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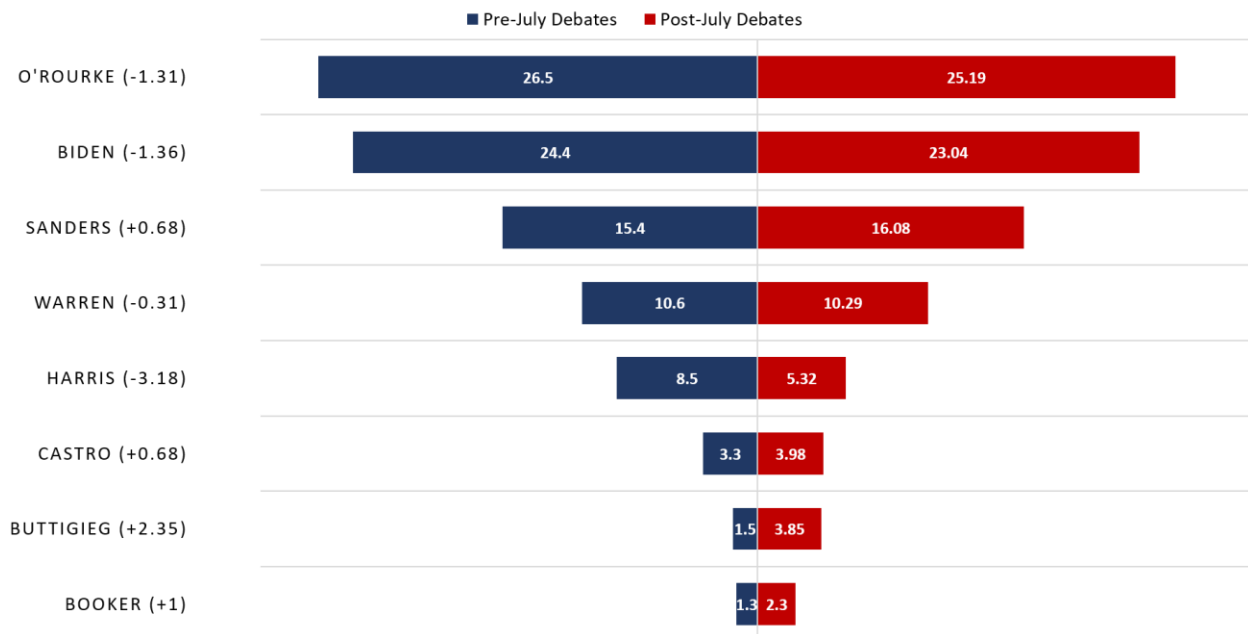
Texas Opinion Survey

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POST-DEMOCRATIC DEBATES: BIDEN & BETO ARE NECK-AND-NECK

Tyler, Texas – In the wake of last week's Democratic presidential primary debates, former-Congressman Beto O'Rourke (25%) and former Vice President Joe Biden (23%) continue to lead the field among registered Texas Democrats. They are followed by Senators Bernie Sanders (16%), Elizabeth Warren (10%), and Kamala Harris (5%).

2020 TEXAS DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY SUPPORT

■ Pre-July Debates   ■ Post-July Debates

Candidate	Pre-July Debates	Post-July Debates
O'ROURKE (-1.31)	26.5	25.19
BIDEN (-1.36)	24.4	23.04
SANDERS (+0.68)	15.4	16.08
WARREN (-0.31)	10.6	10.29
HARRIS (-3.18)	8.5	5.32
CASTRO (+0.68)	3.3	3.98
BUTTIGIEG (+2.35)	1.5	3.85
BOOKER (+1)	1.3	2.3

When asked which candidate they believe did the best job in the debates, regardless of their personal support for the nomination, 19 percent of those who watched all or some of both debates chose Senator Warren, with O'Rourke (18%), Sanders (15%), Biden (15%), and Harris (10%) also earning double-digit backing. Additionally, about 13 percent of Democratic and Democratic-leaning respondents said the debates changed their support for a candidate, while the events affirmed the support of others (43%) and 45 percent are still deciding. Post-debate coverage had no bearing on their assessments of the candidates.

Of the 282-person panel of Democrats who watched all or some of all four Democratic primary debates in June and July, support for "Medicare for All" plans that eliminate private insurance plans increased by 3 percent, while plans that would allow private insurance lost 6 percent support. That said, a noticeable number of respondents shifted from *opposition to* or *support for* the elimination of private plans in July to having a neutral position (17%). Furthermore, about 12 percent of respondents shifted from a clear position (support or opposition) on "Medicare for All" as a general policy choice to having a neutral position. These results suggest that the ongoing debate among Democratic candidates about which path to universal healthcare is the most viable is impacting the attitudes of many Texas primary voters – who have not yet settled on which path they support.

The panel's shift in attitudes toward decriminalizing border crossings is starker. Nine percent of panelists who in June supported or were neutral toward repealing the law that makes unauthorized border crossings a crime moved to opposing the measure in the July survey. On the other hand, 33 percent of panelists who in June opposed the repeal moved to *supporting* it in the July. Overall, support for decriminalizing border crossings increased by 7 percent, while opposition declined by 2 percent.

Democratic voters still want someone who can beat President Trump in the general election. When asked to rank in order of importance the characteristics they prefer in a Democratic nominee, voters chose "electability" as their top priority (45%). President Donald Trump's job approval is down another point from our last survey in July. It now stands at 39 percent approval among all registered Texans. His disapproval stands at 53 percent, including 15 percent of registered Republicans and 56 percent of Independents.
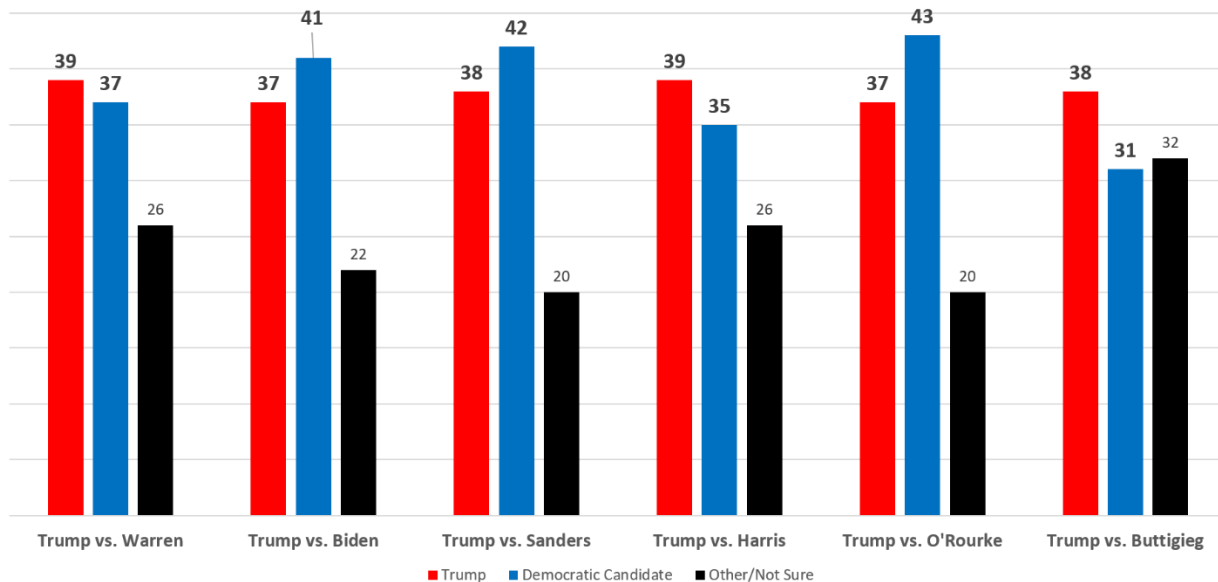
In head to head contests, President Trump is trailing Joe Biden (-4), Bernie Sanders (-4), and Beto O'Rourke (-6), though a sizable percentage of respondents answered "neither/other" or "not sure" in each contest. Trump currently leads Elizabeth Warren (+2 but within the margin of error), Kamala Harris (+4), and Pete Buttigieg (+7), though again, a large percentage of respondents is undecided.

Senator John Cornyn, heading into the 2020 reelection cycle, is at 36 percent approval, with 30 percent disapproving and a sizable 35 percent answering, "Don't know." Between this week and last, the number of voters who are unsure about their opinion about Senator Cornyn has dropped 13 percent. This change is led by 10% more of the electorate who now approve and 3% who disapprove. Voters are certainly noticing the increased campaign activity related to the U.S. Senate campaign in Texas.

On issues, 55 percent of registered Texans support expanding "Medicare for all" (20% oppose it), particularly when private insurance plans are allowed. Nevertheless, expanding "Medicare for all" while eliminating private insurance plans is less popular (40% support eliminating private insurance, 33% oppose it). So, too, is the idea of decriminalizing unauthorized border crossings (33% either "somewhat" or "strongly" disapprove while 29% "somewhat" or "strongly" approve), an issue that continued to be spotlighted in July's Democratic debates.

This poll was conducted over a four-day period (08/01/19 – 08/04/19).

Methodology

Online

The UT Tyler-Texas Opinion Survey poll was also conducted using a Survey Sampling International panel of registered voters that opt-in to take surveys. This is known as Aristotle. The online panel generated a sample of 1261 registered Texas voters, 18 or older.

The data were weighted to be representative of Texas adults. The weighting balanced sample demographics to population parameters. The sample is balanced to match parameters for gender, age, race/ethnicity, and education using through an iterated process known as raking. These parameters were derived from 2016 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Tables. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the characteristics of the sample closely reflect the characteristics of registered voters in Texas.

In this poll, the sampling error for 1261 registered voters in Texas is +/- 2.8 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval.

Survey of Registered Voters in Texas

Using a 7-point scale where 1 is extremely liberal and 7 is extremely conservative, how would you rate your political views.

		Weighted
1.	Extremely liberal	7.6%
2.	Liberal	12.8
3.	Slightly Liberal	9.7
4.	Moderate, Middle of the Road	30.5
5.	Slightly Conservative	10.0
6.	Conservative	19.4
7.	Extremely Conservative	10.0
	Total = 1,189	

Are you very enthusiastic, somewhat enthusiastic, somewhat unenthusiastic, or very unenthusiastic about voting in the March primary?

		Weighted	Dem.	Ind. Dem	Ind. Rep.	Rep.
1.	Very Enthusiastic	40.3%	47.0%	33.1%	21.6%	46.3%
2.	Somewhat Enthusiastic	29.9	34.8	23.2	28.2	30.5
3.	No opinion	19.3	13.8	18.8	29.9	13.5
4.	Somewhat Unenthusiastic	6.7	4.0	19.0	6.9	7.1
5.	Very Unenthusiastic	3.9	0.4	5.9	14.0	2.7
	Total = 1,256		453	80	91	496

Do you consider yourself to be a Republican, Democrat, or neither?

		Weighted
1.	Republican	37.6%
2.	Democrat	38.5
3.	Neither	24.9
	Total = 1,261	

[If independent, no preference, or other party] Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?

		Weighted
1.	Democrat	44.1%
2.	Republican	55.9
	Total = 172	

[If Republican or Lean Republican] In the Texas Republican primary next year, do you support Donald Trump or prefer a different candidate?

		Weighted	Rep.	Ind.
1.	Strongly Support	57.0%	60.7%	37.4%
2.	Somewhat Support	21.8	21.4	24.0
3.	Not Sure	7.1	6.3	11.1
4.	Somewhat Support a Different Candidate	6.5	6.1	8.8
5.	Strongly Support a Different Candidate	7.7	5.6	18.6
	Total = 587		495	92

[If Republican & Selected a Different Candidate] In the general election, if Donald Trump is the Republican nominee, would you be willing to vote for the Democratic nominee?

		Weighted	Ind.	Rep.
1.	Yes	57.5%	50.9%	61.1%
2.	No	43.5	49.1	38.9
5.	Not Sure	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total = 63		22	41

[If Democrat or Independent closer to Democratic Party] Who is your FIRST choice candidate in the Democratic primary?

	Dem.	Ind. (Lean D)	Weighted (D & Lean D)
Beto O'Rourke	25.2%	10.3%	23.3%
Joe Biden	23.0	27.3	23.6
Bernie Sanders	16.0	28.2	17.6
Elizabeth Warren	10.3	8.7	10.1
Kamala Harris	5.3	2.7	5.0
Julian Castro	4.0	4.9	4.1
Pete Buttigieg	3.9	8.9	4.5
Cory Booker	2.3	0.2	2.0
Andrew Yang	1.8	2.0	1.8
Amy Klobuchar	1.4	0.2	0.3
Tulsi Gabbard	0.8	0.7	0.8
Michael Bennet	0.8	0.0	0.7
Kirsten Gillibrand	0.7	0.0	0.6
Bill de Blasio	0.6	0.0	0.5
Marianne Williamson	0.6	0.0	0.5
Joe Sestak	0.6	0.0	0.5
Tom Steyer	0.5	2.8	0.8
Steve Bullock	0.5	0.0	0.4
Tim Ryan	0.5	0.0	0.4
John Hickenlooper	0.4	3.1	0.7
Wayne Messam	0.4	0.0	0.3
John Delaney	0.3	0.0	0.3
Jay Inslee	0.2	0.0	0.2
Seth Moulton	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total =	454	80	534

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[If Democrat] Please list in order of importance the following characteristics you prefer in a Democratic nominee for president.

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5
Electability	44.9%	18.6%	13.0%	10.9%	12.7%
Closest to [my] issues	27.4	20.9	22.0	20.3	9.4
Will appeal to independents	9.3	26.8	25.3	20.1	18.6
Will energize the base	8.5	17.7	25.8	27.0	20.1
Aligns with President Obama's policy agenda	10.0	16.0	14.1	21.7	38.3

Total = 515

Did you watch all, some, or none of the first Democratic Debate on July 30 and July 31?

		Weighted
1.	I watched all of both debates	20.9%
2.	I watched some of both debates	38.1
3.	I watched none of both debates	41.0
	Total = 1,256	

[If Watched the Debate] Regardless of who you support, which candidate do you think did the best job in the July debates?

	Dem & Lean Dem	Weighted (All)	Dem.	Ind. (Lean D)	Ind. (Lean R)	Rep.
Elizabeth Warren	18.5%	13.5	19.3%	10.9%	10.1%	7.9%
Beto O'Rourke	18.2	13.3	18.4	16.8	4.4	7.7
Joe Biden	15.2	17.0	14.9	18.6	19.7	19.6
Bernie Sanders	14.8	13.2	15.1	12.0	0.0	10.5
Kamala Harris	9.4	9.5	9.7	6.8	23.0	7.9
Cory Booker	3.2	2.5	2.9	6.2	0.0	1.5
Marianne Williamson	3.4	3.1	3.4	0.0	3.6	3.1
Julian Castro	3.1	3.3	3.4	0.5	1.2	2.3
Tulsi Gabbard	2.6	5.3	2.3	4.7	12.2	9.0
Tim Ryan	2.4	2.2	1.6	9.9	0.0	2.4
Bill de Blasio	1.8	1.2	2.0	0.3	0.0	0.4
Kirsten Gillibrand	1.7	3.0	1.6	2.8	3.3	4.6
Andrew Yang	1.5	3.0	1.7	0.0	10.6	4.3
Pete Buttigieg	1.1	2.5	1.2	0.8	4.9	4.2
Steve Bullock	1.1	1.6	1.2	0.0	2.9	2.0
John Hickenlooper	0.9	1.3	0.6	3.8	3.5	1.6
Jay Inslee	0.6	0.6	0.0	5.9	0.0	0.7
John Delaney	0.3	2.4	0.4	0.0	0.7	6.2
Amy Klobuchar	0.4	1.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	2.9
Michael Bennet	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	1.2
Total =	368	734	324	44	55	253

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[If You Watched the Debate] Did watching the July debates change or affirm your support for a candidate? Or are you still deciding?

		Weighted	Dems & Lean D.	Dem	Rep & Lean R.
1.	Changed my support	10.6%	12.6%	13.2%	9.6%
2.	Affirmed my support	44.4	42.8	43.6	51.0
3.	Still Deciding	45.0	44.6	43.3	39.5
	Total = 712		348	305	304

[If You Did Not Watch the Debate] Did post-debate coverage of the July debates change or affirm your support for a candidate? Or are you still deciding?

		Weighted	Dems & Lean D.	Dem	Rep & Lean R.
1.	Changed my support	0.9%	0.1%	0.1%	1.1%
2.	Affirmed my support	30.9	13.4	13.0	50.9
3.	Still Deciding	68.2	86.5	86.8	48.0
	Total = 508		161	127	304

[If Democrat] Do you believe Julian Castro should or should not drop out of the presidential race?

		After Debate	Prior to Debate
1.	Should drop out	29.6%	21.1%
2.	Should not drop out	33.2	34.0
3.	Not sure	37.2	45.0
	Total = 453		

[If Democrat & Should Drop Out] Do you believe Julian Castro should run against John Cornyn for Senate?

		After Debate	Prior to Debate
1.	Yes, he should run against Cornyn	69.3%	55.9%
2.	No, he should not run	21.2	32.5
3.	Not sure	9.5	11.7
	Total = 141		

[If Democrat] Do you believe Beto O'Rourke should or should not drop out of the presidential race?

		After Debate	Prior to Debate
1.	Should drop out	25.8%	24.8%
2.	Should not drop out	56.9	58.9
3.	Not sure	17.3	16.3
	Total = 450		

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[If Democrat & Should Drop] Out Do you believe Beto O'Rourke should run against John Cornyn for Senate?

		After Debate	Prior to Debate
1.	Yes, he should run against Cornyn	71.1%	73.1%
2.	No, he should not run	14.9	18.6
3.	Not sure	14.0	8.3
	Total = 124		

If the general election for president were held today, for whom would you vote?

		Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
1.	Joe Biden	41.2%	78.5%	31.0%	9.6%
2.	Donald Trump	37.2	4.2	25.2	78.4
3.	Neither – Other	14.0	13.3	28.1	5.8
4.	Not sure	7.6	4.0	15.8	6.2
	Total = 1,259		467	311	496

If the general election for president were held today, for whom would you vote?

		Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
1.	Elizabeth Warren	37.4%	71.9%	26.7%	8.8%
2.	Donald Trump	38.8	5.6	27.5	80.0
3.	Neither – Other	16.0	17.8	27.9	6.5
4.	Not sure	7.9	4.7	17.9	4.7
	Total = 1,255		453	309	493

If the general election for president were held today, for whom would you vote?

		Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
1.	Kamala Harris	35.4%	68.4%	27.2%	6.8%
2.	Donald Trump	38.5	5.2	26.7	80.2
3.	Neither – Other	17.3	19.5	29.2	7.4
4.	Not sure	8.8	7.0	17.0	5.5
	Total = 1,257		453	310	494

If the general election for president were held today, for whom would you vote?

		Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
1.	Bernie Sanders	42.2%	82.9%	30.9%	7.7%
2.	Donald Trump	37.7	3.5	25.9	80.3
3.	Neither – Other	13.0	10.0	27.3	7.1
4.	Not sure	7.1	3.7	15.9	5.0
	Total = 1,251		450	308	493

If the general election for president were held today, for whom would you vote?

		Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
1.	Pete Buttigieg	31.2%	59.9%	23.5%	7.5%
2.	Donald Trump	37.5	5.4	24.0	78.9
3.	Neither – Other	21.6	28.4	32.7	7.7
4.	Not sure	9.7	7.0	19.8	6.0
	Total = 1,253		452	309	492

If the general election for president were held today, for whom would you vote?

		Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
1.	Beto O'Rourke	43.0%	78.4%	36.7%	10.6%
2.	Donald Trump	37.3	4.8	24.1	79.0
3.	Neither – Other	11.6	11.9	21.6	5.0
4.	Not sure	8.1	4.9	17.7	5.4
	Total = 1,257		452	310	495

In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way President Donald Trump is handling his job as President?

		Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
1.	Approve	38.9%	7.8%	28.6%	77.6%
2.	Disapprove	53.1	88.4	56.3	14.6
3.	Don't Know	8.0	3.8	15.1	7.8
	Total = 1,259		454	311	494

In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Senator John Cornyn is handling his job as Senator?

		Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
1.	Approve	35.5%	18.6%	22.3%	61.3%
2.	Disapprove	30.0	51.6	28.3	9.0
3.	Don't Know	34.5	29.8	49.4	29.0
	Total = 1,261		454	311	496

On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means Strongly Support and 5 means Strongly oppose, do you support or oppose expanding Medicare for all Americans?

	Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Strongly support	29.8%	44.3%	23.9%	16.3%
Support	25.4	31.8	28.3	17.3
Have a neutral position	17.4	15.3	23.2	16.2
Oppose	11.9	4.6	12.2	19.2
Strongly oppose	15.4	1.9	12.5	40.0
Total = 1,214		444	287	483

On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means Strongly Support and 5 means Strongly oppose, do you support or oppose expanding Medicare and eliminating private insurance plans?

	Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Strongly support	15.0%	25.5%	10.0%	7.5%
Support	17.3	22.1	17.6	123
Have a neutral position	21.5	25.4	21.7	17.5
Oppose	19.2	15.9	24.6	19.3
Strongly oppose	27.0	11.2	26.2	43.5
Total = 1,206		435	287	484

On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means Strongly Support and 5 means Strongly oppose, do you support or oppose expanding Medicare and allowing private insurance plans?

	Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Strongly support	17.8%	24.3%	14.1%	13.4%
Support	32.2	38.5	29.3	27.4
Have a neutral position	28.6	23.7	36.2	29.3
Oppose	11.4	9.3	11.1	13.7
Strongly oppose	10.0	4.2	9.4	16.4
Total = 1,204		437	288	479

On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means Strongly Support and 5 means Strongly oppose, do you support or oppose repealing the federal law that makes unauthorized border crossings a misdemeanor crime?

	Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Strongly support	16.1%	22.2%	10.8%	13.1%
Support	17.0	24.5	17.9	8.6
Have a neutral position	23.8	31.2	26.7	14.6
Oppose	15.3	12.8	21.1	14.5
Strongly oppose	27.8	9.3	23.5	49.2
Total = 1,192		436	282	474

Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way migrants attempting to cross the U.S. border are being treated by the U.S. government?

	Weighted	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Strongly approve	19.2%	9.1%	10.0%	35.4%
Somewhat approve	19.5	10.4	19.2	29.0
Neutral	19.4	16.9	23.7	19.1
Somewhat disapprove	16.1	19.5	20.6	9.8
Strongly disapprove	25.8	44.1	26.6	6.7
Total = 1,227		438	305	484

Demographic Questions

What do you identify as your racial or ethnic background?

	Weighted
White	57.7%
Hispanic or Latino	24.7
Black or African American	13.4
Asian	1.1
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.1
Two or more races	1.0
Total =	1,261

What is the highest level of education you have attained?

	Weighted
Did not finish high school	2.4%
High school graduation, no college	16.1
High school graduation, some college	26.9
Completed Associate's Degree	14.0
Completed Bachelor's Degree	31.2
Completed Bachelor's Degree and some Graduate or Professional coursework	6.5
Completed Graduate or Professional Degree	2.9
Total =	1,261

What is your age?

	Weighted
18-29	23.0%
30-44	28.7
45-59	26.3
60-64	6.5
65+	15.6
Total =	1,261

What is your marital status?

	Weighted
Married	50.2%
Divorced/Separated	11.5
Single	38.3
Total = 1,255	

How would you best describe your religious affiliation?

	Weighted
Roman Catholic	25.2%
Evangelical Protestant	19.3
Mainline Protestant	15.3
African-American Protestant	6.7
Church of Latter Day Saints	1.3
Jewish	1.0
Other	2.6
Secular/No Religious Affiliation	24.8
Muslim	0.3
Christian – unaffiliated	3.2

Total = 1,258

How frequently do you attend worship services?

	Weighted
Never/hardly ever	37.4%
A few times a year	23.0
Once or twice a month	10.9
Almost every week	12.7
Once a week or more	16.0

Total = 1,260

What is your gender?

	Weighted
Male	48.8%
Female	51.2

Total = 1,261

What is your approximate level of household income?

	Weighted
Less than $30,000	22.0%
$30,000-$49,999	19.7
$50,000-$74,999	20.3
$75,000-$99,999	13.2
$100,000-$149,999	15.4
$150,000-$199,999	5.2
$200,000-$299,999	2.6
$300,000 or more	1.8

Total = 1,199

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Methodology

The UT Tyler-Texas Opinion Survey poll was also conducted using a Dynata of registered voters that opt-in to take surveys. The online panel generated a sample of 1,261 registered voters during a four day period from between August 1 and August 4.

The sample is unique because it includes 757 interviews of respondents who participated in the random registered voter survey from July 24-27. The sample was also enhanced with the addition of 504 new random registered voters that were not part of the initial study. The data were weighted to be representative of the Texas register voter population. Iterative weighting was used to balance sample demographics to the state population parameters. The sample is balanced to match parameters for gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, and geography using an iterated process known as raking. These parameters were derived from 2016 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Tables, as well as voter registration information from the Texas Secretary of State's Office. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the characteristics of the sample closely reflect the characteristics of registered voters in Texas.

In this poll, the sampling error for 1261 registered voters in Texas is +/- 2.8 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval.

Visit http://www.uttyler.edu/politicalscience/pollingcenter for more information about our current and previous study.