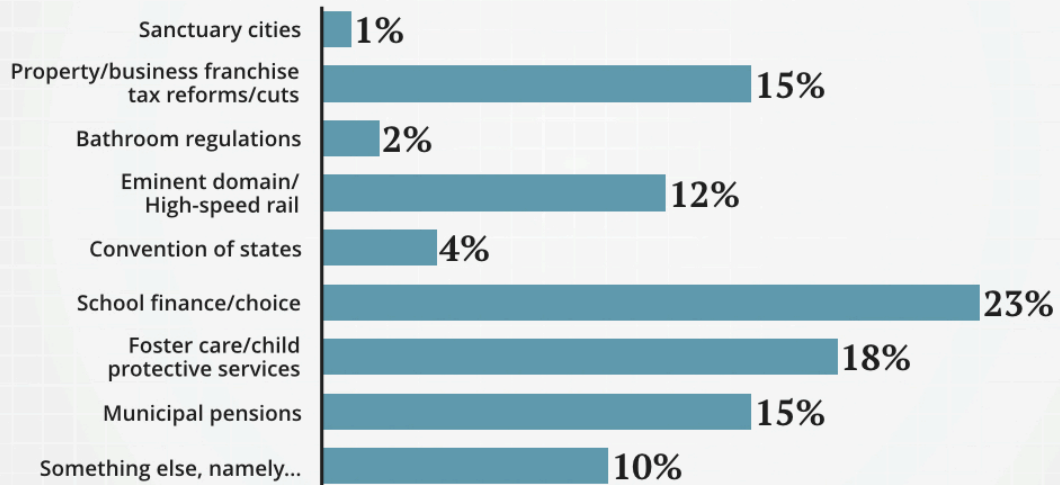


# “INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll  
for the week of 12 May 2017*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

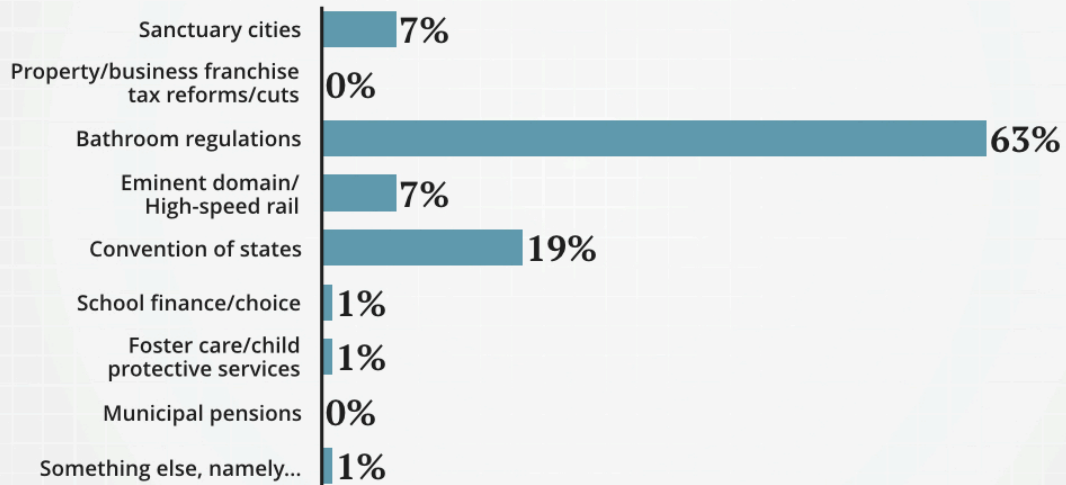
## What's been the most underrated issue this session?



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

## INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

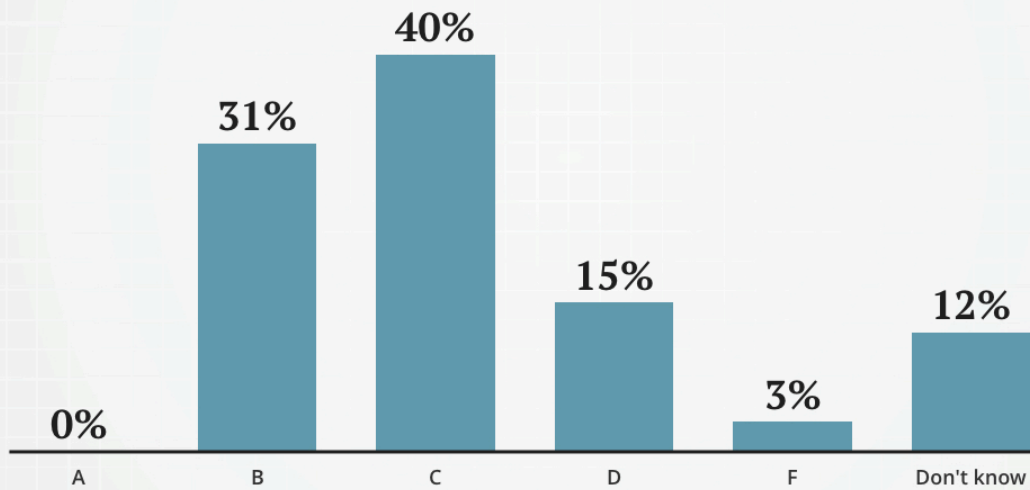
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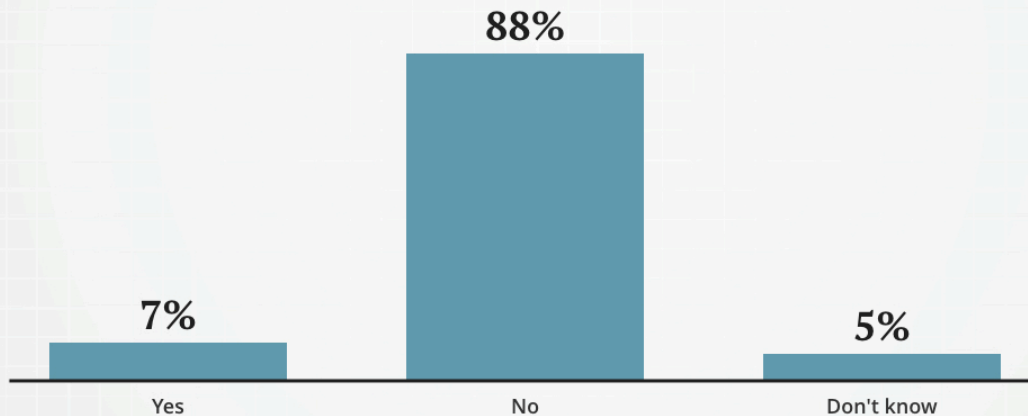
**As things stand right now, what grade do you give the Lege's budget writers?**



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## INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

### With the bill-killing season about to start, is it time to rethink the May deadlines to move bills in the House?



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### ***What's been the most underrated issue this session?***

- "ERS and TRS health coverage costs."
- "Retired teacher health insurance"
- "The silence has been deafening. PC run amok."
- "Erosion of local control at record levels."
- "If anyone were paying attention, the absurd bills to wipe out the state's third largest source of tax revenue, without a replacement, would never have made it out of committee. Instead, each chamber has passed a version. Let's hope it ends there, with everyone going home, satisfied with having shown how big and bold they are."
- "School finance is what's going to get us all in the end."
- "Coastal Spine-related bills."
- "The so-called 'bathroom' issue has been debated along simplistic and petty lines without any discussion of the long term implications of allowing individuals to declare that they are a different sex. We may want to be cool with the idea that a man can simply

declare himself to be a woman, but we still must consider the impact on Title IX, on set-aside programs for women and minority-owned businesses and on protections for women in the workplace... all places where this issue is just beginning to bubble up."

- "School finance, but not so much choice — that always grabs headlines and this session with those phony letters, not good ones. But, when will others — beyond the House — get serious about properly funding Texas public schools and reducing the reliance on local taxpayers to carry the load?"
- "Tax cuts; if passed, they are going to blow a massive hole in future budgets and make this session's budget fights look tame."

### ***What's been the most overrated issue this session?***

- "It won't do what it promises, which is why most states are nixing the notion. And repealing all prior calls for a constitutional convention."
- "Talk about a manufactured issue..."
- "Few care, really care about bathrooms. They may like or fear the polling, but c'mon. When have you ever heard of a real-life case in your hometown where a bathroom went awry?"
- "Bathroom regulations are nothing more than political grandstanding, and it's tiresome."
- "The convention of the states kerfuffle was the biggest waste of times since

• "Should be the most important issue, but it really kind of went away."

• "The Senate has addressed everything on the list — the House... not so much. The most underrated issue of the session is the House's inability to get their work done."

• "So much money at play it is surprising that the pension bills haven't garnered near the hype because bathrooms and sanctuary cities dominate the landscape."

• "Texas nursing home reform."

• "Property insurance legal restrictions"

Pee Wee Herman went looking for the basement of the Alamo."

• "The Senate has addressed everything on the list — the House... not so much. The most overrated issue of the session is the House's inability to get their work done."

• "Convention of states has to be one of the silliest legislative efforts in decades. Right up there with the purple paint bill of a few sessions ago."

• "This is the most ridiculous piece of legislation garnering this much attention nationwide. Legislators are so intent to violate the civil rights of trans people about where they can pee and poop in public. The Republicans talk as

if trans people are dropping deuces in plain sight!"

***As things stand right now, what grade do you give the Lege's budget writers?***

- "N/A."
- "That's an average — the House gets a B and the Senate gets an F?"
- "Until the 'fat lady' sings, there's no way to know, but anything taken from the 'Rainy Day Fund' will play in the next election cycle."
- "You can't tell until you have a final budget."
- "I-incomplete. They've not yet completed their work. Each side has done what they're supposed to do — write a budget representing the desires of its leadership — and now they're smack in the middle of the fun stuff."
- "House gets an A for being practical. Senate gets an F for being ideological. Average is a C."
- "Who can say? They are apparently in an undisclosed secure location, making deals."
- "Too early to say."
- "I give the House a B. The Senate would barely pass, and that's only if I grade on a curve."
- "Somehow members who oppose new taxes and demand a pay-as-you-go budget are OK with depositing billions in taxes in the ESF and doing nothing with those billions. The voters overwhelmingly approve spending money on transportation and they move those obligations into the next biennial budget. Maybe pay-as-you-go means different things to different people? Businesses pay fees to ensure that permits for new businesses can be issued promptly and we cut the budgets of the agencies while unexpended fees accumulate in the Treasury. All in the name of a 'balanced budget.' Make that a D-."
- "F — they have failed to produce an agreed budget and there doesn't seem to be a deal coming during the regular session."

***With the bill-killing season about to start, is it time to rethink the May deadlines to move bills in the House?***

- "Rules are fine. It's up to both responsible and irresponsible members how they choose to follow them either for the benefit of all or to weaponize."
- "The hold-up does not appear to be in the House."
- "I would actually move the bill death deadline UP some."
- "The 'system' isn't broken, but some of the players are."

- "If deadlines are changed it should be to kill more bills. This state could get by just fine with a budget and 50 passed bills."
- "If by rethink you mean move them up a week or two, then YES!"
- "It is called limited government."
- "On the whole, the fewer bills that pass, the better."
- "It's time to rethink the Calendars committee."
- "Anything that kills more bill is fine with me."
- "The deadlines are necessary to the process, but also a good judge of one's ability to be effective during a session."
- "No — unless you want to move them EARLIER. Then we're all ears."
- "It keeps things moving."
- "Hopefully, by the time we get to the second or third special session, the House will learn to get their work done. Giving the House more time wouldn't help."
- "If you mean to change the deadlines to further kill bills in the House then I am in favor, but if you are asking to make it easier to pass bills then HELL NO!"
- "The deadlines were instituted to prevent last minute surprises but have resulted in the death of much good public policy."
- "Best thing the House ever did!"

***Our thanks to this week's participants:*** Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Jennifer Ahrens, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, Raif Calvert, Kevin Cooper, Randy Cubriel, Denise Davis, June Deadrick, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Jeff Eller, Jon Fisher, Tom Forbes, Neftali Garcia, Dominic Giarratani, Eric Glenn, Kinnan Golemon, John Greytok, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Jennifer Harris, Susan Hays, John Heasley, Steve Holzheuser, Deborah Ingersoll, Richie Jackson, Mark Jones, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Pete Laney, Bill Lauderback, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Luke Legate, Ruben Longoria, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Vinny Minchillo, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Robert Peeler, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Allen Place, Kraege Polan, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Jay Propes, Ted Melina Raab, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, Grant Ruckel, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Robert Scott, Ben Sebree, Christopher Shields, Nancy Sims, Ed Small, Mark Smith, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Jim Suydam, Sherry Sylvester, Vicki Truitt, Corbin Van Arsdale, Chris Wallace, Ware Wendell, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Michael Williams, Angelo Zottarelli.