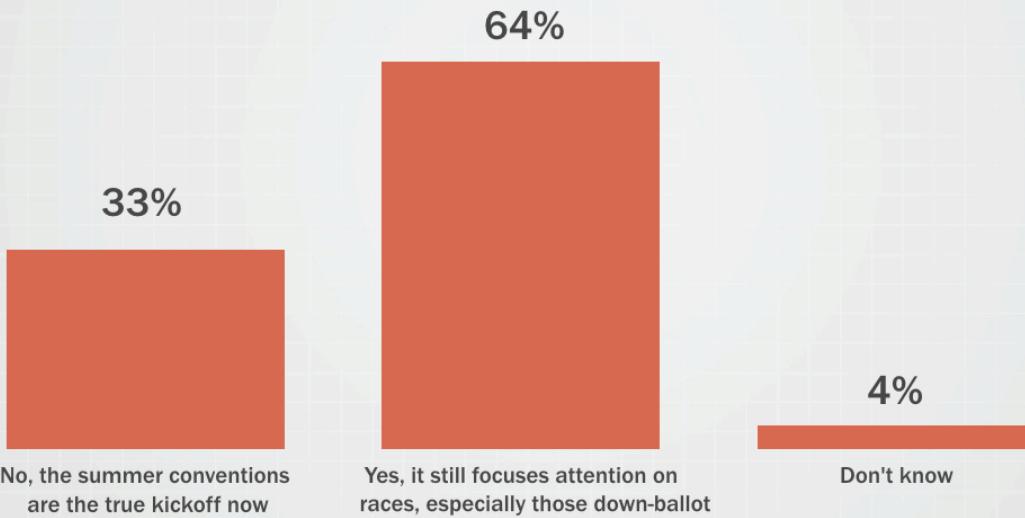


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of 9 September 2016*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

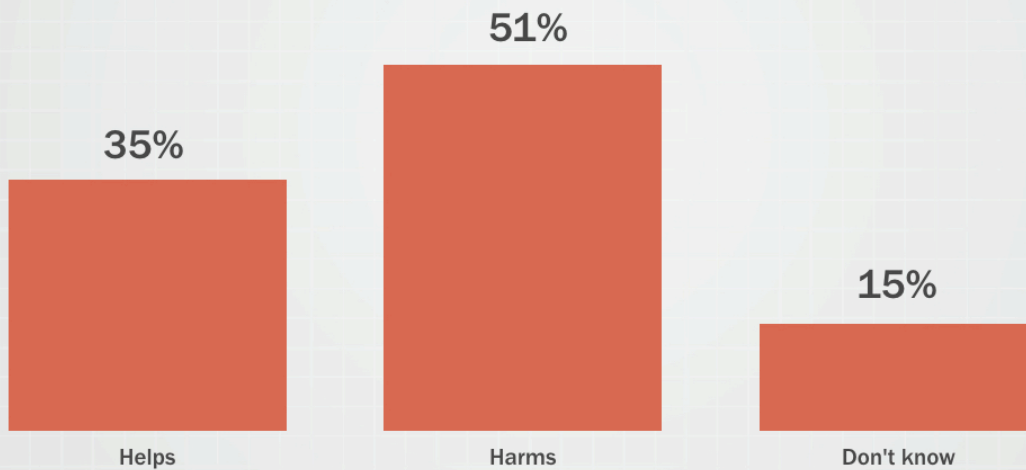
Is Labor Day still the kickoff to the general election season?



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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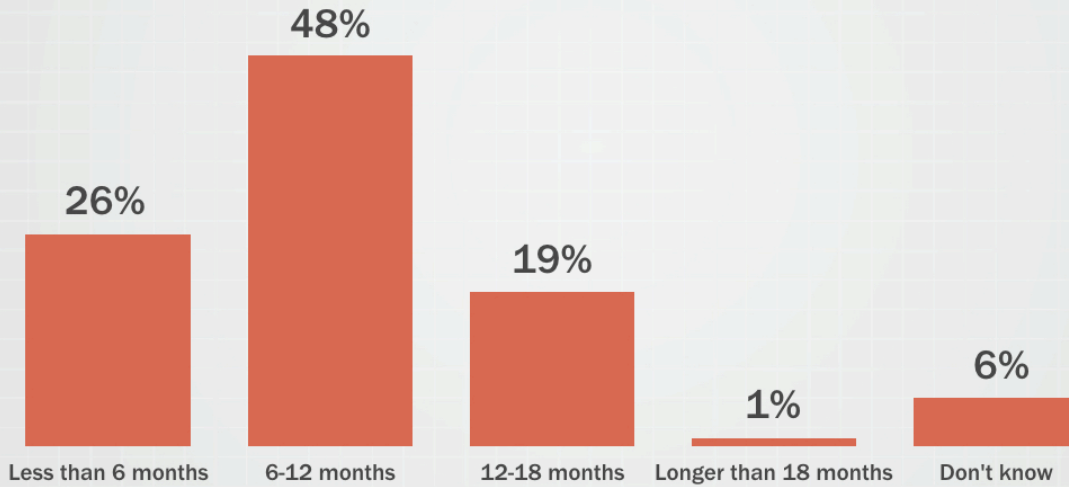
Has the length of the presidential race helped or harmed the ability of voters to pick the best leader for the country?



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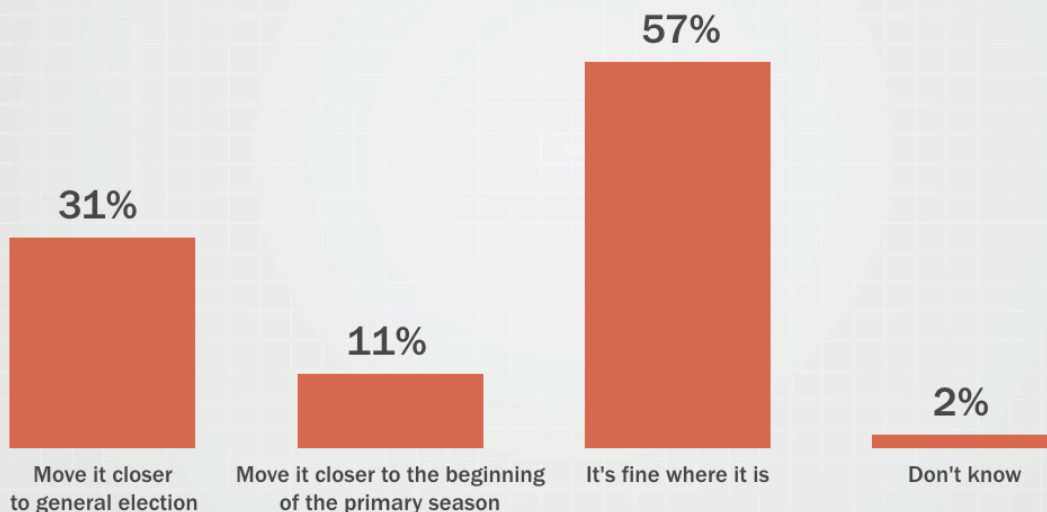
How long should the presidential race run?



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Should Texas change its primary election date relative to the general election?



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Is Labor Day still the kickoff to the general election season?

- "Consultants would answer that the season begins with the summer conventions. But in reality, the season begins after Labor Day."
- "Races don't stop. People may tune out, but the political machine is 24/7/365..."
- "Hasn't been for some time. We pretend it is. Who are we kidding? NOT!"
- "This election has had high interest for nearly 18 months. Undecided voters (who will actually vote) are rare now."
- "Labor Day is still the kickoff to the sprint to early voting. This is when voters start paying attention."
- "During Presidential election years, it seems to start with the national convention. Down-ballot races definitely kick into action on Labor Day."
- "We're all procrastinators!"
- "Media might push agendas, and candidates might be out there doing candidatey things, but the

overwhelming majority of voters aren't paying attention until after Labor Day."

- "Before Labor Day, a candidate can sink his or her campaign by doing or saying something stupid — which will be used by their opponent later. After Labor Day, the general public starts to pay attention, and those mistakes from earlier times come back to haunt candidates. It's always been that way."

- "...There are no cycles, seasons anymore — just one continuous campaign."

- "The insider class always overestimates how much real people are paying attention to elections and candidates. It's not that they are dumb or disinterested; it's just that they have lives."

Has the length of the presidential race helped or harmed the ability of voters to pick the best leader for the country?

- "Easier to tune out, and hugely more expensive because of its nonstop nature today."

- "Do we need that much time? Please, Americans are lazy. They don't pay attention until the last two weeks, if even that. If you can't decide in a short period of time then stay out of the process, you morons."

- "There is such a thing as voter fatigue based on information overload, i.e. the 24-hour news cycle, the beast must be fed."

- "By the time they win their primaries, voters have become very familiar with the candidates."

- "The primary voters have harmed the ability to pick the best leader for the country. The voter's job now is to pick the 'least worst.'"

- "It usually helps in that voters get a bead on the character and qualities of each candidate over a long period. Short campaigns can be more easily scripted."

- "Not sure it has much to do with the length of the process, but based upon the results and choices, something certainly went awry."

- "I don't think it helps ... voters are smart enough in the end. Doesn't hurt except having to endure it."

- "Look at the choice we ended up with. Ugh."

- "I could argue this one flat or round."

- "It helps the ability of the base to get energize for the final push. You still the need the base to turn out and vote."

- "John Q. Public is already tired of the negative campaigns; tired of the rhetoric; tired of the craziness that makes it impossible to even watch the evening news!"

- "Harms democracy by discouraging any serious person from paying attention. The long season attracts the wrong candidates — having the stamina to repeat the same thing a thousand times while holding a phony

smile is not a presidential trait. The long season is also why it is so expensive."

- "Folks lose interest after too many weeks of screaming daily headlines."
- "Even beauty pageant contestants start to look tired after a while."
- "Ninety percent of minds have been made up. Those undecided 10 per centers must be gluttons for punishment."
- "I think the 24-hour news cycle, more than the length of the presidential race, has harmed voters. The news requires conflict, and when it isn't there, they make it up."

How long should the presidential race run?

- "Your question is impossible to answer. People are already planning for 2020. Do you mean how long should it run in the public eye? Primaries are important so it is at least two years of campaigning so they can win those Iowa primaries."
- "The U.S. Presidential race should be as long as needed. Choosing the Leader of The Free World is not something that should be taken for granted."
- "Many countries manage with six weeks."
- "It is disheartening to me that so much media attention is focused on the presidential candidates (who are not actually doing anything to lead the nation) instead of the actual running of

- "Separates the wheat from the chaff!"
- "The length of the term is irrelevant — it's the constant coverage of the campaigns and the fracturing within the two-party primary system that I believe has harmed the voter's ability to consider the 'best' leader for the country."
- "Is there the possibility of a 'best leader'?"
- "Saturation overload. Pushes down-ballot races out of the news for months on end. And the national media picks the winner early on."

the country. It seems like the administration gets a pass on scrutiny for the last couple of years because the press is focused on people with no actual authority to do anything yet."

- "The way it is now — the honeymoon is over before you get to the altar!"
- "As a political consultant, I'd say continually. As a voter, I'd say less than six months."
- "If you can't make the case for why you're the best, most qualified candidate in 6-12 months, then something is wrong with you as a candidate and/or your ability to persuade voters."

Should Texas change its primary election date relative to the general election?

- "Ha, let's all do this the same week across the country. Only one week!!!! Then see how people respond. Again, do you need that long to figure it out?"
- "For such an important state, it has always been a wonder to me why it doesn't have a larger role in the primary season."
- "August would be just swell by me."
- "For the Republican primary, it can't be moved up without being penalized by the RNC in the form of disqualifying our delegates, leaving us with no voice in the primary. The RNC members from Texas are working to change these rules, but it's doubtful that the RNC members as a whole body will allow Texas to move up in the selection process, for a number of reasons. 1) nobody outside of Texas likes Ted Cruz and 2) there is still a sentiment for selecting a nominee based on their ability to connect personally with voters in small states, without being able to rely on TV ads for the nomination. Ironic that with this being the intent, we've ended up with 'the Donald,' of all people."
- "Current early primary date acts to protect incumbents. Since nobody pays attention during the previous year, the race starts in early January as a practical matter and lasts less than two months. That's usually not enough time for a challenger to make his/her case. Cruz would not have beaten Dewhurst if the original primary date had held."
- "The only change needed to our primary election is the ability to have an open primary."
- "Of course, since the general election hardly matters in terms of statewide or legislative races — at least in the current environment — it doesn't really matter how distant the primaries are from the general."
- "We need time to rest (and heal) after the primary."
- "The Primary date is fine. But for goodness sake, can we please move the runoff date back to no more than 30 days after the Primary?"
- "Move it back to May!!!"
- "To avoid voter tune out, it should be moved more toward Labor Day, as it was in the past."
- "Maybe we should just have one election and one runoff?"
- "Thanks to redistricting, most primaries are the 'real' election. Moving them back to the summer/early fall would help voters and result in better outcomes."
- "Texas should follow the lead of most states and hold a separate presidential primary, earlier than state primary elections. Our primary now is way too early for anyone to be interested in the contests. We should go back to the fourth Saturday in July (used from

1906-1958) or at least the first Saturday in May (1960-86)."

- "I wish all primaries were in May or thereabouts. Would give the campaigns the summer to regroup and the fall to

talk to voters. But the cottage industry of early primaries will keep them early and often. Why would Iowa and New Hampshire give up any influence?"

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Clyde Alexander, Jay Arnold, Dave Beckwith, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, Raif Calvert, Lydia Camarillo, Elna Christopher, Randy Cubriel, Beth Cubriel, Denise Davis, June Deadrick, Glenn Deshields, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Jack Erskine, John Esparza, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Kinnan Golemon, Daniel Gonzalez, John Greytok, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Susan Hays, Deborah Ingersoll, Jason Johnson, Mark Jones, Walt Jordan, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Dale Laine, Nick Lampson, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, Luke Legate, Ruben Longoria, Homero Lucero, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Robert Peeler, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Richard Pineda, Allen Place, Gary Polland, Ted Melina Raab, Karen Reagan, Patrick Reinhart, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, A.J. Rodriguez, Grant Ruckel, Andy Sansom, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Robert Scott, Steve Scurlock, Ben Sebree, Christopher Shields, Nancy Sims, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Mark Smith, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Sherry Sylvester, Trey Trainor, Ware Wendell, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Michael Williams, Seth Winick, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.