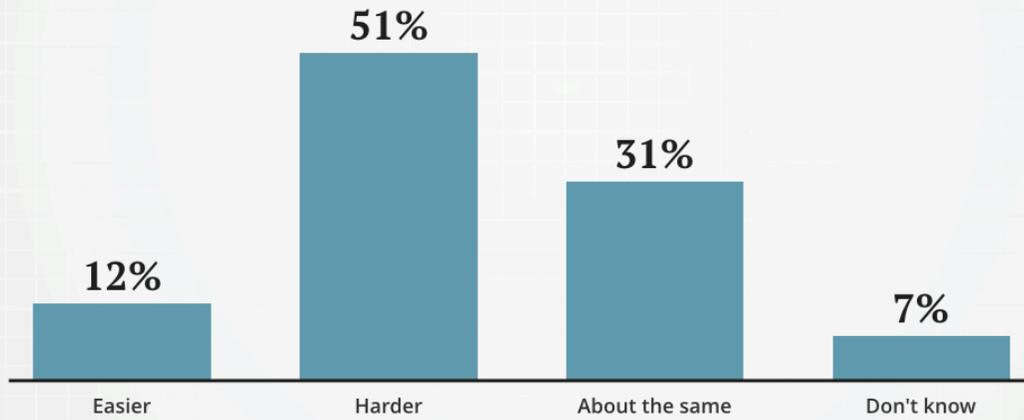


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of 5 May 2017*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

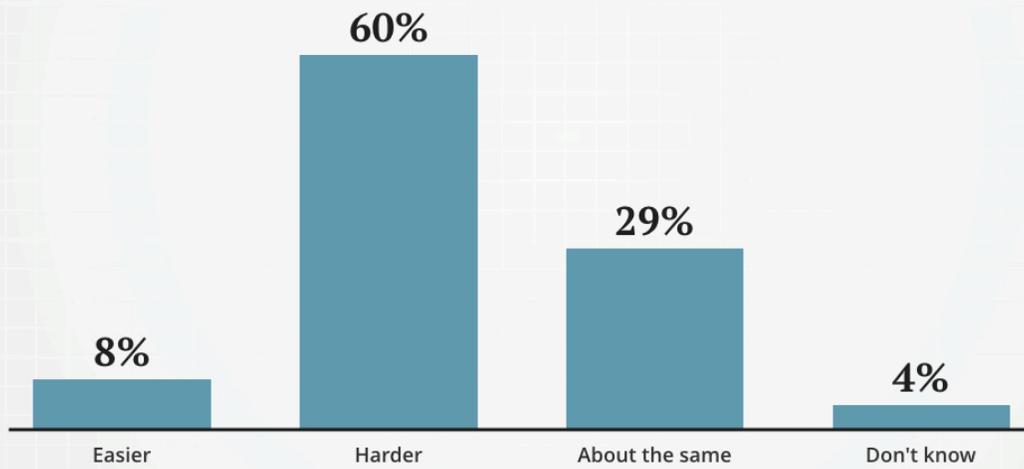
Compared to previous sessions, has this Legislature been easier or harder for lobbyists in general?



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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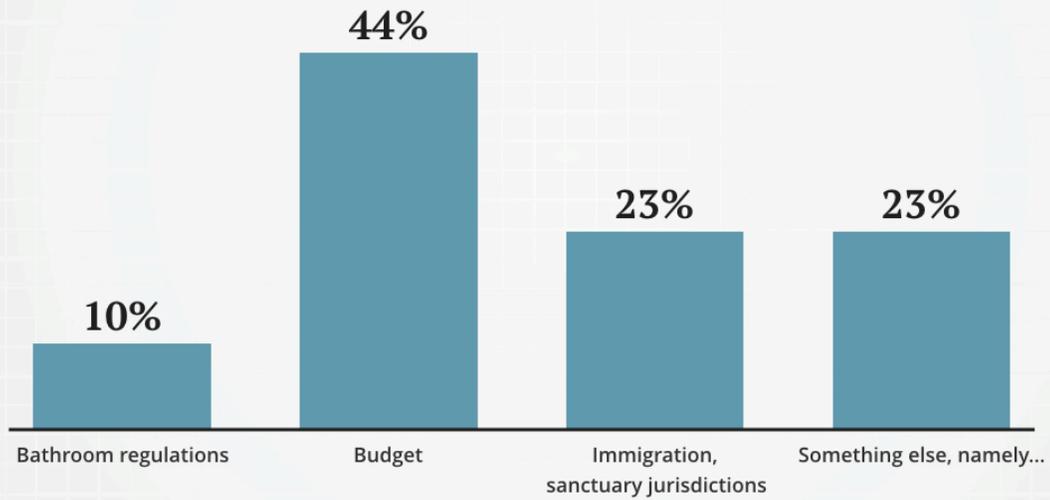
Has this Legislature been easier or harder for your clients or causes in particular?



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Which of these has proven to be the biggest motivating issue this session?

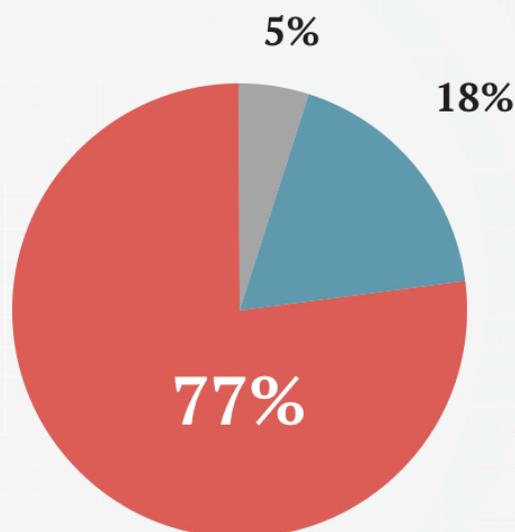


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**Historically,
it's been easier
to kill bills than
to pass them.
But has the
formula changed
this session?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know



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Compared to previous sessions, has this Legislature been easier or harder for lobbyists in general?

- "2nd and 3rd term members have a different way of approaching legislative business — no deep dive into details of issues or budget... although they think abbreviated review and discussion is the way to go... results in lack of big picture understanding and minimizes huge gaps in funding."
- "Some of the members are behaving more oddly than usual, maybe a result of the wingnuts, or because of the House-Senate divide, but most issues and members are about as difficult as usual."
- "Much more difficult. There's a general grumpy vibe in the building this session with so many new factions at each other's throats. And any influence you may have had in the past is out the window now. It's Patrick v. Straus, and that's it."
- "Ask me on June 19, 2017."
- "Harder, it is actually being driven some by legislators and non-lobbyists, aka voters. Novel thought, eh?"

- "Nobody's that busy, so it's easier to grab some time."
- "Extremely volatile session in which members are especially anxious."
- "Depends on your issues."
- "Lobbyists are people who are paid to develop and use personal relationships in order to advance legislation. They are held in increasing contempt by both the left and the right. This is a good thing."
- "They seem to be having a more difficult time."
- "Yes, it is harder but not because of the high-profile social issues, the money fights or any personalities in leadership. It has been getting harder to effectively lobby many topics over the last 15-20 years due to some big trends, including the web, the Tea Party, increased polarization of our political culture, and Republican dominance of statewide offices. Those trends are going to continue, and it will be even harder next session ... regardless of the issues, the budget or who's in leadership."
- "I keep my expectations so low I'm rarely disappointed."
- "No change. Don't listen to the whiners, it's always been hard out here for a pimp."
- "There are no clear ideological lines, making identification of allies and adversaries more difficult."
- "Well, I don't know about the big corporate lobbyists but it sure as hell hasn't been easy for the public ed/higher ed, teachers, LBGTQ and social justice and immigrant rights advocates this session. Those poor folks have been running around with a target plastered on their backs."
- "Harder — that's what I tell my clients and I don't want any word getting out to the contrary."
- "Less work because the bill referral dragged out and so few bills have made it out of committee."
- "As usual: depends on what you're lobbying for."

Has this Legislature been easier or harder for your clients or causes in particular?

- "Less information known by legislators and less information shared with constituents."
- "Some of the members are behaving more oddly than usual, maybe a result of the wingnuts, or because of the House-Senate divide, but most issues and members are about as difficult as usual."
- "Surprisingly, slightly easier in the Senate than in the past."
- "Let me spell it: F-I-S-C-A-L note."
- "My folks who rely on public services are totally ignored."
- "The Republicans' (at least on the Senate and to a lesser extent the House)

war against business interests has made this session one for the history books — or at least rattles some alarm bells for what may still come in future years."

- "This depends on the lobbyist, the issue, the committee members and other details much more than the general legislative atmosphere."

- "Easier. Thanks goodness for bathrooms, immigrants, private schools, Warren Buffett, TABC, and all the other shiny objects that have distracted them this session!"

Which of these has proven to be the biggest motivating issue this session?

- "If immigration is a big deal, and the two sides can make a deal, then things can all work out."

- "Trying to figure out how a conservative state government fits in a new federal order. Frankly, no one knows what to do."

- "All three... something for everyone to get pissed off about."

- "Republican Primary voters"

- "State control trumps local control over taxation, car sharing, tree-cutting, when and how to have elections, etc."

- "Question is not clear. 'Motivating' for whom?"

- "The disagreements between business Republicans and Tea Party Republicans."

- "Everything!"

- "There are no clear ideological lines, making identification of allies and adversaries more difficult."

- "No one seems to want to listen anymore. They've all got their agenda or their orders to carry out someone else's agenda, and they just don't listen to logic, rhyme or reason."

- "Because so few bills are moving."

- "The social issues have totally obscured the budget/tax changes, which will slowly decay Texas' future."

- "The respective efforts of the Upper and Lower Chambers to thoroughly screw each other have been about the only thing that has been motivating to the Members. For the lobby, the motivation is as it always has been: MONEY."

- "Our state is going down the toilet when bathroom regulations are one of the top three issues of the session!"

- "All of the above"

- "Too soon to tell. Too many issues are still on the bubble. In 6-12 weeks from now, most of us will agree on what the one or two key issues were, but until the chips fall it's not clear which ones those are. Sanctuary cities may turn out to be the 800-pound gorilla, or school

finance/vouchers, or SB 6 or (name your topic)."

- "The 2018 Primary Election."
- "The budget. When money is tight, it's always the budget. Period."
- "How about all of the above!"
- "Other issues may get more media attention, but the budget is always king. Especially in a tight money session."
- "Fear of MQS."

• "It is always the budge, but we must stop the micturating in wrong bathrooms."

- "Bad staff. I see that Turkey canned 4,000 public employees this weekend. If we did that, we could replace almost the entire staff of the Senate — and at just the right time!!!"
- "Mean-spirited short-sightedness"
- "Poor leadership in both houses as well as by the Governor."
- "Preemption"

Historically, it's been easier to kill bills than to pass them. But has the formula changed this session?

- "When bills aren't referred quickly, time works in favor of the killing fields."
- "If you don't need to pass anything, this has been a great session."
- "The Senate will pass ANYTHING."
- "Especially in the Senate"
- "Several things about this session have 'felt' different than the historical norm, but they weren't truly different when compared to the actual stats. So, on this question my money is on 'no change,' meaning that in June the percentage of bills making it to the Governor's desk this session will be within the typical historical range —

even though right now it feels like it is easier to kill bills than in the past."

- "Ask me @ midnight on Thursday the 11th."
- "Even easier, thanks to the House plan to clog the final few calendars."
- "Even easier than in years past. Building a coalition on business-friendly issues has proven to be very difficult."
- "It's damn near impossible to get a bill passed in the House this session. The axiom holds."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Jennifer Ahrens, Brandon Alderete, Clyde Alexander, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, Kerry Cammack, Randy Cubriel, Beth Cubriel, Denise Davis, Eva De Luna-Castro, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Jeff Eller, Jon Fisher, Dominic Giarratani, Eric Glenn, Kinnan Golemon, John Greytok, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Jennifer Harris, Deborah Ingersoll, Mark Jones, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Nick Lampson, Pete Laney, Bill Lauderback, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Luke Legate, Ruben Longoria, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Vinny Minchillo, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Nelson Nease, Robert Peeler, Wayne Pierce, Allen Place, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Jay Propes, Ted Melina Raab, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, Grant Ruckel, Tyler Ruud, Andy Sansom, Barbara Schlieff, Robert Scott, Ben Sebree, Christopher Shields, Ed Small, Mark Smith, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Jim Suydam, Sherry Sylvester, Vicki Truitt, Corbin Van Arsdale, Chris Wallace, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Michael Williams, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.