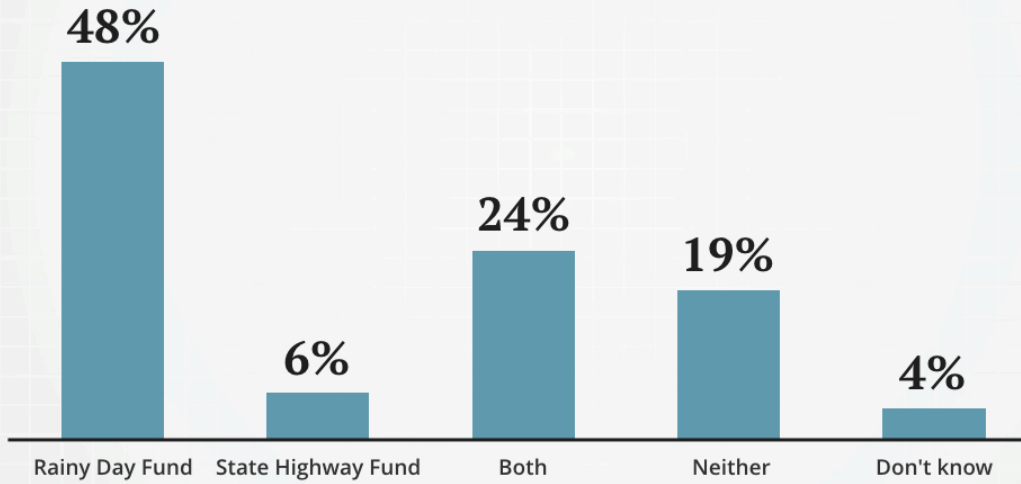


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of 17 February 2017*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

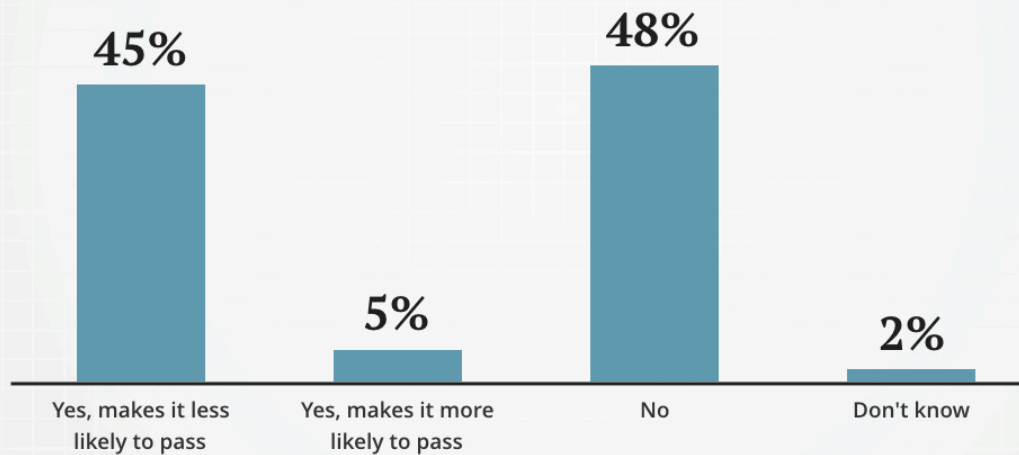
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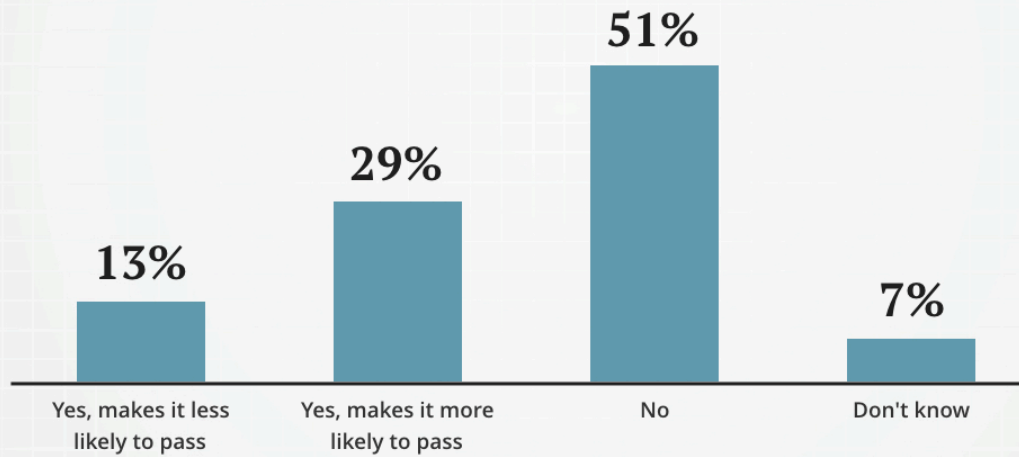
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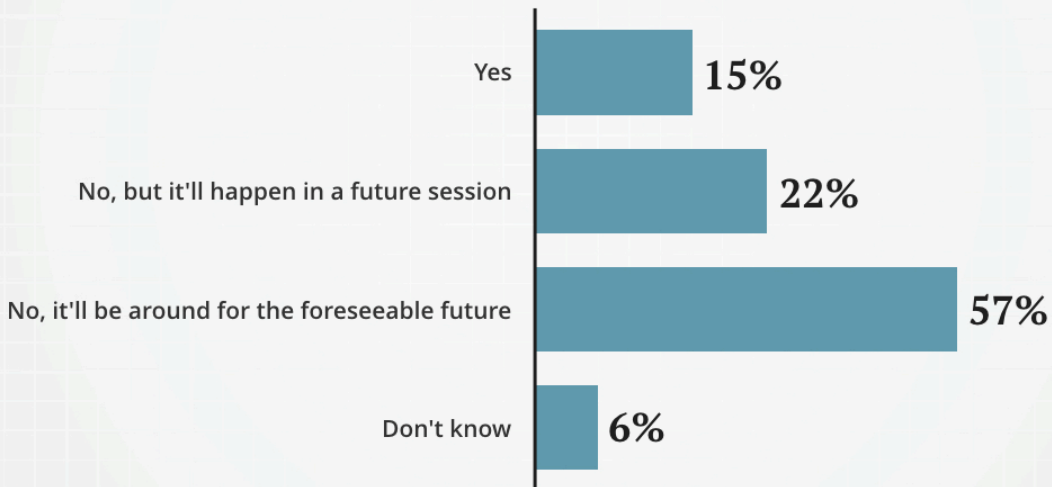
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Will lawmakers act this session to end straight ticket voting, either in judicial races or in all races?



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Lawmakers will look here to free up cash to fund a tight state budget this year...

- "Patrick promised not to raid the State Highway Fund again, so he's in a pickle."
- "And depending on how dire the situation gets, don't forget about other 'protected and dedicated' funds, like TERP and the Crime Victims Compensation Fund."
- "They will look at both but there is no political will to spend the RDF."
- "But, it will be a hard fought fight to the end!!!"
- "There is growing buyers' remorse on the highway diversion and if NAFTA is in trouble then the highway pork is in trouble. The Rainy Day Fund is in play particularly in light of the limited carry over funds to plug holes from previous budget."
- "No better than 50 percent chance of success, but I would guess they'll make the effort to tap it."
- "Both and raise taxes, er, uh, I mean fees. God forbid we cut spending. No Tinker Bell, we haven't cut to the bone."

Lefty lies bought into by Republicans.
Room to cut, no courage to cut."

- "The House will pass some Rainy Day Fund spending, but unless some fantastic new storyline can be developed, Lt. Gov. won't accept it."
- "Senate would rather close public schools."
- "Individual lawmakers are already talking about reducing the sales tax diversion or tapping the Economic Stabilization Fund. It remains to be seen if the 'Big 3' can agree on either one —

Does the threat of denying future Super Bowls to Texas made late last week by the NFL change the prognosis of the "bathroom bill" in the Senate?

- "Like anyone in football cares who comes into a bathroom?"
- "It still has a tough row to hoe, but not because of the NFL's attempt to influence the legislative process."
- "Too early to tell"
- "It's the Texas Senate..."
- "This bill is a priority of the grassroots, Dan Patrick and most seriously conservative legislators. It is will probably pass. In terms of the NFL, a lot of people already hate them. They support a guy who doesn't stand up for the national anthem. Even folks who love their Texas teams don't love the NFL. They can't afford to boycott Texas. Who cares what they think?"
- "To the Senate, they could care less if we lost out on Super Bowls, Final Fours and other sports and musical acts to

and they both require a politically difficult supermajority vote."

- "The House, lacking any self-discipline or good judgment, will look under sofa cushions and everywhere else for the dollars to feed their insatiable appetite. The Senate, lords of wisdom, will demonstrate self-control and live within the constraints of limited income."
- "They'll look, but they might not touch."

tour Texas. They are more inclined to support their base than a threat from the entertainment industry. Thank God the House has its head on straight!"

- "The direct impact is probably viewed on Houston and Dallas, so others won't count the pennies they receive from such events."
- "The Lt. Gov. office was waiting to get past Super Bowl Sunday before reheating the bathroom bill but the NFL fired a quick shot across the legislative bow and they mean what they say. The NCAA is not far behind and they mean what they say as well. Just ask basketball fans in North Carolina."
- "It will die a slow death in the legislative process, but the pain will be felt most by those Texans who are most vulnerable and impacted by poor policy proposals and discriminatory decisions."

- "Stuff like this only irritates people. It even got Gov. Abbott to chime in on the topic."
- "This is only going to pass over Jerry Jones' dead body."
- "Senate will pass the bill and thankfully the House will kill it."
- "Just provides a way out of the trap for some who don't like the bill but might otherwise be forced to say aye."
- "As they say on Wall Street, the market price already reflects such risks."
- "It is DOA in the House. More fascism from the left. Where have my liberal friends all gone?"
- "Texas Republicans aren't afraid of taking a hit at the ballot box, but they are afraid of taking a hit at the deposit box."
- "Who cares? Super Bowls just cost our cities money. Call it the billionaires' subsidy."
- "The NFL does not have a team in Brenham."
- "Senate not interested in Super Bowl or tourism. Just want to know about bathrooms."
- "It's passing the Senate no matter what."
- "Bill was never intended to actually pass. The NFL does — however — make Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick look ridiculous."
- "In a match-up between the state's ego and its tendency to pander to voters' fear and worst instincts, it's tough to say what will win."
- "The voters care more about their privacy and safety than they do about sports leagues, fat cat team owners, and spoiled athletes who thumb their nose at long established cultural norms and customs. Remember, most voters will never be able to see a NCAA Tournament or Super Bowl anywhere other than their TV set. But everyone ends up needing to take a potty break away from home."
- "I don't think it will pass either way."
- "Only fools pass a bigoted bill that costs everyone money, and I don't think a majority of the Legislature are fools."
- "This is starting to get serious now."

Do current reports of immigrant raids across Texas and subsequent demonstrations change the prognosis of "sanctuary city" legislation in the Legislature?

- "Important that law enforcement takes this issue out of politicians' hands."
- "These raids target folks who committed crimes and are still here (illegally). I don't see their round-up as

garnering much sympathy from most Texans."

- "The angrier the crowds get, the louder the protests become, the more likely the bill passes both chambers quickly."
- "Catching crooks is the Texas way."
- "As a super lib on immigration issues, even I am offended that child rapists are not being turned over to ICE by local law enforcement. If I can support this law, I think 90 percent of other Texans will likely support it as well."
- "Oh, my, Tinker Bell, rule of law, what a thought."
- "They'll still probably be able to pass something on sanctuary cities, but these arrests will make them feel worse about voting for it."

Will lawmakers act this session to end straight ticket voting, either in judicial races or in all races?

- "Republicans will finally stop blocking good gov't reform."
- "I doubt it. But if they pass it, what will Abbott do — sign or veto it? Will he sacrifice and risk the political successes in the vast majority of state to appease a couple urban counties?"
- "I think we know that a lot of Republican legislators probably got into office because of straight ticket voting, so I find it hard to believe that those folks would support a bill that could put them out of office."
- "Dallas and Houston have to convince others why it hurts."

• "Since when is violating the law a good thing?"

- "Zero impact in the Senate, only marginal impact in the House as a whole, Joe Straus notwithstanding."
- "It was already going to pass — now the federal government is simply in agreement."
- "Either way, powerless people are already being scapegoated and terrified."
- "If you've paid any attention to election results recently, the voters are crying out for immigration laws to be enforced."

• "Justice Hecht was correct, but in a state that is driven to preserve minority rule that is not a change in the making."

- "Oh, wait, because the Repubs lost Harris, Dallas & Bexar counties they want to get rid of straight ticket voting."
- "Sad but true. We're stuck with it."
- "Perhaps in judicial races..."
- "Again, why is this a problem?"
- "But anything is possible here."

- "There is just no actionable momentum among the Rs or the Ds to do away with straight ticket voting."
- "Read: Harris County Republican Party Joint Judicial Campaign biennial candidate \$hakedown won't be enough to win if Harris County remains 52 percent D."
- "Those who powder themselves in the status quo know better than to change the status quo."
- "With any luck they will reinstall a literacy test for voters as well."
- "Repealing straight ticket voting would be suicidal for Republicans."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Clyde Alexander, Charles Bailey, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, Raif Calvert, Lydia Camarillo, Randy Cubriel, Beth Cubriel, Curtis Culwell, Denise Davis, Eva De Luna-Castro, June Deadrick, Jim Dow, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jeff Eller, John Esparza, Jon Fisher, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Eric Glenn, Kinnan Golemon, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Steve Holzheuser, Deborah Ingersoll, Mark Jones, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Pete Laney, Bill Lauderback, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Luke Legate, Ruben Longoria, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Mike McKinney, Vinny Minchillo, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Todd Olsen, Robert Peeler, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Allen Place, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Jay Propes, Ted Melina Raab, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, A.J. Rodriguez, Grant Ruckel, Jason Sabo, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Robert Scott, Steve Scurlock, Ben Sebree, Christopher Shields, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Jason Stanford, Colin Strother, Sherry Sylvester, Vicki Truitt, Corbin Van Arsdale, Chris Wallace, Ware Wendell, David White, Michael Williams, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.