

“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of February 13.*

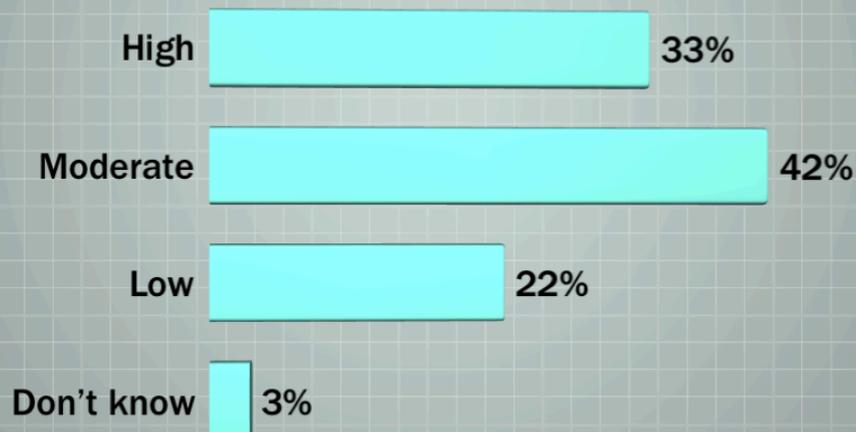
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Who is most influential in primary elections?



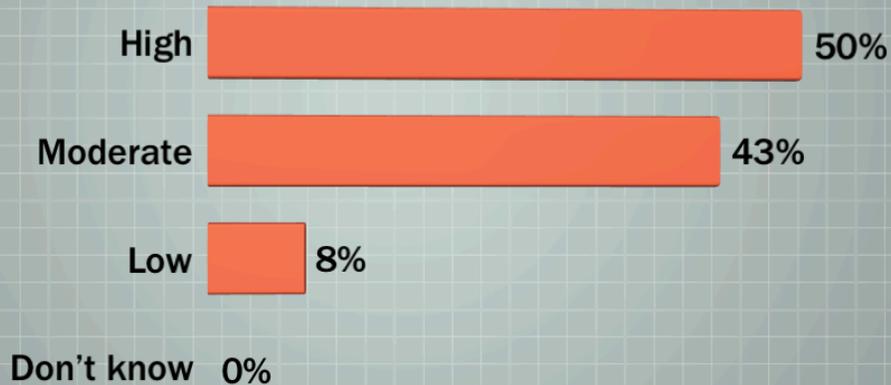
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Rate the strength of 3rd-party ideological groups in primaries



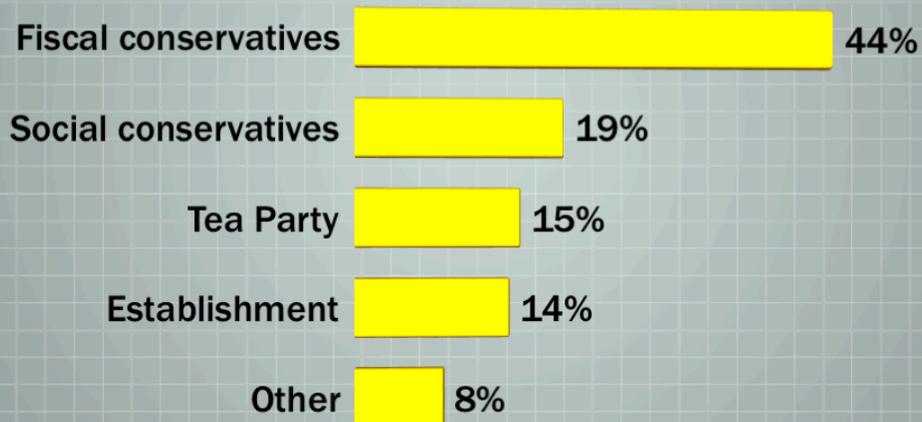
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Rate the strength of trade groups
and PACs in primaries



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Which kind of Republicans
will prevail in the primaries?



What group or interest is most influential in Texas primary elections?

- "Money, from whatever source."
- "Lobby cartels who direct 2/3 of all campaign contributions."
- "Popular and partisan locally elected officials."
- "Individual wealthy persons."
- "Note: see TAB election activities-2002."
- "Rep - Empower Texas... Dem - does it matter?"
- "It is not possible to segment out groups and organizations as single focused. The overlap between Ideological groups and pragmatic groups is significant. Most social conservatives are also fiscal conservatives. Most are very pro-business. And they advocate for all. Message development is complex because these issues overlap with other groups. If groups were segmented cleanly, campaigns would be very easy."
- "Teacher unions. Automatic withdrawal from teacher paychecks needs to stop."
- "Republicans: a tie: Texas Association of Business and Texans for Lawsuit Reform... Democrats: tie: Texas Trial Lawyers Association and teachers' union(s)"
- "Is TLR a trade association or business?"
- "Does TLR belong in "business," "ideological" or "trade association?""
- "Texans for Lawsuit Reform"
- "The lobby."
- "\$\$\$\$ - i.e. TAB/TLR for GOP, Trial Lawyers for Dems"

How would you rate the strength of third-party ideological groups in legislative elections in Texas?

- "Because they can dominate Republican primaries, which is where the action is."
- "The strength and influence of third-party ideological groups was strong enough to convince moderate Republican legislators to take more extreme positions to ward off possible challengers. What did they get for compromising their principles? Ideological conservative primary challengers."
- "Some incumbents overestimate their reach, ironically granting them exaggerated influence"
- "The Tea Party is a wing of the GOP."
- "In a tight race they make the difference."
- "The abortion mafia is big in the GOP Primary."

- "GOP right-wingers and tea party seem to rule the recent GOP primaries, which currently is all that matters in this messed up state."
- "Historically, virtually nonexistent. More recently, of course, sadly they are becoming more prominent and more influential, particularly in the GOP primary."
- "High in primaries (because of the low turnout, their strength is magnified if their supporters are loyal/energized), not so much in the general"
- "Growing-in 2012 beware the SuperPAC"
- "TLR money is impossible to overcome."
- "There was an undercurrent of *very* social conservatives last cycle, but they just ate their own in the Republican primary. And then caved to Straus."
- "But don't tell them . . . it's so very entertaining to watch!"
- "Even the Dixiecrats were weak as were followers of Wallace, Perot, Nader and La Raza."
- "It really depends on the district. In a hotly conservative primary, the Tea Party has a lot of sway. That same group would have less of an impact in

other areas. It really depends on whether the group can turn out voters."

- "In some districts these groups have the ability to "disqualify" or defeat a candidate by rejecting them - - or just smearing them."
- "Ideological organizations have an audience in the Democratic Party and Democratic office holders. They are the audience for the Republicans."
- "In a low-turnout primary, their influence is magnified"
- "The influence would be greatly diminished if more people bothered to vote. When the pool of voters is so pitiful, the percentage of Voters whose primary focus is ideological and, therefore, more easily swayed by these groups is much higher."
- "TLR has blotted out the sun, eclipsing every other group in Texas. They are the center of influence."
- "Not as significant as they think, but meaningful."
- "What is a third party ideological group? Not TPPF or any of their ilk."
- "Strength is greater in some parts of the state."

How would you rate the strength of traditional third-party groups like trade associations and political action committees in legislative elections in Texas?

- "When Corp \$ laundered thru 'independent expenditures"
- "In the absence of other readily available information, people turn to their associations. They are not as

influential a force as they were 20 years ago."

- "Except for the NRA, trade associations don't mean anything. PAC's are good for money and if they are generous, can be strong, but not because of their name."
- "It's all about the money!"
- "Depends on the industry & the region as to the effect!"
- "Third Party interest groups are also known as "voters". Traditionally these "voters" decide who wins the election therefore their strength is dominant"
- "They are most helpful to informed voters."
- "TAB, TLR, and others traditionally strongly support Republicans, whereas the Dems are primarily funded by the trial lawyers. Many candidates would not be in office were it not for receiving funds and support from groups like these... Also, don't discount the effect of wealthy individuals whose checks can match

or exceed those of many trade groups and PACs."

- "It depends. Groups like TMA that can deliver dollars and votes make a real difference. Groups like NFIB bring "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" credibility to the candidate. Others matter when then can turn out voters/workers in an election."
- "It can be "high" in certain races, and those are often the more publicized situations, but overall it is moderate."
- "Primary elections are all about making a statement. Third-party groups are more influential in general elections."
- "Too high. The unlimited cash drives the focus immediately away from voter education and directly to voter persuasion."
- "They butter the bread."
- "Show me the \$\$\$."
- "TLR owns Texas. They bought and paid for it."

Which kinds of Republicans will prevail in primary races this year?

- "We are all fiscal conservatives now. (Joke. Referring to "We are all Keynesians now.")"
- "Social conservatives may be the only ones who are paying enough attention to know when the primary in Texas will be this year."
- "Depends on localized anti incumbent antagonisms"
- "Tell me whether there will be a split primary this year, and I'll tell you whether the Tea Party will dominate them."
- "Depends on the location of the district. The rural R districts have more of a social emphasis. If it is an urban area district, the fiscal conservatives will likely prevail."

- "It will be a wonderful hodge-podge of Republicans."
- "GOP candidates kowtow to the nutty social conservatives. Until rational voters wake up and realize that governing is the point, this state will remain at the bottom of everything."
- "Fiscal conservatism is at the heart of Texas politics, though social conservatives and tea party activists are often used to gin up enthusiasm. The deal often is, we will tighten up a little more on access to abortion if you support is in cut to balance."
- "It's going to depend on the election date and turnout. The lighter the turnout, the more the tea party / fiscal and social conservatives benefit. The heavier the turnout, the more "establishment" Rs benefit."
- "It depends on when the primaries take place, and whether or not they are bifurcated. There won't be much of a primary on the Democratic side, so speaking of Republicans. If there is a unified primary and the presidential nominating contest is still in play, that will favor more mainstream candidates down ballot. Other scenarios will benefit more hard line candidates."
- "Moderate Republicans will carry the day."
- "These aren't mutually exclusive."
- "Social and fiscal conservatives"
- "It's the economy, stupid." Last time they ran on budget issues, this time they'll again run on budget issues."
- "Depends on the district!"
- "Case by case basis"
- "Taking KBH as the prototype "establishment" republican, the winners this year will be an amalgamation of Fiscal/Tea/Social, with little or no establishment in the mix."
- "Surviving Republican candidates will be skillful at balancing Tea Party Activists and more moderate groups."
- "The ones with enough money to have strong opposition research and the paid communications to tear the other side to shreds."
- "We will see the term "compassionate conservative" come back...these are the types of R's which will win the Primary"
- "Terrible question - response options aren't exclusive."
- "All of the above. It depends on the race."
- "Case by case. The candidates are very important."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Cathie Adams, Clyde Alexander, Doc Arnold, Charles Bailey, Mike Barnett, Dave Beckwith, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Hugh Brady, Chris Britton, Andy Brown, Lydia Camarillo, Kerry Cammack, Thure Cannon, Snapper Carr, Tris Castaneda, Corbin Casteel, William Chapman, Elizabeth Christian, Elna Christopher, George

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