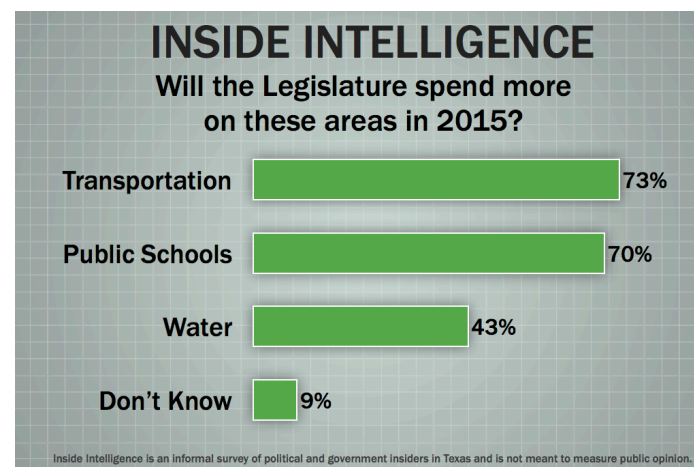
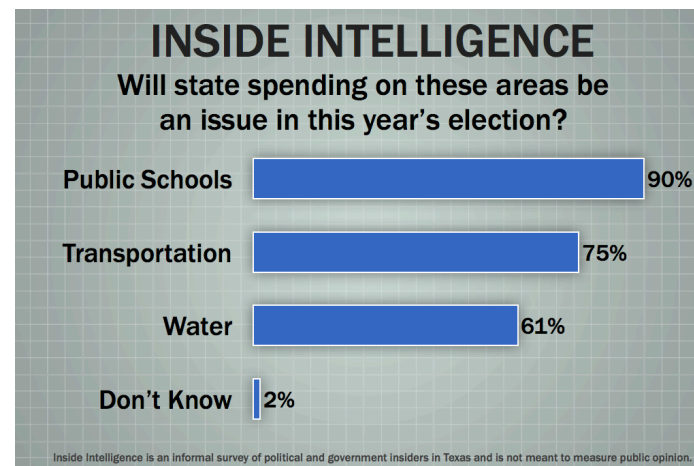


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of 7 February 2014*

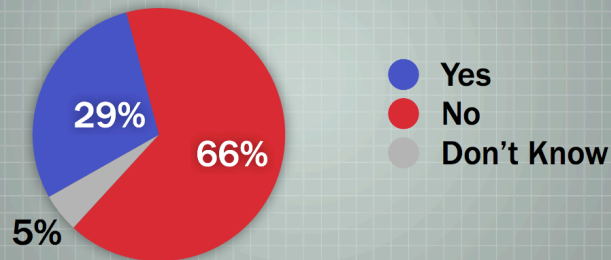
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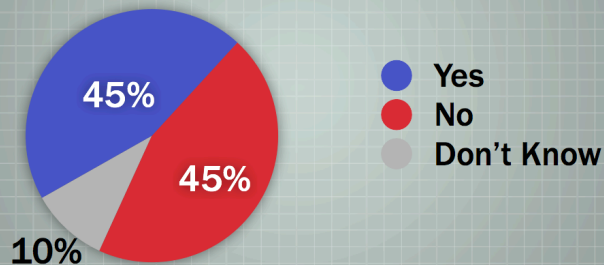
Will environmental regulations be a campaign issue this year?



Inside Intelligence is an informal survey of political and government insiders in Texas and is not meant to measure public opinion.

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

Will environmental regulations be a legislative issue in 2015?



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Will spending on transportation, water, and public schools be issues in the 2014 elections? (check all that apply)

- "No. Those are not sexy campaign issues. The election will be about how Obama is destroying our Texas and how democrats spend more money on high heels and using campaign funds to live a lavish life. Why would any of you think this election will be about real significant issues?"
- "It's either going to be too much or too little depending on the party affiliation."
- "No, will not be issues in Republican legislative races; unfortunately any 'new spending' is the new 3d rail of R races. Sen. Wendy Davis will try to make issue of the infrastructure and education needs of additional funding but will not get traction with majority of voters (sadly enough)."
- "Transportation -- unless the drought worsens this summer."
- "Yes to all. Ds will say we don't spend enough. Rs will say we're spending the right amount. And Stickland/Schaeffer/Simpson will say we're spending too much."
- "Yes. Tea party jokers will pick up a couple of seats because their message is easier to convey."
- "Transportation dollars are on the ballot, so it'll definitely be an issue."
- "With the reconfiguration of the Water Development Board, water will now join the stalwarts of transportation and public schools as our big, perennial spending issues."
- "So far, of course, the issues are immigration, creationism, and dates of divorce. But it's always possible that something substantive might emerge by November."
- "All three SHOULD be. Unfortunately, not enough people seem to understand we're on our way to becoming California without water."
- "Spending on public education is already a talking point for the Ds. Makes great talking point...until voters realize you're talking about raising local taxes to get it done."
- "School budgets are still reeling despite cost-cutting and 2013 restorations. Middle class families are very aware of re origins of these cuts."
- "Democrats will certainly advocate spending more, on virtually everything except border security."
- "No. I don't think the public truly understands any portion of the budget. They are mostly uninformed voters."
- "Public schools will be driven by the court. Transportation is a must, regardless of the small gains in the November Constitutional amendment. Water has money now, but there will be additional efforts to address the delivery of that money."
- "No - this election is all about ideology."
- "Only if the republicans running are forced to talk about them. Otherwise

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they will keep talking or I should say pandering to the far right"

- "Whatever we spend, the voters want more."
- "In the general"
- "They are always issues, but to determine the dominant one depends on the District region."
- "Like a vampire, funding of public schools is an issue that never dies. And when the sun shines on it all you see is smoke and mirrors."

Will the next Legislature vote to spend more money on transportation, water, and public schools? (check all that apply)

- "At least during the 83rd some attempt was made to address these pressing needs. The 'spend no money crowd' sure needs to recognize that it's an 'investment,' and if we don't maintain our infrastructure, the state will deteriorate."
- "Water is an issue both parties know they have to address. Now, legislators will try to sneak in transportation solutions to the water bill, but MQS will send out an email and accuse Straus of being a socialist and all Republicans will retreat to their caves."
- "There will be enough money for everyone...not enough for some and too much for others."
- "They'll punt on transportation because the constitutional amendment would have passed by then. Our legislature will be uncomfortable spending more on public schools

- "They should be, but if you ask the reporters who covered the Lt Gov debate, the only relevant issues are abortion and creationism."
- "It's either not enough or too much but it's always a crisis."
- "All will be issues, but schools more than infrastructure because rivers and roads don't have unions to run commercials for them. (Yes, I'm looking at you, teachers.)"

- because the majority party isn't really sure where the money goes."
- "More money more spending."
- "Definitely transportation--they need it. Water probably gets a timeout this session. And public schools can't ever get enough."
- "Nope. Transportation is not yet seen as a crisis and public education has a spending problem, not a funding problem. The general sentiment is that we 'took care of water'"
- "Depends on whether the Tea Party is successful in capturing either the East or West wing leadership. If they're not successful, look for Straus and/or Dewhurst as rational adults to invest funds in some of those areas (if not all). If, however, the Teas are successful, then don't hold your breath for any smart investments."

- "There should be money available and the public ed court case will drive that debate; with the transfer from the rainy day fund for water and the anticipated one for transportation, I don't expect to see a lot of additional money going there in this session."

- "We are coming into our first post-Rick Perry session flush with cash. Who is going to hold the line on spending now?"

- "Whiskey is for drinking, water is for fighting"

- "They'll be satisfied with the Rainy Day Fund money for water and roads, but the Supreme Court might force them into getting schools partway back to where they used to be."

- "Transportation will be an ongoing priority. If you look for businesses and people to move here, you got to have the infrastructure. School funding will depend on the courts. Districts will continue their heavy lobby about more money because we all know if they all get more money, they will all deliver Highland Park results."

- "After seeing that the public will support real investment in the future of the state, the legislature needs to make that investment more permanent and more impactful statewide."

- "Issues like pre-kindergarten and other cost-effective and proven strategies to boost student achievement will finally get the attention they deserve."

- "Economic recovery, with Texas in the lead, means there will be more to spend."

- "We can only hope that they will vote to use some of the surplus to add funds to Transportation and Public Schools. But most are so worried about their next election they can't get a majority to do the right thing. You can be conservative and take care of the states infrastructure and children...they are not mutually exclusive!"

- "Only if they can come up with an alternative to new fees and/or taxes. Abbott will be more conservative than Perry."

- "Transportation - we hope. Water - done for now. Schools - depends on what the Supreme Court says and what the members want to do."

- "Let's hope so."

- "If they are smart they will."

- "If the new Gov is the same as the old Gov, then no."

- "Only God knows what the current legislature will spend money on and he is not too sure."

- "If a few of the 'No to everything' crowd do not return, we may actually invest in the future."

- "More? Yes. Enough to keep up with inflation and population growth? What is you, a Commie?"

- "If the court tells them to, they will pony up what is needed of the every decade adjustment for schools..."

- "The Legislature won't do anything on public schools until the courts force them."

- "The courts will force the Legislature to spend more on public schools."

Will new regulations relating to the fertilizer explosion in West or the earthquakes in Azle that some residents blame on energy exploration be an issue in the 2014 elections?

- "I'm a big proponent of gas drilling, but it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that something (likely to be disposal wells) is causing earthquakes where there have been none before."

- "It will be addressed in a dog-and-pony method: 1) Bill will be filed; 2) Committee will hear it; 3) A few articles will be written; 4) then it dies. Both of these issues are 'two-session' issues."

- "It should be, but it won't."

- "I am sure a nice funded study on earthquakes will be undertaken and some agency folks will be blamed for the explosion."

- "I doubt anything will pass due to the earthquakes, but I am sure some process will be put in place concerning the storage of large amounts of hazardous materials."

- "Not to be a jerk, but nobody outside Azle cares about their earthquakes. And while the West explosion was an awful disaster, very few people outside of West will probably notice any regulations to the point that they're a viable campaign issue."

- "It should be, but Texans have a long history of voting against their own interests."

- "Only regulations promulgated by the EPA can be election issues."

- "There will be campaign rhetoric but I'm not sure how many votes it will drive."

- "It is too late for these to become issues in the Republican primaries, and these will not be core issues for the one or two competitive general election races."

- "The RRC and Legislature are taking initial steps to better understand the earthquake issue; there will be some talk of potential next steps during campaign season with more action in 2015."

- "Not in this silly state! Nor will the fracking earthquakes in North Texas be an issue."

- "Probably not, but then again real issues rarely are discussed on the primary trail. Only who is pure enough."

- "Who cares if the Earth rips open and our communities explode when there is so much money to be made?"

- "While they may be legitimate controversies, neither is a potent political issue."

- "Maybe in a handful of elections, but definitely will be issues next session."

- "Looks as if this will be an issue next session though."

- "Yes, but relatively minor issues."

- "Anywhere you hear the boom of seismicity, a politician will want to do something about it."

- "In the general"

- "In West and Azle, maybe, but nowhere else."

- "Only in the Metroplex."

- "Barely."

- "Don't you know Dear Leader has told us that we all support him on this matter?"

- "In whatever districts cover West and Azle they will be. Not for the rest of us though."

- "either fracking or God! Oil and gas industry has never told the truth!"

- "Huh? Drill baby drill!"

- "No, but they should be."

Will the next Legislature approve new regulations in 2015 relating to the fertilizer explosion in West or the earthquakes in Azle that some residents blame on energy exploration?

- "Well now, that's a good question. I'd say the odds are better for the fertilizer explosion than for the earthquakes - for obvious reasons."

- "It will be addressed in a dog-and-pony method: 1) Bill will be filed; 2) Committee will hear it; 3) A few articles will be written; 4) then it dies. Both of these issues are 'two-session' issues."

- "Beyond some window dressing, nothing will change. This is a public safety issue that lawmakers are confusing with economic development. The fact is that business should have a basic obligation to the public to mitigate safety risks and be responsible when they fail."

- "Studies will be prepared and some consultant will get a chunk of change

to report back in 2017. Until then, drill here and drill now, baby!"

- "West. Not Azle."

- "Maybe but in our business friendly climate, it is unlikely. Consumer issues are not at the forefront."

- "Fertilizer plant/ storage regs yes. Fracking no."

- "When in doubt, regulate! Amlright?"

- "Texans don't really like regulations."

- "We citizens have short memories. Those events are already ancient history."

- "There simply has to be some meaningful regulations relating to the fertilizer explosions. No choice. I think there has to be some accepted scientific link to exploration and earthquakes before the Texas legislature shuts down fracking."

- "In both cases, I think the narrative will produce legislation; I doubt the fracking legislation will be significant."

- "Both issues will garner a flurry of early bill filings; however, Lt. Gov Patterson will find a way to kill all but the most calibrated bills."

- "Expand government? Never!"

- "They will do something very weak and call it tough."

- "Just enough will get passed in the next session to make it look like the state addressed these issues - but they really won't do a damn thing."

- "Business trumps people."

- "Toothless self-regulation is the best we can hope for."

- "Should see some tightening on fertilizer"

- "Definitely on streamlining fertilizer regulation, but the science is still out on the earthquakes so what would the law say?"

- "Not sure, but the West explosion is more readily dealt with without too much controversy if the rules are not over the top. The energy - earthquake question is harder. It may depend on further study which may not be ready by 2015."

- "Yes to fertilizer regulations, No to energy regulations"

- "With no damage, they won't do anything substantive."

- "Perhaps on the fertilizer explosion but not on fracking."

- "Probably some window dressing regulations, but nothing substantive."

- "There will be a lot of sound and fury but in the end it will signify little."

- "Through their elected officials [people] clearly send the message of their comfort with the amount of oversight," said Perry."

What 2014 election issues do you think will become legislative issues in 2015?

- "ACA related"

- "Too soon to predict. Public education, obviously, but when WASN'T it an issue?"

- "Border security."

- "Immigration and illegals and benefits, funding of public schools vs. resources going to private schools, plaintiff lawyer agenda"

- "Rainy Day Fund. Period."

- "Abortion, education"

- "I'd sure like it to be who the legislators really work for, i.e., their district, or a megalomaniac millionaire and his loud, lying mouthpiece with a bogus scorecard."

- "Are you guys following these races? Most candidates running for state office are running on a federal campaign platform (Obamacare, immigration, etc.)."

- "Need you ask? Abortion. Cause they just can't regulate it enough."

- "Less spending, lower taxes, border security (r); more spending, more taxes and amnesty (d)"

- "Healthcare"

- "School funding. I think the schools are going to want their cut of the Rainy Day Fund."

- "Women's health care"

- "Medicaid expansion, eminent domain, transportation and education, always..."

- "Believe it or not, national issues NSA scandal and Target bankcard theft will translate into the first internet privacy and security legislative proposals."

- "Ground water. Too many conflicts to ignore"

- "Roads, water, education, pay day lending, tax loopholes, tax abatements"

- "Vouchers"

- "Abortion, end of life, immigration, Obamacare,"

- "Transportation"

- "Pay equalization."

- "Health care and education"

- "Property tax reform."

- "Open Carry, Campus Carry"

- "OBAMACARE, the Second Amendment, and Mexicans ... er ... immigration. The TxLege can't really do anything about those, but they certainly seem to be the campaign issues. Why did I see a candidate for comptroller wielding an assault rifle? Is he saying he'll defend our money to the death?"

- "All of the above!"

- "The cost to the state and health care institutions of the failure to expand Medicaid should produce action in the next session."

- "I'm sure someone will find a way to further curb abortion practices in Texas."

- "Immigration; abortion; marijuana decriminalization."

- "If the Tea Party is successful in 2014, every baby will be born no matter the circumstances, will be given a gun at the hospital, and will be asked to sign a petition to end Obamacare."

- "Transportation -- more toll roads. Water -- more study. Schools -- depends on the courts."
- "Public school funding"
- "School funding will dominate 2015 IF we get a Supreme Court decision by January or February."
- "Late term abortions, level of public school funding, vouchers and the Tea Party"
- "Immigration."
- "Immigration--more state penalties for employers who do not comply with federal immigration and employment laws. Probably will be that goofy 'sanctuary city' stuff, again, too."
- "1.more legislative will on reducing the pain of Obamacare, 2. Additional states rights initiatives"
- "Red meat Republican issues: abortion, border wall, cut spending, deregulation and gun rights."
- "Privacy, private property rights, women's health"
- "Immigration"
- "Education funding, Additional Transportation funding, online courses,"
- "Eco Devo Funds"
- "Spending and bond limits on Gov't entities"
- "School choice, Payday lending"
- "Transportation, Women's Health and Education."
- "None. Just like term limits and I and R They are election issues that go away when the ones that make it an issue are elected"
- "Obamacare, end of life"
- "Obamacare, border security, immigration. Oh wait, those are federal issues..."
- "Not sure. Probably none."
- "Education, Transportation, Water"
- "Education, if the state loses the lawsuit."
- "Ones that they have no power to do anything about."
- "Abortion, gay marriage and guns."
- "Spending"
- "Why of course Obamacare which is decided by house members (Not)"
- "Border security, public education, infrastructure investment, budget transparency"
- "Corpse incubators, doublewide trailers and, in all seriousness, making Texas more hostile to unauthorized immigrants."
- "Health care"
- "Affordable care act"
- "Education, Water then it depends who wins statewide"
- "Transportation use fees"

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- "Abortion..."
- "Roads"
- "School safety. Only one incident away."
- "Education funding"
- "Education"
- "Public Education and Healthcare funding"
- "Social issues"
- "Education funding"

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Brandon Aghamalian, Jenny Aghamalian, Brandon Alderete, Clyde Alexander, George Allen, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Dave Beckwith, Amy Beneski, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, David Cabrales, Kerry Cammack, Thure Cannon, Janis Carter, Corbin Casteel, William Chapman, Elna Christopher, Harold Cook, Beth Cubriel, Randy Cubriel, Denise Davis, Nora Del Bosque, Glenn Deshields, Holly DeShields, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jeff Eller, Jack Erskine, Jon Fisher, Norman Garza, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Stephanie Gibson, Jim Grace, John Greytok, Jack Gullahorn, Clint Hackney, Anthony Haley, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Richard Hardy, Susan Hays, Ken Hodges, Billy Howe, Laura Huffman, Kathy Hutto, Deborah Ingersoll, Cal Jillson, Bill Jones, Mark Jones, Robert Jones, Russ Keane, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Dale Laine, Nick Lampson, Pete Laney, Bill Lauderback, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Luke Legate, Richard Levy, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Luke Marchant, Matt Matthews, Bryan Mayes, Dan McClung, Mike McKinney, Robert Miller, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Nelson Nease, Keats Norfleet, Pat Nugent, Todd Olsen, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Robert Peeler, Jerry Philips, Wayne Pierce, Allen Place, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Jay Propes, Patrick Reinhart, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, Grant Ruckel, Jason Sabo, Luis Saenz, Andy Sansom, Jim Sartwelle, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Bruce Scott, Robert Scott, Ben Seebree, Bradford Shields, Christopher Shields, Nancy Sims, Jason Skaggs, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Todd Smith, Larry Soward, Dennis Speight, Jason Stanford, Bill Stevens, Bob Strauser, Colin Strother, Sherry Sylvester, Gerard Torres, Trey Trainor, Vicki Truitt, Ware Wendell, Ken Whalen, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Seth Winick, Alex Winslow, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.

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