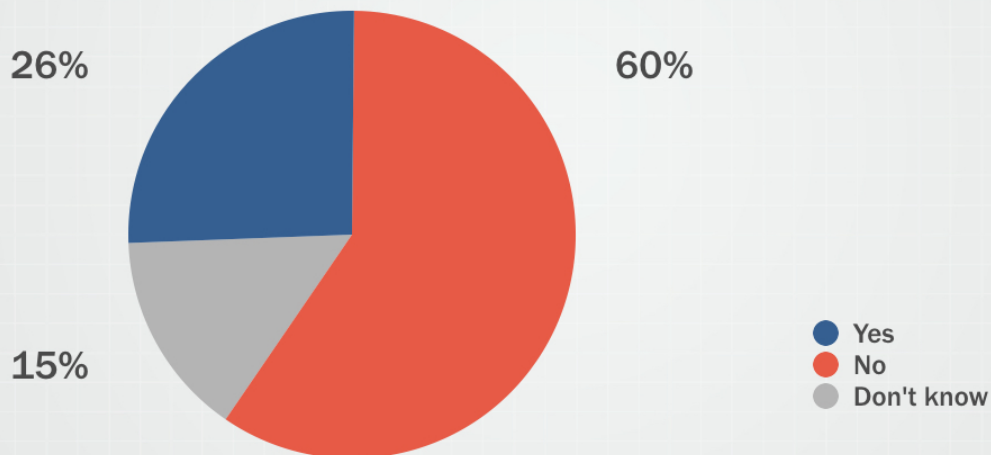


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of 27 May 2016*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

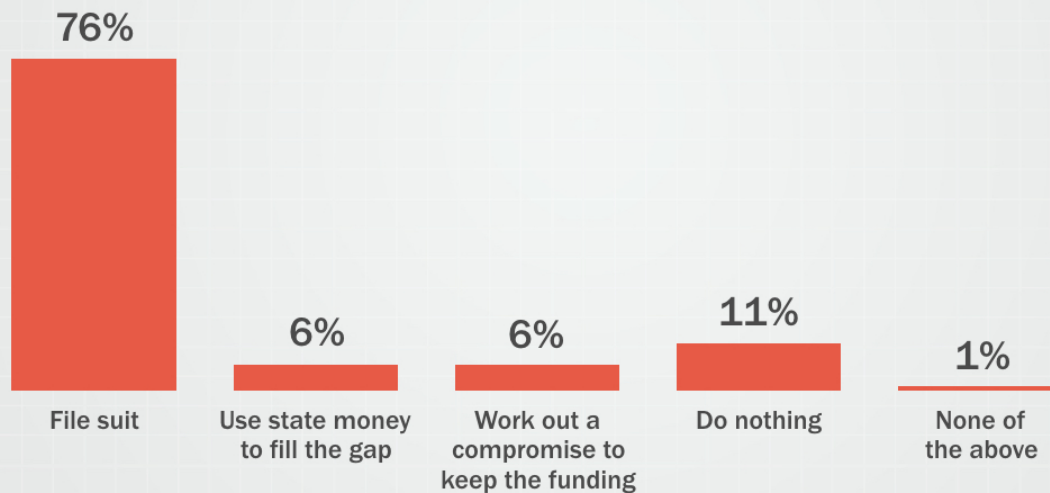
Will public schools really lose funding if they refuse to comply with the Obama administration transgender students directive?



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

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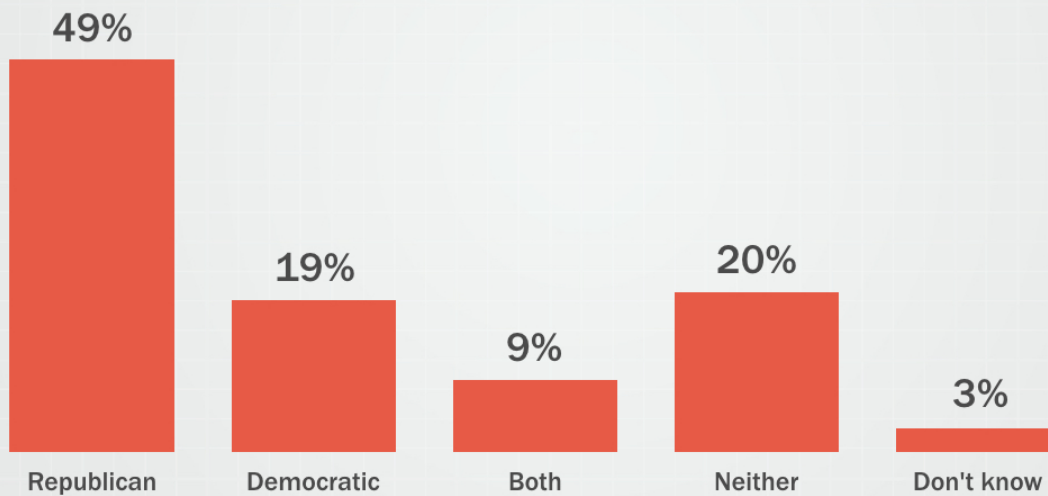
If there is a move to cut funding to Texas schools,
what do state leaders do in response?



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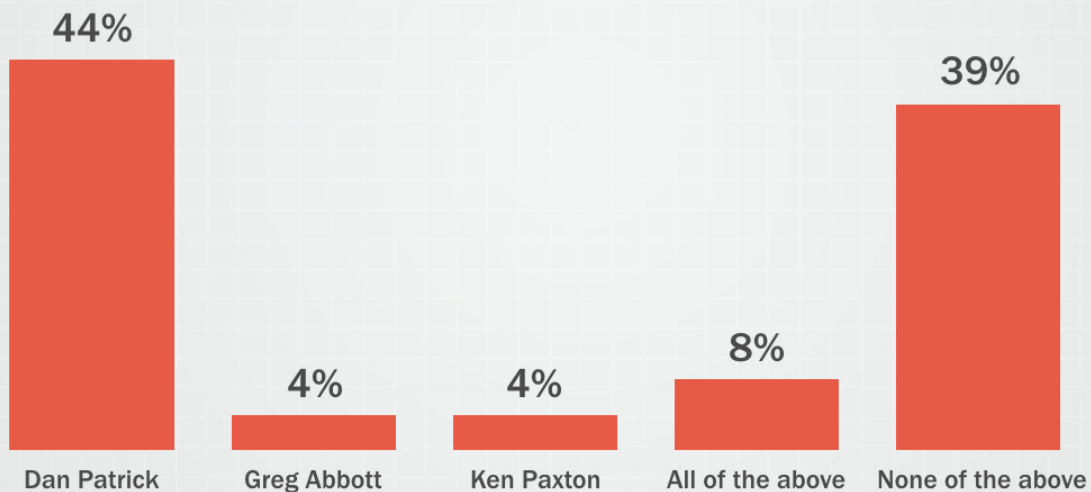
Which party benefits more from state leaders pushing the transgender controversy?



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Who has communicated most effectively with GOP voters on the transgender guideline controversy?



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Will public schools really lose federal education funding if they refuse to comply with a new Obama administration directive regarding transgender students?

- "Well, of course we would and we will because Dan Patrick is NOT going to let himself be bullied by the administration in Washington! It does not matter that this NOT a real issue and he is making this up as he goes, but it is red meat for all the crazy, right wing haters! Forget the money — we are Texas, we will make up for it from the Rainy Day Fund (oh, wait, no we won't); besides our schools are GREAT and our school funding is sound and legal (so says the Supreme Court!!)"
- "Failure to fund public schools would become a PR nightmare for the Democrats. Doing so will give the R's another silver bullet campaign topic for the general."
- "Why are we spending so much time trying to accommodate a handful of people and ignoring the 99 percent? And now the Obama administration wants to punish poor kids by cutting funding."

- "This is one crazy year. Please, Obama, just go..."

- "Well, I tell you what, gonna tell 'Bama to come and take it out of my dead cold hand!"

- "Depends on who steps back from the brink first."

- "Hell, yes, under this fascist regime. Why again are we dealing with this? Oh, the fascists are pushing it."

- "The feds won't pull that trigger. It's too hot of an issue."

- "No, because 'transgender' is not protected by the Title IX statute. Congress has declined multiple opportunities to include it. If 'transgender' is not a protected class in the black letter law, how can the Administration penalize states for not complying with a provision that does not exist?"

- "The U.S. Supreme Court has expressly ruled that agencies cannot add strings to federal money if those restrictions are not found in the statute."

If the Obama administration moves to cut funding to Texas schools over transgender students, what do state leaders do in response?

- "Then they can blame the big bad evil people in Washington for depriving our children of an education and education funding."

- "TLR still hasn't stopped the AG's office from doing what it knows best... sue everyone that gets in the way."

- "Rely on Joe Straus to save the day."

There is no mention of 'transgender' in Title IX and it is illegal and unenforceable for the U.S. Department of Education to add that requirement."

- "No public school will be denied federal funds because they refuse to comply with a rule that allows boys to shower with girls — this is an empty threat from Obama put forward only to pander politically."

- "I hope so... that's how it's supposed to work. There are consequences for our actions and we should be prepared to accept them."

- "No, that criminally-indicted AG of ours will sue. Then the politically motivated Supreme Court will rule along party lines that Washington can't tell local school districts what to do. Then we will see Dan Patrick's preening face on Fox News. It's all very simple."

- "The IMPORTANT thing is to protect children, even if it means losing a pittance of school funding, federal funding."

- "If we lose federal funding, that means the federal government is now out of Texas education altogether?"

- "Duh!!!"

- "These chicken hawks are not going to do a darn thing but flap their wings and shake their tail feathers."

- "Suing the federal government goes without saying. There is nowhere close to enough state revenue to replace the billions in federal aid that would be lost, so that's out. Doing nothing is even worse than not even trying to fill the gap. Compromise? Dan Patrick?"
- "What we do best — sue the Obama administration."
- "They want to cut public education funding anyway..."
- "On the front steps of the courthouse, our leaders will posture, throw a temper tantrum, act indignant, and allude that we could go our own way all because our 'state rats' are being trampled upon by moderates and socialists."
- "Adapt and learn to live without it. If more states do, maybe U.S. Dept. of Ed goes away, yeah!"
- "Our Texas Attorney General isn't good for much, but he's good for legal fights against the Obama Administration. Look for him to file suit."
- "The current crop of Tort Reformers in office sure do file a lot of frivolous lawsuits for their causes."
- "This would be the only way tea baggers would use the RDF."
- "So-called transgenders have no legal standing — they are not a protected class nor are they likely to be since there is still a great deal of debate among mental health professionals about the nature of who they are versus who they say they are. If the Feds go to court, it will only be to rev up their political base — they are not likely to win."
- "No doubt about it."
- "General Paxton would see a high-profile lawsuit as a last chance to save himself in the court of public opinion. This also could be interesting vis-à-vis the new SCOTUS justice."
- "A statewide elected official isn't doing their job if they aren't suing the federal government."
- "It's be a boon to the quality of education to remove federal strings."

As an electoral issue, which party benefits more from state Republican leaders pushing the transgender controversy?

- "'Real' Republicans will just stay home as they are DISGUSTED by what has happened to their party - it is no longer the 'grand' old party."
- "This is the type of issue that makes Democrat consultants grab the tequila during general elections. If you're explaining, you're losing."
- "Obama administration pushing the transgender controversy, correct?"
- "The bathroom battle is utter foolishness. How about education,

transportation, taxation etc.? Perhaps the Lt. Gov. can take a note from the fundamentalist Moslems and establish morality police to guard bathrooms."

- "Fear, bigotry, ignorance, and discrimination... it is what produced candidate Trump!"
- "It shows the extreme elements of the Democrat Party and reinforces that fascism always rises from the left."
- "It really should be a non-issue with so much more important issues facing Texas, but let's fight over the non-issues and spend two days with the important stuff!"
- "There is only one party that would welcome transgender folks, and it sure as hell ain't Danny boy's party."
- "Short-term, this is obviously a good year for Republicans to run against a despised minority. Longer-term, it's yet another way for the party to alienate young voters."
- "The Republicans are playing to their fringe base. The rest of Texas knows bigotry when they see it."
- "Extremists on both sides get the mic and make everyone involved look like idiots. These issues need to be worked out case by case, keeping the best interest of the child as the priority."
- "Texans lose either way."
- "Irony is this is a tiny, very tiny group of people who are screwing things up for the rest of us."

• "Adults are still trying to hash out these issues. Involving the children won't motivate Democrats who are mostly ho-hum about it. Republicans, on the other hand, are starting to line up now to vote in the general election."

• "Based on the overwhelming result of both 1) the Pastor Protection Act in the House last session, and 2) the Democrat vote against HERO in Houston, it is very difficult to argue that the bathrooms issue will help Democrats in Texas. But note the error in your question: This issue is being pushed by Democrats, not Republicans. Transgenders have used their personal discretion to choose a bathroom for decades. There was no problem until the Democrats manufactured one. The press is constantly accusing voter ID as being a solution in search of a problem; why don't we ever hear the press characterize the HERO ordinance or the Fort Worth ISD decision in that way?"

• "The Republican leadership has spoken on this matter and have demonstrated once again that Republicans take reasoned and sensible positions on basic and fundamental public policy issues, like girls and boys should use separate bathrooms in public facilities. If the Texas Tribune wants to allow boys and girls to use the same bathroom at the same time in its office, that is a private decision by a private entity, but such practice should not be mandated to the population as a whole. Sometimes common sense must prevail over perceived political correctness."

• "Democrats seem to be winning the first round because the press is portraying the refusal to buckle under

to the Obama's bathroom agenda as anti-gay, but Republicans and Trump will ultimately win on this issue because it is transparent political pandering. Anyone who looks at this closely sees that this is not discrimination. The fact that the Obama rule rejects the sensible accommodation most schools have employed — creating unisex bathroom options for anyone to use — speaks volumes about what his true intentions are."

- "By a lot."
- "Repubs are ahead on messaging, but if the Dems can figure out how to frame this issue, they can pick up some seats. If they fail, which, let's be honest, they probably will, status quo reigns and far-right doubles down."

Who has communicated most effectively with GOP voters on the transgender guideline controversy?

- "They sing from the same hymnal — 'The Songbook of the Wackado's'"
- "This is the stupidest 'issue' that has come to the forefront in a long time."
- "From opposing Cruz, to owning Cruz, Patrick is an old school political ninja. The Texas GOP is his; enjoy the ride."
- "Those three individuals have latched on to the most fringe elements and issues of a vocal minority in the Texas GOP; they do not speak for the right-of-center business community nor are they communicating effectively, but rather simply regurgitating through social media, press conferences and media releases."

- "There are no Democratic state leaders in Texas — yet."
- "I'm not sure 'benefit' is the word I would chose... but the politics mobilize the Republicans more effectively than Democrats. Or at least those R's who dominate the party at this moment."
- "Fear is the most effective campaign tool. And the GOP specializes in it."
- "Sixty-one percent of Houston voted AGAINST the transgender bathrooms, showers and locker rooms."
- "This won't have an effect on this cycle, but look out for the business wing of the GOP next cycle."

- "Fear mongering, end of days scenarios, it's transmageddon!"
- "If 'effective communication' means whip up the masses, that's what our statewide electeds are good at."
- "Love him or hate him, Lt. Dan is the face and voice of the social conservative Republicans because he's articulate, media savvy and it's from his heart."
- "Don't know."
- "Dan Patrick runs circles around the others. Abbott can't make a decision and Paxton is busy talking to his defense lawyers."

- "If by effectively, you mean in a 'politically effective manner' then the answer would be Dan Patrick. If you mean by effectively something closer to 'fairly' or 'truthfully,' then none of the above."
- "Patrick has done a masterful job of turning this into a school choice issue."
- "DP knows how to talk to the far-right, even when they're both wrong."
- "Does he have time to do anything else?"
- "Worthy of re-elections."
- "All of the above and to their detriment."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Brandon Aghamalian, Brandon Alderete, Clyde Alexander, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Dave Beckwith, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, Raif Calvert, Lydia Camarillo, Kerry Cammack, Snapper Carr, Elna Christopher, Harold Cook, Kevin Cooper, Randy Cubriel, Beth Cubriel, Denise Davis, June Deadrick, Nora Del Bosque, Holly DeShields, Glenn Deshields, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jack Erskine, Tom Forbes, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Eric Glenn, Kinnan Golemon, John Greytok, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Steve Holzheuser, Kathy Hutto, Deborah Ingersoll, Jason Johnson, Mark Jones, Walt Jordan, Lisa Kaufman, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Dale Laine, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, Luke Legate, Ruben Longoria, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Nelson Nease, Todd Olsen, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Robert Peeler, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Allen Place, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Ted Melina Raab, Patrick Reinhart, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, A.J. Rodriguez, Grant Ruckel, Andy Sansom, Stan Schlueter, Robert Scott, Bruce Scott, Ed Small, Larry Soward, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Colin Strother, Sherry Sylvester, Trey Trainor, Corbin Van Arsdale, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Seth Winick, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.