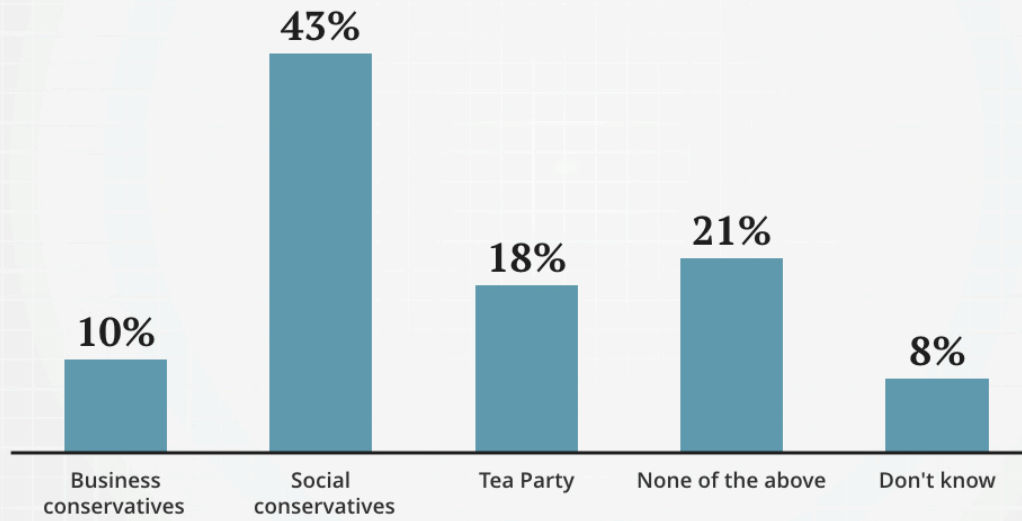


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of 10 March 2017*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

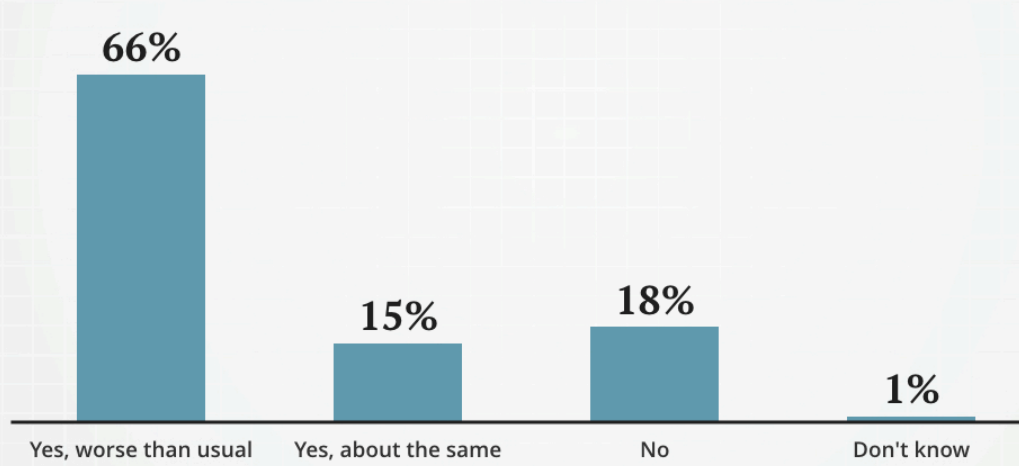
Who's the leading voice in the Texas GOP these days?



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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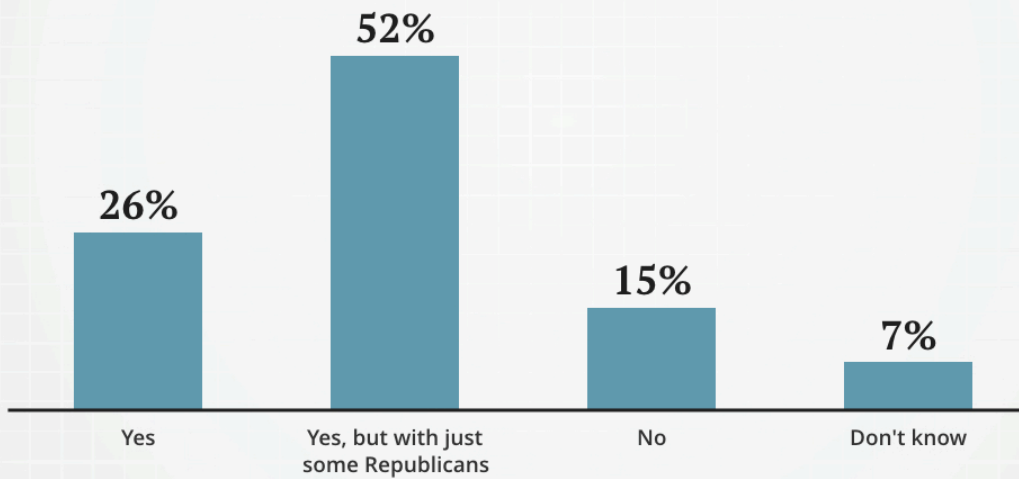
Are Texas business interests facing a hostile work environment in the capitol this year and, if so, is it worse than usual?



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Does the Texas Association of Business face a credibility issue with GOP lawmakers after the release of its bathroom bill economic impact study?

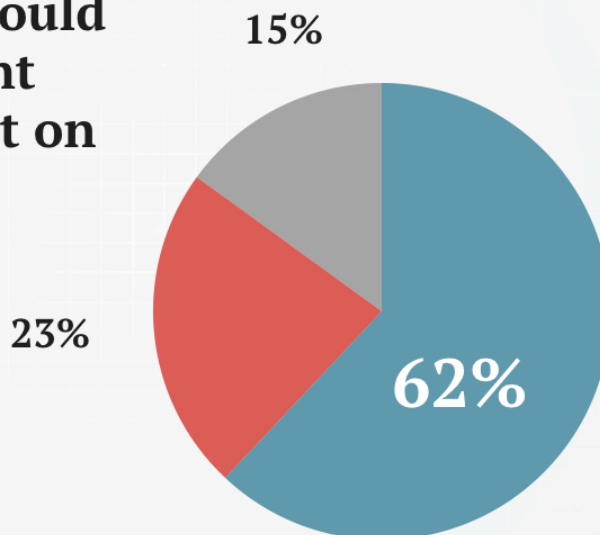


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Do you think a bathroom law would have a significant economic impact on the state?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know



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Who's the leading voice in the Texas GOP these days?

- "Jokers to the left, clowns to the right... stuck in the middle! No one is the leading voice."
- "I think the Tea Party members are relatively small (except in the Texas Senate), but they're vocal and they vote in greater numbers than the more traditional GOP voter in GOP primaries (and they have more time to write and read echo chamber blogs). Texas has about 27 million people. Lt. Gov. Patrick, the grandfather of the Texas Tea Party, got about 2.7 million votes in 2014, not exactly overwhelming numbers. By the way, he also got fewer votes than George P. Bush."
- "I wish the GOP would move on from social issues. We've got a state to run. Also, if the Texas Dems didn't suck out loud, they could identify at least five major message points and erode the evangelical GOP stronghold."
- "Uncle Danny — the 'lite' gov"
- "Business conservatives were warned during the election that if they knee-jerked toward the GOP nominee for Lt. Gov., they'd find themselves in the back

seat to a social agenda that would cost them money. So of course they knee-jerked toward the GOP nominee for Lt. Gov. Now it'll cost them money."

- "Primary voters"
- "Republican elected officials"
- "Tea Party seems to have the loudest voice, that's for certain."
- "Dan Patrick is the loudest, for sure."
- "Senate? Social cons. House? Business cons. Party platform? Tea Party cons. But if you have three leading voices, you have no 'leading' voice. Therefore, none of the above."
- "There is a Trump realignment going — who knows where it will end up?"
- "Hard to pick up one voice above the cacophony."
- "Business conservatives lost their stroke in the party by failing to speak up or challenge misrepresentations by the socials and Tea Party."
- "Abbott. Depending on the audience, he speaks for social conservatives, Tea Party folks and business."
- "It's Dan Patrick! He is the leading voice in all three categories."

Are Texas business interests facing a hostile work environment in the Capitol this year and, if so, is it worse than usual?

- "It's piss poor, oops, the bathroom bill!"
- "With certain members, their stock has likely gone down, but with others they remain a sane, rational voice in the hallways, offices and hearing rooms."

- "It's the haters. Hate property tax, hate eminent domain, hate transgender."
- "The social conservatives are definitely the loudest voice, but I think at the end of the legislative session we'll see that business conservatives are the most successful."
- "Social conservatives lost the top spot because they divided meiotically over goofy stuff, like the bathroom bill."
- "Social conservatives and Tea Party control the Senate. Business interests have a little moderating effect on the Governor. The House leadership shows an even more balanced appreciation for business, social, and tea agendas, and is most willing to buck bad ideas."
- "It's just a lot of noise."
- "Leading voice? Probably none of the above. They are all trying hard to be acknowledged as the leading voice, however."
- "Most Tea Party do not play with full deck. Or want to tape."
- "TLR is probably the leading voice right now."
- "Mixture."

- "They're running the show."
- "It seems as though the Tea Party folks and social conservatives are not necessarily 'business friendly' legislators. Many of them won their races without 'business' support and consider themselves 'of the people.'"
- "You must be kidding! Business interests still run the place, like they always have."
- "Anti-free market and pro-discrimination measures proposed and supported by the Lt. Gov. and several senators will send business out of state. The job creators and innovators in Texas have choices — and we will choose to build it and sell it elsewhere."
- "It's their own fault — they don't stand for anything."
- "The Capitol is about a business-friendly environment as you'll find

anywhere in America. Texas is still the very best place to do business — low taxes, light regulation, predictable legal environment."

- "See above, hate, hate, hate!"
- "The business community needs to wake up and get involved in primaries."
- "Not only is it worse, but it's different. Some legislators don't listen."
- "When you have an increasing number of legislators in leading positions who have forgotten (or never knew) the role business plays in maintaining employment, improving tax revenues, decreasing dependence on entitlements and all the other issues they say they care about, real progress only gets harder."
- "Briscoe Cain and Biedermann strong anti-business"

Does the Texas Association of Business face a credibility issue with GOP lawmakers after the release of its bathroom bill economic impact study?

- "They might have an issue in the east wing of the Capitol, but I'm pretty sure they're OK on the west side. Who the Hell knows what the south wing is thinking these days?"
- "That depends on the lawmaker. Some of our more partisan friends only find these impact studies credible if they align with that lawmaker's belief. Getting 'primaried' is their main concern."
- "Study was a joke."
- "TAB disregards the safety of women and children."
- "Again, primarily with social conservatives. With conventions already pulling out of the state and San Antonio legislators speaking out about it, their study is less important."
- "Talking about fake news!!"
- "TAB problems persist predictably while the business community fills void in Austin through industry groups."

- "The bathroom bill study was ridiculous, but they also opposed sanctuary cities. They are all Austin now — they have gone native. No serious legislator cares what they think anymore."

- "Certainly not, because Dr. Hotze didn't call TAB president Chris Wallace a liberal, pro-socialist and pro-homosexual Democrat."

- "After years of Bill Hammond's sleazy pay-for-play, TAB lost all credibility in the Capitol. The new guy has his work cut out for himself. The bathroom economic impact study was as helpful as an empty roll of toilet paper."

- "Bill Hammond had bled the group of their credibility for years. Chris Wallace has finished them off. There is nothing left but smoldering ashes."

- "The TAB faces credibility issues not because of the bathroom bill, but because they are a 'play-to-play' association. Just like TPPF and TLR."

- "It should. The bathroom bill is dumb, but TAB should debate the bill on its

Do you think a bathroom law would have a significant economic impact on the state?

- "Hard to say, but it's time to stand up to groups making demands on states, whether it's tax breaks, free services and they walk away with millions. Is the multiplier effect really accurate?"

- "I suppose there are at least two factors to determine economic impact: 1) costs to comply, and 2) potential lost revenue from events, tourism and businesses leaving or not locating here.

actual stupidity (requiring someone who has undergone gender transformation to use the opposite gender bathroom) and not on 'fake news' reasons. For example, the bill does not determine bathroom policy for private business. In fact, it specifically states that cities that pass a bathroom ordinance cannot have the ordinance govern a private businesses bathroom policy. Ironically, TAB is fighting a bill that actually protects business owners."

- "TAB loses credibility because they're a paper tiger."

- "TAB should've known better."

- "With some, their minds are made up, and they don't wish to be confused by the facts."

- "The credibility gap exists mainly with those members whose agenda is undermined by the report and who have ignored the other reports that tell much the same story."

Since the bill doesn't directly affect businesses, they will not have compliance costs; and the state won't have any costs because it doesn't require additional spending. The potential lost revenue has been overplayed, in my opinion. Look at the actual effect in N.C. and you'll see the media hype is much ado about nothing."

- "I think it could. A lot of it depends on enforcement. If someone is stopped (or worse, asked to 'prove' their gender through whatever means), and turns out to be a masculine-looking lady or a feminine-looking dude, I guarantee a lawsuit and hugely negative PR."
- "It's an empty threat."
- "Just the discussion is already costing the cities and state money."
- "Psychic damage too, from loss of sports events."
- "This is the biggest non-issue of non-issues. There is no 'there' there. It's just red meat for the extreme wings of both parties."
- "The biggest impact will be on the HVAC system in the Capitol from all the hot air from both sides"
- "Bathroom bill might well improve the economy — expand Texas' reputation as a haven for good old American values."
- "Blah blah blah NBA blah blah blah NFL. Love that they won't take a stand and on social issues unless it is gender and sexual preference related. Blackmailed browbeaten by fascists."
- "All depends on the final language, but I give it one chance in 20 of ever making it to the House floor."
- "Would show we are ideologues."
- "Just ask North Carolina."
- "My question is this: Who has been harmed? What evidence exists to substantiate the need for this bill?"
- "Whatever happened to the principle that a government governs best that governs least?"
- "Overheard: 'I can't imagine putting 'Bathroom Press Conference' on my calendar.' (in reference to the Lucio/Patrick presser this week)."
- "All bad. Fixing a problem that doesn't exist. Except in Brenham."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Brandon Alderete, Clyde Alexander, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, Raif Calvert, Lydia Camarillo, Harold Cook, Kevin Cooper, Randy Cubriel, Beth Cubriel, Curtis Culwell, Denise Davis, June Deadrick, Tom Duffy, Jeff Eller, John Esparza, Jon Fisher, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Kinnan Golemon, Daniel Gonzalez, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Susan Hays, John Heasley, Steve Holzheuser, Kathy Hutto, Deborah Ingersoll, Mark Jones, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Pete Laney, Bill Lauderback, Dick Lavine, Luke Legate, Ruben Longoria, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Vinny Minchillo, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Todd Olsen, Jerod Patterson, Robert Peeler, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Richard Pineda, Allen Place, Gary Polland, Jay Propes, Ted Melina Raab, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, A.J. Rodriguez, Grant Ruckel, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Robert Scott, Ben Sebree, Nancy Sims, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Mark Smith, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Sherry Sylvester, Sara Tays, Vicki Truitt, Corbin Van Arsdale, Chris Wallace, David White, Woody Widrow, Michael Williams, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.