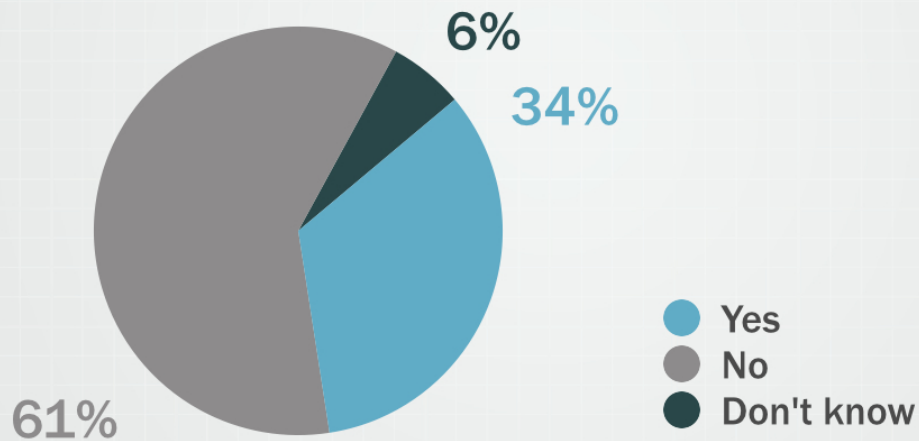


# “INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll  
for the week of 12 September 2014*

# INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

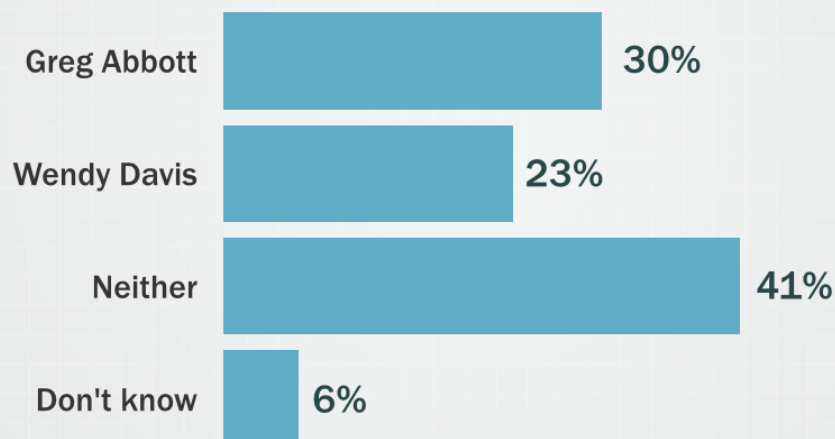
WILL THIS NEWS AFFECT THE RACE FOR GOVERNOR?



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

# INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

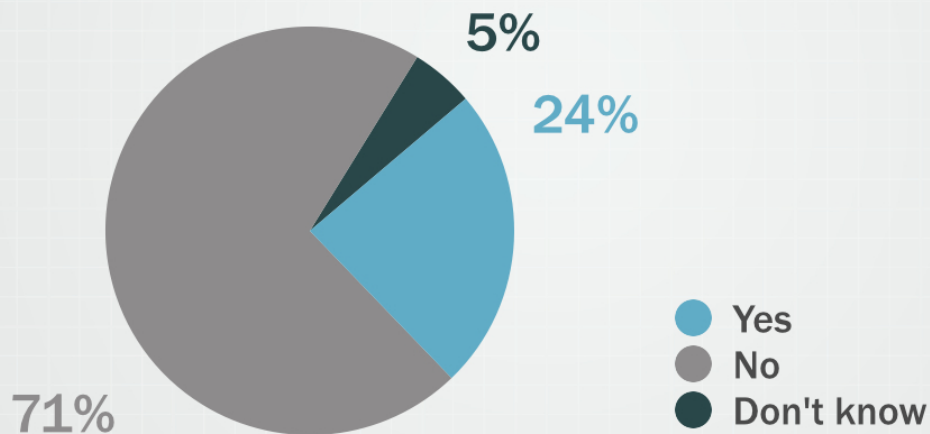
THIS NEWS PLAYS TO THE  
POLITICAL ADVANTAGE OF...



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## INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

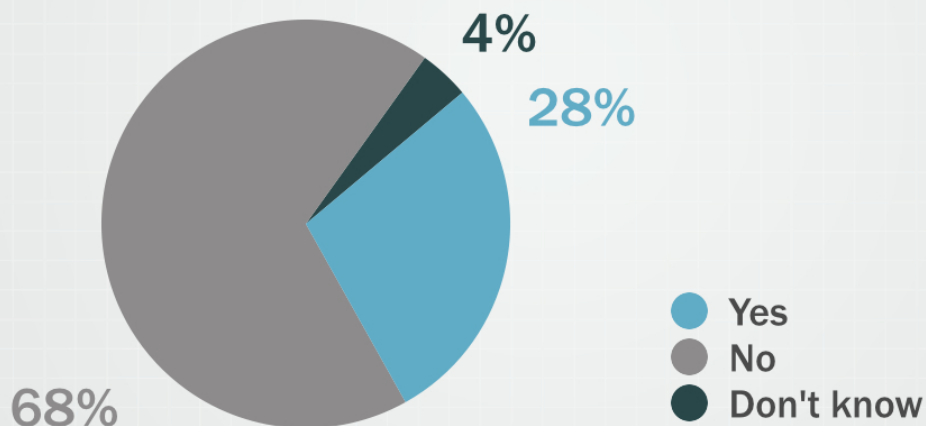
WILL THIS CHANGE THE ISSUES TALKED ABOUT IN THE RACE FOR GOVERNOR?



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## INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

WILL THIS AFFECT THE OVERALL DEBATE OVER ABORTION LAWS?



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***Wendy Davis published a biography this week in which she revealed she had two abortions, one for a nonviable pregnancy and the other after doctors found serious developmental problems with the fetus. Will this news affect the race for governor?***

- "Most women understand this is a VERY personal and private matter - the fact that she has shared this information makes her human. Many have faced this same issue and will empathize with her decision. Of course there will be a few crazies who will condemn her - oh wait - they already have done that when she was brave enough to stand and filibuster the HORRIBLE intrusive and unnecessary restrictions set forth in the bill she worked to defeat."

- "Can someone abort something that doesn't have a heartbeat (i.e., nonviable fetus)? You can't terminate something that's already lifeless, you can only remove it from the uterus."

- "No, other than perhaps reminding people that there are indeed elections coming up this November."

- "Solidifies her base."

- "This has happened to a lot of women and if they manage to get women to understand the option to do the same has been taken away by the new Texas law, then-'Lucy...you got some explaining to do'!!"

- "The voters will not be convinced to support her because of her filibuster against saving babies that are viable."

- "Another reminder of the issue that made her popular with the base, but unpopular with everyone else;

including all but one county south of San Antonio where she lost the primary to an unknown candidate."

- "I don't see it changing any one's mind."

- "It will make her look heartless."

- "She will gain a few point and lose a few points. The result will be the same. She loses and Abbott wins."

- "She is already going to lose so I don't see how this changes that fact"

- "There are so many comments that can be made here, based on a myriad of perspectives; at the end of the day, Ms. Davis made a personal decision - twice - that probably did not come easy and was filled with incredible emotion."

- "It always helps to be able to connect to a candidate personally, for whatever reason."

- "It gives the Christian Right more opportunity to mobilize their folks. Unfortunately, for the Dems - I just don't see this as an opportunity to excite the populace..."

- "The goose is cooked. Wendy is already looking around the next bend. Best all around to lose the hard core feminist agenda."

- "She chose to abort a fetus because of the possibility of serious developmental problems? Wow! That's cold; end a life because they may have Down's Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Rett Syndrome; conditions in which millions of people live with today. But hey! It's a woman's choice, right?"

- "Abortion is not an issue that you can sway voters one way or the other. Most have an entrenched position on the issue."

- "What race? It was over before it began, this is all just fodder for political news junkies. Now, if \*Abbott\* had been the one with the abortions in his background..."

- "This election was never in doubt, media hype early on to the contrary. Davis's book is a hail-Mary attempt to appeal to women voters a la Anne Richards, but it only serves to hang a lantern on her pro-abortion policy position. Not a winner in Texas."

- "It will harden the opposition to Sen. Davis by the pro-life groups, but they wouldn't vote for her anyway. The hard-core pro-choice folks will love her more, but they wouldn't vote for General Abbott, either. Nobody else

will really care when it comes to Election Day."

- "She will lose by at least 15 points. Would have no matter..."

- "Pro-life people will be more motivated to vote and encourage like-minded people to, as well."

- "This news is so powerful it will make abortion a top 5 issue for every likely voter."

- "Only at the margins, if at all. The initial response by the Abbott campaign and some key anti-abortion activists was measured and even humane. Had the responses been harsh, the Davis campaign might not only have garnered the initial sympathy but been able to push back against an unfeeling dogmatism. The measured response took a good bit of steam out of the revelations."

- "I don't think anything changes the outcome of this race."

- "This should boost Abbott!"

- "Yes, but only slightly."

### *This news plays to the political advantage of...*

- "This recent news only solidifies the two camps on each side."

- "She hasn't had to pay television and media for coverage."

- "I don't perceive many 'undecideds' in this race. Unless some of the Rs

decide to make this a huge issue, it goes away quietly."

- "Solidifies his base."

- "Tried to select both. It helps each with their base."

- "Justifying her own abortions doesn't change the fact that she opposes saving viable babies who feel pain."
- "Nobody cares."
- "Again, another reminder of an issue that does not help outside of the base."
- "This is just a straight up pity pitch-- out of desperation."
- "Sure sign of desperation. Looks like she is sinking to a new low with this kind of garbage."
- "All of the 'Abortion Barbie' talk looks even worse in this light, if that's even possible."
- "The headlines posted by the Texas Tribune and other major dailies helped Abbott. The headlines got the clicks at Davis' expense."
- "Don't forget, there are lots of women who have gone through what Wendy went through, who might now pay a little more attention."
- "The General has already used rhetoric and will continue to do that. I 'm always so frustrated when I hear the pro-life positions with 'no pro-life budgets' for CPS-Healthcare-Education! Very hypocritical!"
- "This information will put the minds of some voters, particularly women, at

ease and plays to Senator Davis' advantage. Beyond that, this also plays well to her professional advantage as she ponders December 2014 and beyond."

- "It's all about book sales. Who would be interested in a defeated candidates bio post election? No one."
- "Its plays to the advantage of both. Meaning, it doesn't lose them any votes they already had."
- "Those who favor abortion rights still favor them. Those who oppose abortion still oppose it. There will be no mass exodus of voters one way or the other."
- "Davis might improve her standing by concentrating on education and other equality issues -- not by focusing attention on social issues."
- "The goal is to force Abbott to address women's issues in closing weeks. We don't know how that will play out"
- "The issue could be redefined this year."
- "At the margins"
- "It just confirms what we already knew..."
- "But just by a small amount."

*Will this alter the subject matter of the governor's race — the issues the candidates choose to emphasize and to avoid?*

- "Subject matter? Who said this race involves subject matter?"
- "It puts abortion back in the race"
- "Davis capitalized on her pro-abortion filibuster. Then she tries to distance herself from it, claiming she's kind of pro-life, and now she's trying to gain sympathetic votes from women who've maybe had similar abortions. Seems clear she loves the issue, politically. It's an issue that energizes the Dem base and plays into the alleged 'war of women' narrative the White House and DNC are pushing."
- "Will be sidetracked while both sides dredge up media issues on each other."
- "Let it stand. No need to do anything!"
- "Davis' career is built upon abortion of babies that feel pain."
- "Wendy Davis will talk about abortion more and Greg Abbott will talk about it less. I wish everyone would start talking about roads, water, infrastructure, economic development, etc. But, the Democrats believe that all anybody cares about is abortion and rich people and the Republicans are scared to talk about what anybody cares about."
- "In September? No. Abbott will let her champion abortion and let her attack with a convoluted message from week to week that drives up her own negatives. He will continue to build his positives with his ads until he attacks her and drives her negatives even higher."
- "Abortion issues have always been part and parcel of both campaigns. This will highlight those issues but only for a short period."
- "Not one bit. Her story and narrative are old and tired. This just makes it more old and tired. Please."
- "Everyone who knows Davis knows her for one reason...abortion. Her campaign will continue to deal with that issue. The Abbott campaign will continue to focus on the economy."
- "She will now have to talk about the issue."
- "The news is out - no need for Wendy to push it."
- "Not necessarily; however there will be plenty of jabs about it and quite frankly all the General needs to do is keep quiet! Money and Numbers are on his side."
- "Re-centers debate on abortion issue, which is a loser for Davis"
- "The narrative has been set since the summer of 2013."
- "I guess it could get interesting if she decides to go all-in on the abortion issue, but it's interesting only for its novelty. The outcome has already been pre-determined."
- "Abortion now back front and center."

- "Abortion was already going to be an issue."
- "Makes abortion a more prominent issue."
- "Abortion is a perpetual issue. It's no secret that she is pro-choice. It's no secret that he's pro-life. Neither side has anything to gain by emphasizing the subject."
- "Texas Democrats have wanted to avoid the issue, so it left Republicans to shadow box on social issues. Wendy just took off the gloves (did I mix my metaphor? put on the gloves? you decide)."
- "Mainly, the race is about the direction of the state and the skill and experience to lead the state. Abbott will win by a big margin. All distractions from Davis do nothing much to that basic situation."

***Governor's race aside, will this influence the political debate over abortions and reproductive rights in Texas in any way?***

- "The reaction to news of a developmental or genetic issue with an abortion is simply inhumane."
- "Many women out there have things in their past of which their husbands, boyfriends, families, etc. are unaware. When those women walk into the voting booth - ALONE - they will vote for the person with whom they hold the most in common!"
- "The abortion of the abnormal development fetus raises red flags for most folks. It's almost a slippery slope for selective abortions--if it's OK to abort a fetus because its development will make your life harder, what about a fetus with an extra chromosome? What if the fetus is genetically predisposed to certain diseases? What if it's a boy and you \*really\* wanted a girl (see e.g., China)? Most Texans are against these types of abortions."
- "People can't be influenced on this issue -- unless they are forced to face an abortion situation themselves"
- "It will become part of the content of what is discussed on these issues. It will not 'influence' the topic by changing the direction or the result of any policy."
- "See response to #1!"
- "Davis may be trying to vindicate herself, but she's doing the opposite. Her filibuster cannot be overlooked."
- "Those opinions are set and voters, their children and then children of those children."
- "I hope the far right will realize there are many more reasons to get an abortion than the inconvenience of carrying a fetus to term. Not holding out a lot of hope though."
- "No. That debate will remain as nasty as ever."
- "It will motivate the pro life people and will show even more how pro abortion supporters devalue life"



- "It puts a very prominent face on the complexities of the decisions women and their doctors make. Absolutist policy cannot be reconciled with this reality."

- "The majority of the population is focused on debating how bad the Dallas Cowboys will be this season. So, NO!"

- "Crazy isn't interested in good policy"

- "Possibly humanize the issue at bit. All abortions are not just delayed birth control."

- "The debate will never end in Texas!"

- "Not this cycle, unless every Swing R loses because of this single issue. Which is highly unlikely."

- "Governor's race aside, what has changed?"

- "The stories of her terminated pregnancies are unique but not really."

It is a reminder why abortions are sometimes necessary. The rhetoric climbs so high on "protecting the child" that the mother and value to others are oft forgotten as well as when the "life" of the child is not viable. Anti-abortion activists try to attribute all abortions to "loose women" carelessly having sex and ridding themselves of precious, perfect, wanted babies. Davis' stories shed light on some of the less heard but realistic medical needs for the procedures."

- "Will not so long as one party controls the whole process"

- "It is what it is, and persons on either side are not swayed by the others side's arguments."

- "Absolutely. No family wants to face the decisions Wendy made, and everyone will want to hear why she and her partner made those choices."

- "To some on the extreme right, there is no such thing as a nonviable pregnancy."

***Our thanks to this week's participants:*** Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Brandon Aghamalian, Victor Alcorta, Brandon Alderete, Clyde Alexander, George Allen, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Dave Beckwith, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, George Bristol, Chris Britton, Raif Calvert, Lydia Camarillo, Kerry Cammack, Marc Campos, Thure Cannon, William Chapman, Kevin Cooper, Randy Cubriel, Curtis Culwell, Denise Davis, Hector De Leon, June Deadrick, Glenn Deshields, Holly DeShields, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jeff Eller, Jack Erskine, Norman Garza, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Stephanie Gibson, Eric Glenn, Daniel Gonzalez, Jim Grace, John Greytok, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Jim Henson, Ken Hodges, Deborah Ingersoll, Richie Jackson, Cal Jillson, Jason Johnson, Mark Jones, Robert Jones, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Nick Lampson, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, Luke Legate, Myra Leo, Ruben Longoria, Homero Lucero, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Kathy Miller, Steve Minick, Mike Moses, Steve Murdock, Keats Norfleet, Pat Nugent, Todd Olsen, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Jerod Patterson, Robert Peeler, Jerry Philips, Wayne Pierce, Richard Pineda, Allen Place, Gary

Polland, Jay Propes, Patrick Reinhart, David Reynolds, Chuck Rice, Carl Richie, Grant Ruckel, Tyler Ruud, Jason Sabo, Luis Saenz, Andy Sansom, Jim Sartwelle, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Bruce Scott, Robert Scott, Steve Scurlock, Ben Sebree, Christopher Shields, Nancy Sims, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Larry Soward, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Jason Stanford, Bob Strauser, Colin Strother, Sherry Sylvester, Trey Trainor, Vicki Truitt, Corbin Van Arsdale, Ware Wendell, Ken Whalen, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Seth Winick, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.