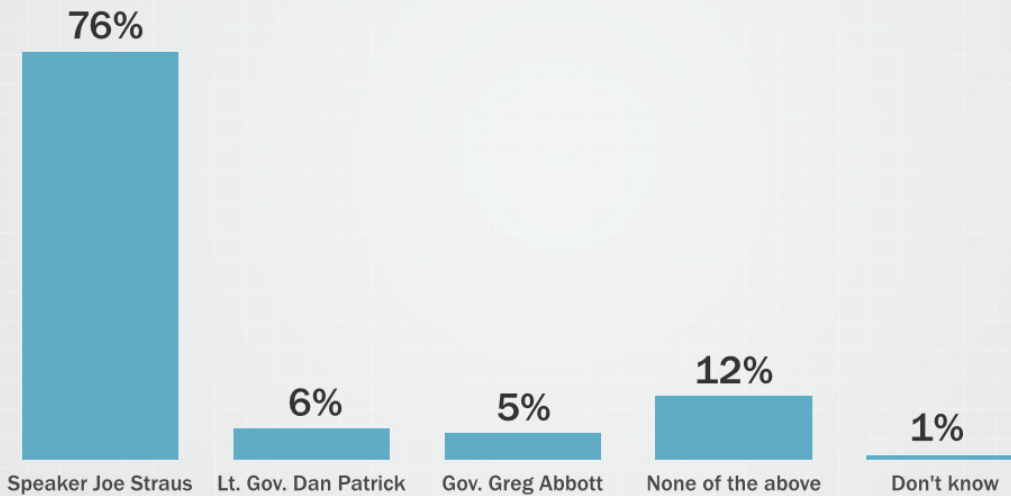


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of 8 May 2015*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

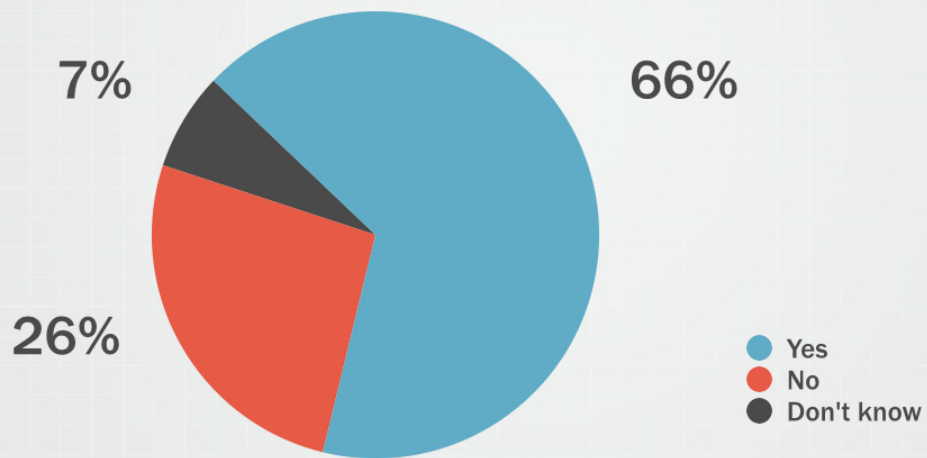
WHO IS HAVING THE BEST SESSION?



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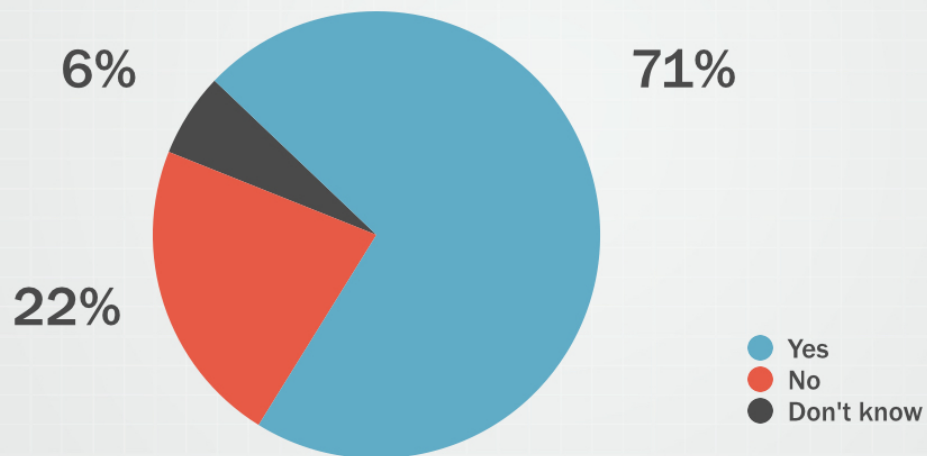
DID ABBOTT'S RESPONSE TO JADE HELM
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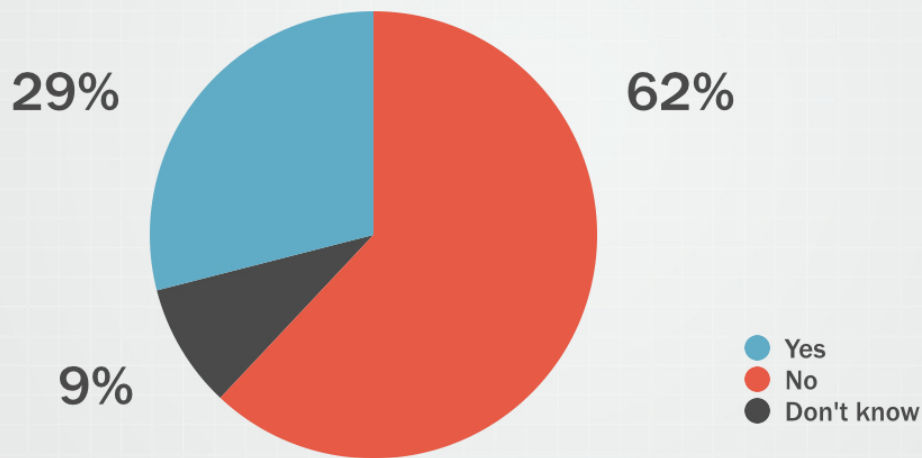
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DID SENATE FAST TRACKING HELP THE
"RELIGIOUS FREEDOM" BILL?



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Who is having the best session?

- "The House is getting real items accomplished. Meanwhile — the Senate just says no and acts silly."
- "Straus is killing it. Patrick overreached and now has to figure out what to do. Abbott needs to avoid those self-inflicted wounds."
- "I would have said Governor Abbott because he has made no missteps. But then Jade Helm happened. Help, he's fallen and he can't get up!"
- "Not even close"
- "I think legislatively it's gotta be Abbott — pre-K is moving, open carry is moving, and his ethics stuff is moving, too, whereas Patrick and Straus are thumping chests about taxes."
- "The train is running on time ... Straus Time!"
- "No one is having a good session..."
- "So far Joe Straus is saving the Republican Party from itself. As long as nothing too goofy gets through, he and the Republican Party are winners. The irony is that if the folks who are

attacking Straus had their way, this state would be more purple than red."

- "By far he is doing the best. Everyone thought he would blow things up and it would be a horrible session. He has made some mistakes. But he has proven people wrong."

- "130 votes, I think!!"

- "Unless you're seeing monsters under the bed, how can you not be a fan of Joe Straus?"

- "Speaker does not pander. Knows it is about his fellow Texans and not about him. The state is fortunate to enjoy his stewardship."

- "If the plan was to be completely uncoordinated, they are all doing great."

- "Weak all around. Patrick is more powerful than I would have imagined. But Texas is aimless under this trio."

Did Abbott's reaction to the Jade Helm military exercise hurt the state's image?

- "We continue to be viewed as a bunch of GUN CRAZY, BACKWOODS, BUFFOONS! There are military installations ALL over this state and training exercises and missions are conducted ALL THE TIME and have been for years! NOW all of a sudden we are 'scared' Obama wants to TAKE OVER TEXAS? WHY? Because he needs a state full of racist, hate-filled conspiracy theorists? Heavens, I am a Texan and I pray EVERY day that our leaders will STOP making us the laughingstock of the nation. We ARE a

- "Seems like the Speaker is the only one running a program."

- "Straus is the master now. He's enjoying it a little too much, but Straus is as on top of his game as I've ever seen any Speaker."

- "Rep. Jonathan Stickland, because he's protecting his peers from themselves."

- "Patrick looks like a fool, can't pass 'toss them back across the border bills', can't blame Speaker or Democrats, changed the rules and still got schooled."

- "Big Joe is in control of the Legislature, including pressing the brakes on issues detrimental to the State of Texas."

- "Abbott getting everything he wants."

great state, but we have gone so far back we truly think we are at the front!"

- "It plays into what I had thought was an erroneous national view of Texans being right wing dingbats. Now I feel like I have to explain ourselves all over again."

- "What a silly response."

- "Shameless pandering"

- "I wish the world was laughing at Oklahoma or Mississippi instead of the boldest and grandest state."
- "It was a bush-league move that made him look weak. The Patrick threat is real."
- "But that is because the rest of the country has their head in the sand like an ostrich. The frog in the pot is boiling and it has no clue."
- "Always!!"
- "It's TEXAS!"
- "Ridiculous pandering. So disappointing from a governor who, up to this point, was making Texans forget about his predecessor."
- "I can't tell you how many out-of-state friends sent links to stories about the Bastrop meeting, then about Abbott's reaction."
- "Tinfoil hat notwithstanding, acknowledging nut cases does NOT help Texas."
- "Have plenty of other things to be embarrassed about. This one was fairly minor."
- "As usual with the current statewide officeholders, Texas looks foolish. But it's great fodder for comics!"
- "Abbott sounded about as rational as the shooter in Garland."
- "No one knows and, outside of the Capitol, nobody cares."
- "We are Todd Smith."
- "We support the military but we need to 'monitor' them. I am glad the good folks of Killeen don't get as freaked out by military personnel moving around their city as the people in the Hill Country!"
- "C'mon, man! This is Texas. Do you expect anything less insane?"

Did it hurt his image?

- "He is not a leader; he is a panderer (is that even a word??). Rather than being a statesman, he will pander to whatever wackadoodle conspiracy the tea baggers/crazies determine is about to harm the world! You expected this from Rick Perry, but not someone as smart as Greg Abbott. It certainly shows that academic intelligence and experience are no match for wild eyed crazies when determining public policy."
- "What a silly response."
- "How can a former Texas Supreme Court Justice and former Attorney General take Alex Jones and his ilk seriously?"
- "The country club Republicans are feeling like wo/men with no country."
- "Maybe, temporarily. But we need to give him a break. As long as Mrs. Dan Patrick is measuring for drapes in the Gov's mansion, Abbott is going to have to get a little goofy."

- "It's Texas!!"
- "How could he not know enough to ignore the crazies?"
- "...but probably not among the sliver of the electorate that keeps him in power."
- "If he learned from the experience, probably not."
- "He foolishly pandered to a minute segment of the population in the Whack-a-doodle Caucus. He needs to show leadership of all the people, not fear of the loud but deranged nutcases."
- "I hope this was a staff error."
- "Not with crazies"
- "Makes him look like he's politically whoring for the really, really crazy people!"

Did fast-tracking a "religious freedom" bill in the Senate last week improve its chances in the Legislature?

- "Stop calling it religious freedom! Call it what it is — TTRDAPTANSCWT Act (The Texas Right to Discriminate Against People That Are Not Straight Crazy White Teabaggers)."
- "I wish we'd just focus on issues that really matter to the state, like the budget, infrastructure, and education."
- "Or care"
- "With roughly a month left, isn't *everything* on a fast track (to death or passage)?"
- "DOA"

- "No one knows and, outside of the Capitol, nobody cares."
- "Not with those who are already planning to vote in the next 2 Republican primaries. Elsewhere, it doesn't help."
- "Is Jade Helm Bruce Jenner's new name?"
- "He appears clueless and pandering. Not ready for prime time."
- "Only a tiny bit"
- "Most don't know about it."
- "He caved in to the black helicopter crowd."
- "There is no reason why anyone, regardless of their position on gay marriage, should want to force pastors of a religious institution into performing marriages for any couple against the church doctrine — whether they be gay, living together before marriage, children out of wedlock, etc. If something isn't done to protect these churches, the end result in these lawsuits is that the church will lose their nonprofit status and will continue with the practice of not marrying gay couples. So at the end of the day, plaintiff's attorneys will win and the IRS will win. And why would anyone want to be married in a church that is only

recognizing your marriage because they are forced by courts to do so? Especially when it's so easy for anyone to obtain a license to perform marriage. It's not like if the church won't do it then the couple is out of options."

- "For now!!"

- "Republican primaries ... coming soon to a theater near you!"

- "QED"

- "Hopefully, the House is in the 21st Century."

- "As long as Straus is Speaker, the Legislature will be mostly ineffective for good bills, yet very good at passing BAD bills."

- "Emergency declaration didn't seem to help either."

- "Last gasp at throwing red meat to far right. I am a Republican all the way, but this is silly."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Clyde Alexander, George Allen, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, Kerry Cammack, Snapper Carr, William Chapman, Elna Christopher, Harold Cook, Kevin Cooper, Beth Cubriel, Randy Cubriel, Curtis Culwell, June Deadrick, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, John Esparza, Jon Fisher, Tom Forbes, Neftali Garcia, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Stephanie Gibson, Scott Gilmore, Eric Glenn, Kinnan Golemon, Jim Grace, John Greytok, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, John Heasley, Ken Hodges, Steve Holzheuser, Deborah Ingersoll, Mark Jones, Walt Jordan, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Dale Laine, Nick Lampson, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Luke Legate, Leslie Lemon, Myra Leo, Ruben Longoria, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Steve Murdock, Sylvia Nugent, Todd Olsen, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Jerry Philips, Allen Place, Kraege Polan, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Jay Propes, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, Grant Ruckel, Jason Sabo, Andy Sansom, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Robert Scott, Steve Scurlock, Ben Seabee, Jason Skaggs, Ed Small, Larry Soward, Dennis Speight, Bob Stein, Colin Strother, Sherry Sylvester, Sara Tays, Trey Trainor, Vicki Truitt, Corbin Van Arsdale, David White, Seth Winick, Angelo Zottarelli.