there is very strong discontent among a vocal element on both sides, it doesn't seem to be translating into primary votes the way it did in 2010."

Redistricting has already delayed the Texas primaries once and could delay them again, raising an old question about when the primaries ought to be held. What's your preference?

- "Separate Pres primary in January"

- "It is an interesting trade out: shorter primary season or shorter general election season?"

- "Get the primaries out of the way early, in March. That way legislators and soon-to-bes can focus on issues facing our state rather than getting elected."

- "Earlier means TX matters. The longer we delay the less important we become on the national stage."

- "Closer to the general is better, but realistically the latest it can be is May."

No one would pay attention to a campaign over the summer."

- "We moved them up to be relevant in the presidential race, we haven't been. Let's move them back."

- "Before Florida..."

- "May primaries worked just fine for years. Super Tuesday is not a decisive point when delegates are awarded proportionally."

- "I'd like to see Primaries joined with local municipal and school board elections."

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- "Even May may not work for counties if the decision isn't handed down ASAP. It is just not physically possible for counties to meet election law requirements in April, and it could take until June."

- "Later is better"

- "Primaries in March with a general in November means we get the summer off. Why mess with that???"

- "Voters and Candidates can both benefit from a more compact election schedule."

- "From the first working day of the year until the 1st Tuesday in March is only +/- 65 days. More time is needed to focus and educate voters."

- "It's going to be disastrous for party conventions, and voter interest, if the primary is in late May and any runoffs are in mid-summer"

- "As soon as possible. Shoot me already."

- "We should have them in November because the general election is so unimportant in Texas due to partisan "safe seat" practices."

- "As soon as possible, but not before we have legal maps which represent the minorities covered under the Voting Rights Act."

- "Not such a long general election season, but out of the heat of the summer!"

- "June"

- "March is too early, especially if a challenger knocks off an incumbent, i.e., the Temple Dickson effect. They used to be in August and that seemed to work fine. Even May would be better than March."

- "Keeping primary and general elections closer together makes for easier campaign cycle and less \$\$ spent by candidates."

- "For 2012 the primaries should remain unified and if so it should take until the end of May."

- "As soon as possible!"

- "Avoiding the split primary and having to hold convention between two primaries would alleviate a lot of headache and complications, not to mention expenses and costs."

- "To those of us who finance a good chunk of these races, an extended primary season only adds to the pressure to spend - and raise - more money. Early is better!"

- "The date of the primaries is not nearly as important as the composition of the districts."

- "If Texas would adopt an instant runoff, I'd be for with early September. But the space required between the primaries under the MOVE act makes anything later than May unrealistic, unless you want to vote in the summer when people are often attending to other things."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Brandon Aghamalian, Clyde Alexander, Doc Arnold, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Mike Barnett, Walt Baum, Dave Beckwith, Luke Bellsnyder, Rebecca Bernhardt, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Hugh Brady, Steve Bresnen, Chris Britton, Lydia Camarillo, Kerry Cammack, Marc Campos, Thure Cannon, Snapper Carr, Tris Castaneda, Corbin Casteel, William Chapman, Elizabeth Christian, Elna Christopher, George Cofer, Rick Cofer, Harold Cook, Randy Cubriel, Hector De Leon, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jeff Eller, Alan Erwin, John Esparza, Jon Fisher, Bruce Gibson, Eric Glenn, Jack Gullahorn, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Sandy Haverlah, Albert Hawkins, Adam Haynes, Susan Hays, Jim Henson, Ken Hodges, Billy Howe, Kathy Hutto, Shanna Igo, Deborah Ingersoll, Cal Jillson, Jason Johnson, Mark Jones, Walt Jordan, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Ramey Ko, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Donald Lee, Luke Legate, Leslie Lemon, Ruben Longoria, Homero Lucero, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Phillip Martin, Bryan Mayes, Dan McClung, Parker McCollough, Mike McKinney, Robert Miller, Bee Moorhead, Craig Murphy, Keir Murray, Pat Nugent, Sylvia Nugent, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Royce Poinsett, Jay Propes, Ted Melina Raab, Bill Ratliff, Tim Reeves, Luis Saenz, Mark Sanders, Andy Sansom, Jim Sartwelle, Stan Schlueter, Steve Scurlock, 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, Jay Thompson, Russ Tidwell, Trent Townsend, Trey Trainor, Ware Wendell, Ken Whalen, Darren Whitehurst, Ellen Williams, Seth Winick, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.