

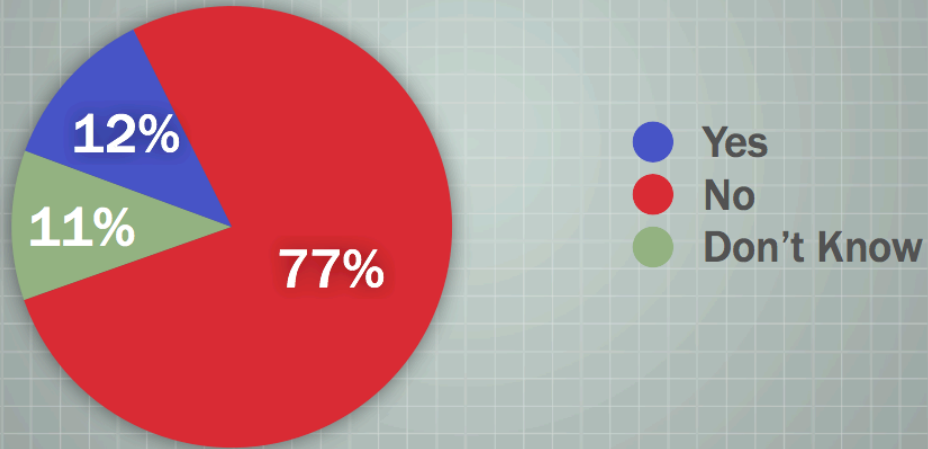
“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

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*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of January 28*

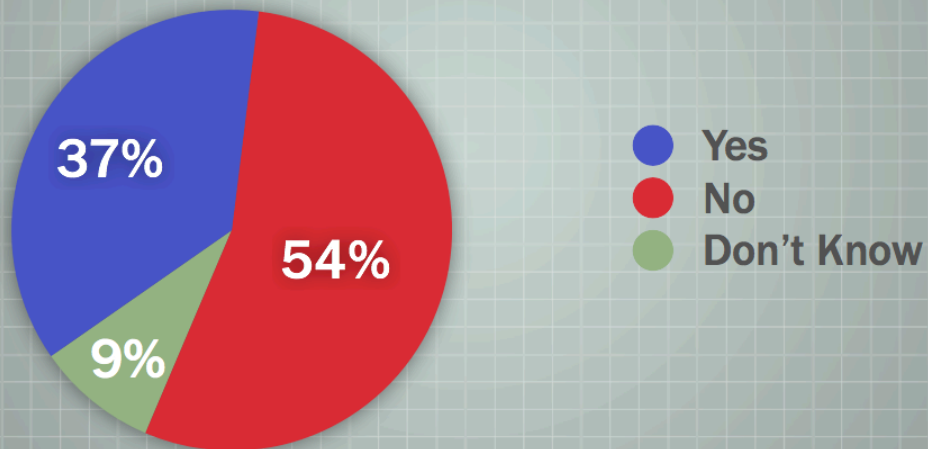
INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

Would the federal government let Texas expand Medicaid as it sees fit?



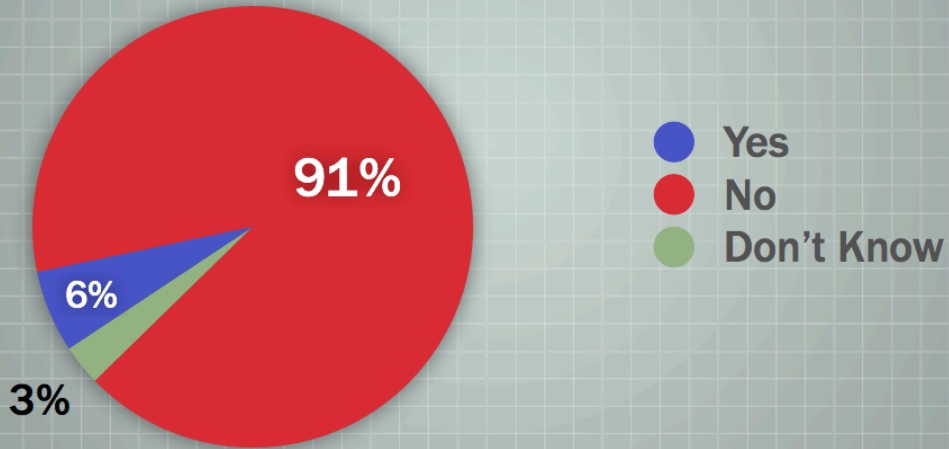
INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

Will the state opt to expand Medicaid under the federal health care law?



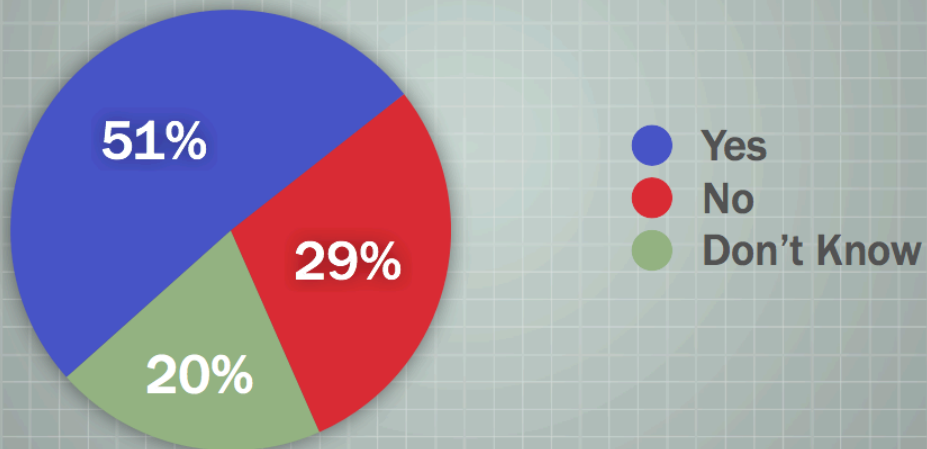
INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

Will lawmakers restore some state funding for Planned Parenthood?



INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

Will lawmakers pass the fetal pain bill?



If Texas were to ask, would the federal government grant the state a waiver to expand Medicaid as the state sees fit?

- "The Texas Republicans have been very vocal about cutting the program to the bone. Based on that and the fact that we are one of the last states to even think about organizing to meet the demands of the Affordable Care Act, I would say the likelihood is less than 10%. Maybe in 4 years we can try again."
- "Why would they?"
- "The federal government has seen first-hand that states like Texas aren't interested in ensuring appropriate access to care for its most vulnerable population, and that by authorizing a block grant, it will be ensuring the citizens have less access than they have now."
- "I'm not sure how the state sees fit. They will not let any state get a block grant and they will not let a state 'partially' expand to less than 138% of poverty and still receive the enhanced match."
- "We are being penalized by the federal government, which actually plays in Governor Perry's political favor."
- "Sure.... the Feds will do that right after they give Texas back our ability to set our own environmental policies."
- "State will not ask"
- "On one hand, no--it's like the feds and Texas are BFFs; look at the EPA fights. On the other hand, Texas is not alone; other states are on the same side as Texas and the feds cannot single Texas for special (mis)treatment."
- "Because how the State wants to is cheap and stupid"
- "China is more likely to let Tibet elect its own leaders."
- "Not as the state see fit if it means only in some areas of the state or with greatly diminished benefits."
- "But it should!"
- "Totally out of the question. The federal government can just wait the state out."
- "Seriously? As though the feds will do anything Texas asks."
- "Have granted one 1115; Feds have some flexibility, but giving Texas, w/ the poorest quality ratings and highest number of working uninsured, a blank check would be like giving a teenager the keys to a Maserati and a fifth of Jack Daniels. Georgia has over 30 waiver applications in play; the only politically feasible end game is some kind of uberwaiver that the executive suite will sell as a 'block grant'"
- "Let the liberals stick their prying hands in someone else's business. Stay out of Texas."
- "If Texas were to ask? Its not going to happen, why speculate."
- "Does not mean the feds would not snicker and say 'told you so.'"

- "Maybe there is some federal HHS wrinkle I'm not seeing which makes a waiver possible, but in general the Obama administration has put ego ahead of results time and again. It's amazing what can NOT be accomplished when 'who gets the credit' is the most important question in Washington DC."
- "Obama will do only the minimum necessary, making sure that Texas knows who's in power in DC."
- "Maybe not 'as the state sees fit,' but I bet the Obama Administration would be willing to give a little to get health care for the huge number of uninsured Texans."
- "Of course they will, just look at our record of finding state based solutions to our uninsured rates - oops"
- "Hasn't the answer to Texas from the Obama administration always been no."
- "Yes, but with some conditions attached, not a complete carte blanche."
- "We hardly have the track record to instill confidence in caring for the very poor."
- "Are you kidding-- not this Administration!"
- "They will not give Texas a blank check, but will work with the State within reasonable limits due to the number of people needing coverage."
- "Why should the federal government trust Texas at this point?"
- "Depends on how generous the Obama administration is feeling towards Texas"
- "And they never will until Texas, and many other states do more than ask."
- "Since when did the federal government ever cede power to the states?"
- "The question implies unlimited flexibility. The program is already incredibly flexible."
- "Texas is persona non grata with the Feds and I doubt any 'favors' such as a waiver would be granted."
- "Obama admin likes to punish Texas at every opportunity"

Will the state ultimately agree to expand Medicaid under the federal health care law or leave things as they are?

- "We want the money and we will find some way to 'bend' our conservative views to be allowed to get the money."
- "Hopefully, the state will come up with an alternative that provides broader access to low-income childless adults that is not an entitlement like Medicaid that the federal government will approve under its waiver authority."
- "Texas may not meet existing deadlines, but certainly over the next

couple of years Texas will move into the program."

- "The state will try to compromise at some level."

- "Texas is more likely to secede than we are to put ourselves under further federal control."

- "Ultimately, yes. When people get so fed up with these ideologically motivated attacks."

- "Too many ambitious Republicans are worried about primaries for them to make the fiscally smart decision."

- "The economic and health impact is too positive to ignore forever. It was a multi year struggle to authorize and implement CHIP in Texas. It will be the same for this expansion."

- "Maybe not until 2015, but the pressure is going to become intense."

- "As long as Governor Perry occupies the mansion, I don't see Medicaid expansion happening."

- "Hard to play chicken w/ sociopaths and nihilists; some say there is an end game because (a) we can cover the 10% in 2017 (b) it's a lot of money and huge opportunity costs to state and local taxpayers absent this deal; others say we really are that dumb and darwinistic"

- "Who is going to be the one to lead the fight to expand Medicaid? That is political suicide"

- "Legislators know deep down expansion is needed but mistakenly afraid of Perry who continues to drive state into the ditch."

- "Federal matching funds, for one or two programs, may have been a good idea 50 years ago. But that mechanism has morphed into a modern day financial suicide pact in which the feds promise to pay new dollars they don't have to match states, who in their turn have to cut or neglect everything else (schools, transportation, water) to come up with their share. Both the size of Medicaid and its rate of growth are out of control and the combination of the two is, in state after state, crushing the entire budget. Expanding that huge dysfunctional mess is indefensible by any standard."

- "HHS spending is already too big. We cannot sustain funding beyond population growth."

- "The financial incentive is enormous. As long as Perry can save face, it's a win-win for all concerned."

- "Politics drives policy and right now health care is toxic. Watch for more fraud and abuse misdirects/red herrings"

- "Unfortunately our state leadership is anything but - they don't understand that an investment today can help save money and our collective society tomorrow. Healthcare is a basic necessity and a right, not a privilege."

- "At some point rural hospitals and docs are going to squeal soooooo loud, but not likely to happen soon."

- "Could be over ten years, but I have faith Texas will eventually see the light. If only because the leadership of this state is completely different in ten or more years."

- "Kicking and screaming, the R politicians will be, but the medical community will eventually get them to do it. Too much money to lose."

- "If poor people want health care, they should make more money, dammit!"

- "As long as Perry's alive, we won't expand it."

- "There will be a good deal of pressure from the health care

community to change it; but I don't think there is a likely change while the governor is a potential presidential candidate."

- "You can never underestimate how the crazy can outweigh the need rational decision."

- "We can't afford the 'free drug' to get us hooked."

- "As long as Perry is at the helm"

Will lawmakers restore some state funding for Planned Parenthood?

- "Sadly, I don't think this will happen. The phenomenal quality of healthcare provided by PP and its clinics will continue to be overshadowed by the zealots who are against a LEGAL procedure which is not performed by all PP affiliates!"

- "Not for Planned Parenthood, but believe that additional funding will be made available for other providers delivering preventive services to low-income women. The snafu that occurred in the attempt to defund Planned Parenthood apparently resulted in an additional 50,000 Medicaid births and cost the state an estimated \$300 million. Not a great trend for legislators who are interested in growing the Medicaid program."

- "Not immediately."

- "We will have a Democrat in the governor's mansion before the state gives another nickel to Planned Parenthood."

- "Maybe Susan Combs will change her position on choice again"

- "Why should they? If you seriously think this group of legislators will do so, then I've got some ocean front property in Arizona for sale..."

- "Texas Republicans can't afford to get a little bit pregnant with Planned Parenthood."

- "Family planning dollars will be restored, but not Planned Parenthood."

- "Should they? Yes. Will they? No."

- "When shrimp learn to whistle"

- "Planned Parenthood got greedy. They became the Wall Street of family planning. In the end, they just could not let go of the profits from their abortion business."

- "Planned Parenthood can qualify right now, TODAY, for millions in state funding if they will meet the requirements of the state program."

It's called 'abiding by the law.' If Planned Parenthood were serious about mammograms, pap smears, women's health, family planning and pregnancy prevention, they could do it with public funding and with no argument. But they have abandoned those goals to stake everything on a legal fight, which raises the question whether those services and issues were ever really a priority for them at all."

- "PP lied about doing breast exams, which didn't show legitimate need."
- "Planned Parenthood is the ACORN of this election cycle."

- "They can just go to the emergency room and let local taxpayers pick up the tab"
- "Not unless a court forces them to."
- "But only because a court rules in some way that makes it complicated, costly, or both, to exclude Planned Parenthood entirely."
- "Not this bunch of nuts, who don't give a damn whether poor women get cancer screenings."
- "When pigs fly."
- "They might agree to pay for the trans-vaginal sonogram devices but only if they get to watch."

Will lawmakers pass the fetal pain bill that would ban abortions after the 20th week of a pregnancy?

- "But there will be a lawsuit filed against it."
- "That is a tough issue to have debated on the floor. I think the Senate passes it out handily. Not so sure that speaker wont bind it up somewhere and keep it off the floor as long as possible. All that blood letting just tends to make things go downhill fast."
- "Believe that although most abortions after 20 weeks are for cause, the legislature can't pass up the opportunity to define the personhood of the fetus. Unfortunately, they will likely be hammering on physicians and penalizing them for care provided in high-risk pregnancies."
- "It's a toss-up in the House, but the Lt. Gov must think he needs to pass it in the Senate in order to get right with conservatives."
- "They shouldn't, but they will. And will do it with gusto in a manner which will garner nationwide attention."
- "Obviously, because it's anti-scientific and subjects women to oppression. It's a sure thing."
- "Setting aside the principle and just looking at the politics, there is no down side for Republicans in continuing to take a strong anti-abortion stance. While attitudes toward gay rights and gun control are shifting to the center, attitudes regarding abortion are not. Younger

voters, especially younger women voters, oppose abortion."

- "But they'll make it ugly in the process; not sure even bubba likes this one; polling continues to show a wide majority of 'leave-it-alone' sentiment even among R wimmin"

- "If I am remembering correctly, in the past 6 sessions (since and including 2003) the right-to-life lobby has successfully passed their number 1 issue every session. I don't know if the RTL groups have coalesced around 'fetal pain at 20 weeks' as the top priority, but if so you might want to stand back because they are coming through."

- "Who can defend dismembering a human when they feel pain?"

- "If they passed the sonogram bill, they'll pass this one too. Especially with pro-choice Wentworth out of the Senate."

- "This is one of the big emergencies facing Texas? Don't think so and I am pro-life."

- "And then we will go to court for months on end so that Greg Abbott can run for Governor."

- "There is no indication that the legislature's record-setting appetite for new legislation restricting abortion will abate any time soon."

- "Don't know if they will...but they should."

- "Hopefully the sane members can keep this religious foolishness in committee."

- "They would have to learn to count to 20 first."

- "According to Speaker Straus, this isn't a priority."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Jenny Aghamalian, Jennifer Ahrens, Clyde Alexander, George Allen, David Anthony, Jay Arnold, Louis Bacarisse, Charles Bailey, Tom Banning, Amy Beneski, Rebecca Bernhardt, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Hugh Brady, Chris Britton, Andy Brown, David Cabrales, Kerry Cammack, Janis Carter, William Chapman, Elna Christopher, Rick Cofer, Harold Cook, Beth Cubriel, Randy Cubriel, Curtis Culwell, Denise Davis, Hector De Leon, June Deadrick, Nora Del Bosque, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Jeff Eller, John Esparza, Jon Fisher, Wil Galloway, Norman Garza, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Stephanie Gibson, Kinnan Golemon, Daniel Gonzalez, John Greytok, Michael Grimes, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Adam Haynes, Jim Henson, Ken Hodges, Kathy Hutto, Deborah Ingersoll, Cal Jillson, Jason Johnson, Bill Jones, Mark Jones, Robert Jones, Lisa Kaufman, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Ramey Ko, Sandy Kress, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Luke Legate, Richard Levy, Elizabeth Lippincott, Ruben Longoria, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Luke Marchant, Dan McClung, Scott McCown, Mike McKinney, Debra Medina, Robert Miller, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Steve Murdock, Craig Murphy, Keats Norfleet, Pat Nugent, Sylvia Nugent, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Tom Phillips, Richard Pineda, Allen Place, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Jay

Propes, Ted Melina Raab, Bill Ratliff, Tim Reeves, Kim Ross, Andy Sansom, Jim Sartwelle, Stan Schlueter, Bruce Scott, Robert Scott, Bradford Shields, Christopher Shields, Jason Skaggs, Ed Small, Todd Smith, Larry Soward, Dennis Speight, Bryan Sperry, Jason Stanford, Bob Stein, Keith Strama, Bob Strauser, Colin Strother, Charles Stuart, Michael Quinn Sullivan, Sherry Sylvester, Jay Thompson, Russ Tidwell, Trey Trainor, Ware Wendell, Ken Whalen, Darren Whitehurst, Seth Winick, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.