

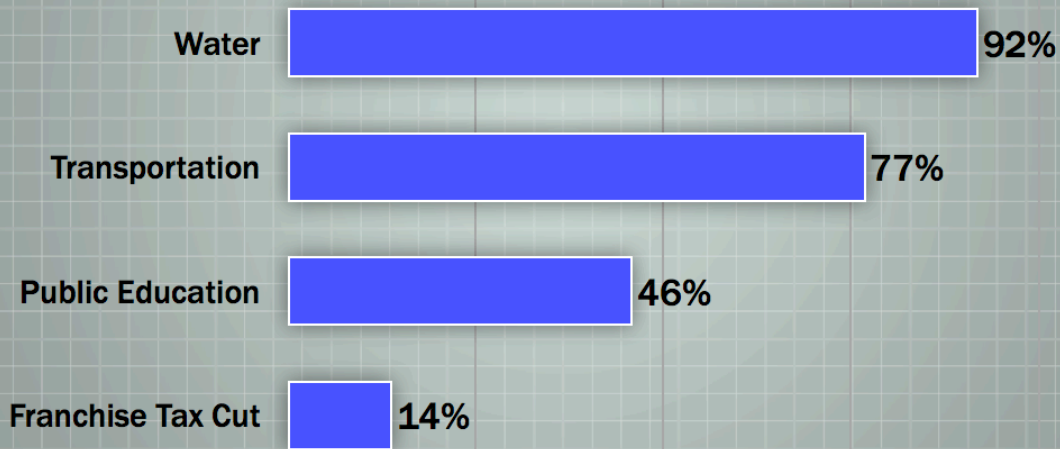
“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

Sponsored by: **Hahn, Texas**

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

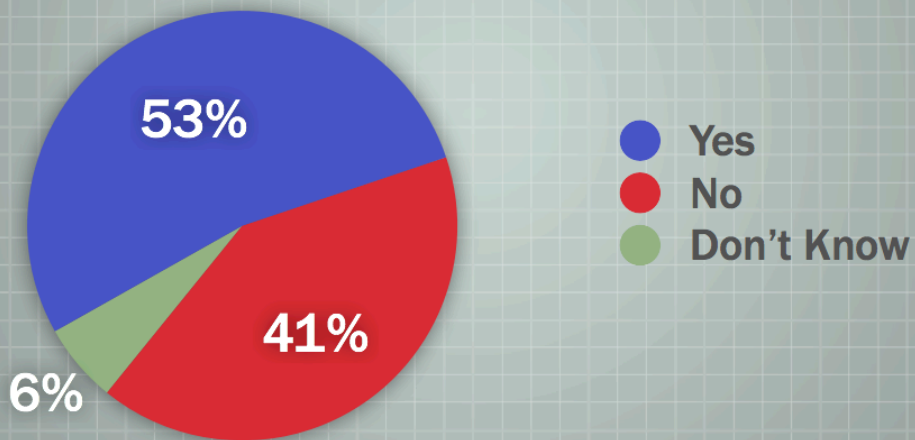
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Which of the following will be financed with money from the RDF?



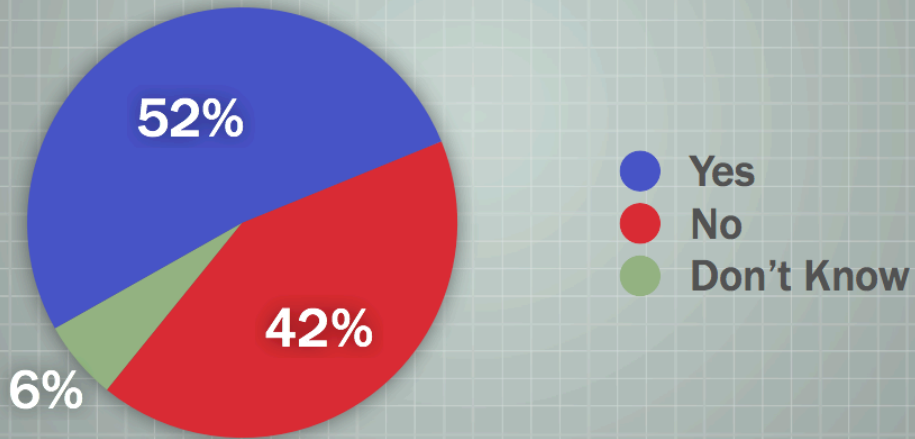
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Will the new budget break the constitutional spending limit?



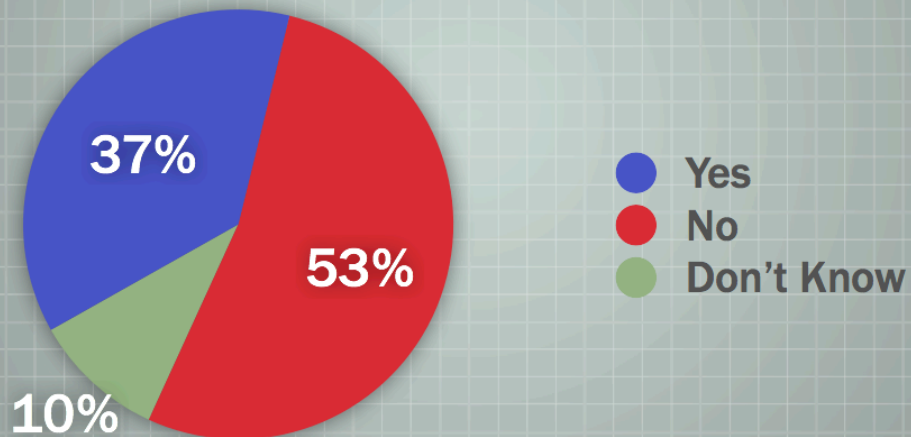
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Will the governor call a special session if lawmakers ignore his agenda?



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Will lawmakers expand Medicaid this session?



Lawmakers have talked about using Rainy Day Fund money for big items this session. When lawmakers are finished, which of the following will be financed with money from the RDF? (check all that apply)

- "It takes leaders who are willing to educate the public and press lawmakers to address long-term state problems. Halfhearted efforts go nowhere fast. The big fear for conservatives is if we don't adopt conservative solutions to our problems we will end up with down with liberal solutions."
- "Believe there is full support in the senate but not in the house. Between the far right and the far left, there are not enough votes to pass the needed infrastructure legislation."
- "Want to kill Texas's economic success? Ensure we'll have inadequate roads, not enough water, not enough electric power, and an uneducated workforce."
- "The dysfunction has hit the fan and it looks like transportation is the only likely beneficiary."
- "Mostly water & transportation -- 2 critical areas that have not been addressed adequately in decades & public ed has a consistent record of failure no matter how many \$ provided; nevertheless to get votes some \$ will again go down that rat hole."
- "Water should be a no-brainer as this is a one-time investment that will be paid back and create other opportunities into the future. Transportation is a little tougher as there are always ongoing maintenance expenses, and that money doesn't come back to the state."
- "It is the modified Hermann Cain plan 2-2-2"
- "The deal has been cut in SJR 1."
- "Water is the key. Without water, our state will look like those in the rust belt: lots of unused machinery and no jobs to speak of."
- "As long as the Ds can stick together to demand something for public ed, all three (water, roads, schools) will get something."
- "The Senate will win this one. RDF money use will be subject to a vote of the people."
- "RDF will be used for a brand-new, ongoing grant program to lure businesses to Texas. No, wait, I'm thinking of the 2003 session (Gov's Enterprise Fund). 2013: small things like unpaid wildfire bills, plus creation of either a water or transportation fund (probably not both)."
- "This has to be a package deal...Democrats know they are in the driver's seat when it comes to getting the votes to pass RDF for infrastructure needs."
- "Perry's veto doesn't scare anyone"
- "Members can run on addressing water and public education funding (even in a Republican primary)."

- "Transportation and Water will get RDF monies for economic development. But, Republicans tend to forget that Public Education is the best investment of economic development dollars."
- "There's too much agreement in principal on the big three (water, roads, kids) for them to not hammer

out some type of bill. Plus the gov has given them cover. It's a done deal."

- "Roads baby"
- "One time expenditures only, not for tax cuts, education, and health and human services.... having said that, they can spend it on whatever they can round up the votes for..."

Some lawmakers want to stick with the constitutional cap on spending growth; others don't. When the budget is complete, will spending growth exceed that limit?

- "Legislators seem intent on ignoring the constitutional spending stop sign. When they do, congratulations! The Texas Legislature will have become Congress."
- "It will only be exceeded if folks don't want a primary candidate!!"
- "I hope so. I'm all for fiscal restraint but Texas can't just let all of these problems linger and get worse."
- "Exceeding the cap will depend on permission from the voters."
- "Though I think there is still a debate about whether 'rainy day' money should count against the cap."
- "No, because the constitutional amendment ultimately approved with provide an exception to the constitutional spending limit."
- "Most of these lawmakers don't really understand math, anyway, so they wouldn't know anyway."
- "If spending from the Rainy Day Fund is included - yes. If not - no,

because there isn't enough available GR to even get to the spending cap."

- "Hard to know because 'budget' won't be complete until the 2015 legislature finishes paying for Medicaid (another IOU expected, though not as big as 2013's) and for schools (if assumptions about local property tax hikes turn out to be overly optimistic, and if there's a special session in 2014 that has to address inadequacies, not just inequities, in current system). So: 'Appropriations Act' might come in under the cap, but that's not the same as 'the budget.'"
- "There is always the threat of a primary challenger awaiting in the shadows."
- "This does not apply to RDF money..."
- "But not by much"
- "They will exceed the limit, but will impose a trick to avoid the vote."

- "They will use some Al Gore 'fuzzy math' to get around the problem."
- "The leg can always make things work they make the rules"
- "But only with RDF money included in that total."
- "Governor Perry will use his veto to achieve the cap."
- "People are done with ethically challenged MQS"
- "With a constitutional amendment"
- "No"

The governor called on lawmakers to find money for a tax cut, for water, and for transportation. Would he call a special session on those issues if lawmakers don't heed his requests?

- "In a heartbeat. Newcomers to the Legislature will soon discover that when it comes to calling special sessions, this Governor doesn't bluff."
- "When was the last time he didn't get what he wanted? His veto pen is primed and ready...the House and Senate will fall in line."
- "Absolutely. The governor knows we need to address water and transportation. I'm more cynical on the tax cut but if it makes him happy, good for him."
- "He'll get 2 of the 3; thus, no special."
- "Not yes, but hell yes. The Governor has not been bashful about calling the Legislature back in...."
- "It helps raise"
- "No way. Empty threat."
- "The Lege will provide money for water and transportation, though probably not for tax cuts. The governor would not call a special session just on the tax cut issue."
- "He might, but at the cost of the everlasting enmity of anyone connected to the Capitol."
- "If he does, the Legislature should remember it's THEIR job to write the budget, and call his bluff or wait him out by sending him the exact same budget, no matter how many times he vetoes it. Yes, it's easier for the Gov to stay here in Austin all summer than it is for legislators, but if Aug. 31 comes and there's still no budget, Texas will look more and more like a DC-style impasse and less like the economic or fiscal 'miracle' the Governor likes to brag about."
- "The governor understands political theatre. He will only call a special session on issues he can win."
- "No special session on those items - if so, it will be a VERY quick session. More likely, a session next spring to deal with the education issues. It will occur after the primary and run-offs!"
- "He says he will; however, this would be a mistake. A special session on infrastructure needs would highlight the fact that taxes and fees

are going up. In other words, you can hide during a regular session; you can't in a special session."

- "Only special is in Feb on ed funding"
- "Yes, but... He can construe what the Lege is already proceeding on as victories even if his role in them was minimal. He'll call a special if he just wants one."
- "It is dangerous to guess what Gov. Perry might do. He has demonstrated the ability to buck logic in his decision-making process."
- "If water and transportation are funded, no. If none of the three are funded, yes."
- "Water and Transportation will get done. He will claim victory of 2 out of 3 and would not call them back for a tax break - he is just grandstanding."

• "This is Rick Perry we're talking about. If he thinks he can preen for the cameras to solidify his already failed South Carolina primary candidacy or his more likely spot as Fox News' newest pundit, he will."

- "If these things fail, it won't be a time issue but a 'will' issue. That won't be corrected by a special session where the Lege can gavel in, then gavel out."
- "Will Gov. Perry call a special session...?' Does the pope wear a funny hat?"
- "If they do water and transportation, I don't think he'll call a Special just for the franchise tax."
- "No need to rush to Iowa."
- "I think he's bored!"
- "Who cares.... they don't!"

Will lawmakers find a politically acceptable way to expand Medicaid under the federal Affordable Care Act during this session?

- "Hard to expand without making it look like Obama won this fight in Texas."
- "Won't happen during this session, but it'll be an interim charge and it might have a chance next session, if there's a new governor."
- "This may be the second coming of school finance..."
- "Politically acceptable way=don't do it."

- "Too much money to ignore."
- "Texas is not crazy (well most of us are NOT!), we want the money - they just want to let the Governor save face and continue to see to 'buck' the Obama Administration!"
- "Yes they will expand, no it won't be politically acceptable"
- "Again, the leg can always make things work they make the rules"

- "If Chairman Zerwas has anything to say about it, yes. Give him props, he is trying."
- "Texas will access these federal dollars but only after the legislature adjourns with a wink to HHSC Commissioner Kyle Janek - who will in turn cut a deal with the feds and then return to the lobby ASAP."
- "Considering what's a stake, resolution should be a no brainer. But it's by no means a sure thing considering the position the governor has staked out."
- "No interest in the senate."
- "This is actually two questions. The state probably will end up taking federal Title 19 money to cover low-income adults somehow. That money will most certainly not run through Article 2 of the GAA and it won't provide coverage that could be

described as 'Medicaid.' A lot of progressives will end up mad because it's not good enough, and a lot of conservatives will end up mad because Texas 'took the money,' but hopefully thinking people of all persuasions will be okay with it because it really will be better for Texas to get low-income working people some kind of health insurance."

- "There is no way Perry will allow Obama Care in Texas. If he cant get the President to answer his immigration letter, what makes any of us think the President will answer a letter on Medicaid when asked."
- "With or without Perry"
- "Rick Perry will negotiate a deal behind the scenes and call a special session after the Republican primary. Because that's the way they makes the sausage these days."

With a month left in the current regular session, what issues or bills do you think will prove to be particularly troublesome for lawmakers in May?

- "Water, transportation, education and medical care"
- "D. All of the Above"
- "The pace has been slow and steady, but there is always a hiccup. Guns come to mind."
- "Darby's transportation bills with fees, Williams SJR and Hildebrand's omnibus franchise tax bill."
- "Funding the water plan."
- "There is still time for meltdowns over the PUC Sunset conference committee report and RRC Sunset."
- "Medicaid, education, water"
- "'Medicaid expansion, Tax cut"
- "Medicaid, TWIA, payday, end of life, moving the public integrity unit to the AG"
- "Redistricting"

- "Funding from RDF and how to get some \$ to counties that are O&G production centers with rapidly depleting road infrastructure."
- "See questions #1 and #3 - tax cut, water and transportation."
- "School finance"
- "Paying for county road building and maintenance in oil production areas; how and how much to add to education budget"
- "Gun bills"
- "The big issues are not finished yet, so put the budget, water, Medicaid, and tax cuts on that list."
- "Any that bust the cap, or bills of lawmakers who don't vote to bust the cap"
- "Water Transportation Medicaid"
- "House Bill 5; Senate Bill 2"
- "Tax cut"
- "Education"
- "Medicaid and use of the rainy day fund"
- "School accountability & testing."
- "Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act"
- "Education funding"
- "Spending on water"
- "Public Education"
- "Testing. Suburban Moms vs. business interests"
- "HB 11"
- "Still some kinks in the budget and it has several moving parts. Last session the main reason they had to come back was to fix budget issues and deal with issues related to the budget that didn't get hammered out in the session."
- "All of them."
- "HB 5"
- "RRC Sunset - might end up in a safety net."
- "Transportation funding solutions will be the Achilles heal in May."
- "None"
- "Common Carrier Pipeline Permit Legislation"
- "Payday lending legislation, Medicaid expansion"
- "Tax Cut"
- "At this point in the session I really don't care, but thanks for asking."
- "Water Transportation Tax Cuts"
- "Wouldn't try to predict. Meltdowns are inevitable, of course."
- "Franchise tax cuts or re-writes could be dangerous once they hit the chamber floors."
- "Budget"
- "Education and immigration"

- "Anything education."
- "Public education funding, tax cuts, TWIA, and redistricting (it is still kicking around)."
- "Medicaid and redistricting"
- "All of them"
- "EDUCAITON: RIGOR AND TESTING and CHARTER SCHOOLS. Busting the cap. Redistricting. Voter issues. How to spend the Rainy Day Fund."
- "Public education, HB 5 and SB 2"
- "Redistricting"
- "Education"
- "Driver's license for illegals is bubbling."
- "Tax cut and transportation"
- "SB 1, HB 5"
- "Expect the unexpected... Whatever happened to the TEA Sunset Bill - AKA The Death Star? Look for a nasty fight around HB 5 as Mark Strama's words re watered down rigor echo through the Senate chamber."
- "House Bill 14 jacks around with local governments for the sole purpose of burnishing the comptroller's qualifications for higher office using 'transparency' as an issue. Doesn't Combs realize that once she handed over my social security number to Nigerian Internet scammers, there's been no doubt about her push for transparent government?"
- "Tax relief and infrastructure finance."
- "Abortion if pro-life forces can convince two of the three pro-life Senate Democrats to vote for one or more of the bills to reduce the number of abortions in Texas."
- "Spending cap"
- "Any sunset bill"
- "5.01 c (4)"
- "Tax cuts, tests, and restoring public ed \$"
- "Redistricting"
- "TDCJ Sunset, TWIA, payday lending and 'not-Medicaid'"
- "Anything the Senate sent to the House on school choice has a long way to go."
- "Everything."
- "Closing prison facilities - and potentially buying the Jones Co. facility; Medicaid expansion"
- "Anything to do with Water."
- "Voter referendum on appropriating money as senate recommended"
- "Healthcare, redistricting"
- "Payday lending; water; transportation"
- "Water and highways"
- "Rick Perry will increase his veto threats over high-stakes testing, and

legislators will have to uncouple tests with curriculum."

- "Tax cuts"
- "Redistricting if it shows up"

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