



**Texas
Policy & Politics
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**Political Attitudes
and Evaluations**

HOBBY
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

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Introduction

The Hobby School of Public Affairs at the University of Houston conducted an online survey among Texans 18 and older to better understand their preferences regarding proposed legislation being considered during the 2021 regular session of the Texas Legislature, their opinions related to the COVID-19 vaccine, and their evaluations of leading political figures. The survey was fielded between January 12 and January 20 in English and Spanish, with 1,329 YouGov respondents, resulting in a confidence interval of +/-2.7. The respondents were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, ethnicity/race, and education and are representative of the Texas adult population. An oversample of Harris County residents was also collected, and will be used in the penultimate two reports that focus on the state's most populous county, Harris County, whose population of 4.8 million is larger than that of 26 states.

The results of this survey will be presented in six separate reports: Legislative Issues, State Budget, Texans and the COVID-19 Vaccine, Political Attitudes and Evaluations, Issue Priorities and Evaluations in Harris County, and Texas vs. Harris County: A Comparison of Policy Preferences.

This report examines Texans' political attitudes and evaluations of politicians. In addition to evaluating a select group of Texas and national politicians, Texans provide their opinions on voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election and on the January 6 storming of the U.S. Capitol in protest of the certification of President Joe Biden's victory in the Electoral College.

Executive Summary

This report examines Texans' favorability ratings of a dozen Texas and national politicians. It also provides Texans' opinions regarding the allegations of the existence of widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election and their support for and opposition to the January 6 storming of the U.S. Capitol by followers of then President Donald Trump in protest of the certification of President Joe Biden's Electoral College victory.

The four Texas and national politicians with the highest proportion of Texans who have a favorable opinion of them are President Joe Biden (41%), Governor Greg Abbott (39%), Vice President Kamala Harris (39%), and former President Donald Trump (39%). The four politicians with the highest proportion of Texans who have an unfavorable opinion of them are former President Trump (51%), U.S. Senator Ted Cruz (47%), Vice President Harris (43%), and President Biden (42%).

The four politicians who have the highest net favorability rating among Texans are Congressman Dan Crenshaw, former San Antonio Mayor Julián Castro, Congressman Joaquín Castro, and Governor Abbott.

The Republican with the highest net favorability rating among Texas Republicans is former President Trump while the Republican with the lowest favorability rating is U.S. Senator John Cornyn.

The Democrat with the highest net favorability rating among Texas Democrats is President Biden while the Democrat with the lowest favorability rating is Congressman Castro.

The two politicians with the highest net favorability ratings among Texas Independents are Governor Abbott and Congressman Crenshaw while the two with the lowest favorability ratings are former Congressman Beto O'Rourke and Senator Cornyn.

Texans are divided in terms of their agreement with the statement that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election. A little more than half of Texans (55%) disagree with the statement (with 45% strongly disagreeing), while a little less than half (45%) agree with the statement (with 34% strongly agreeing). In other words, 55% of Texans do not believe voter fraud occurred in 2020.

The different levels of agreement with the statement regarding fraud are especially stark between Democrats and Republicans. More than four-fifths of Democrats (87%) disagree with the statement that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election (78% strongly), in contrast to less than one-fifth of Republicans (17%). More than four-fifths of Republicans (83%) agree with the statement (66% strongly), in contrast to less than one-fifth (13%) of Democrats.

Almost three-fourths of Texans (73%) strongly oppose the storming of the U.S. Capitol to protest the certification of President Biden's Electoral College victory by the U.S. Congress, with an additional 10% somewhat opposing these actions. Less than one in five Texans (17%) support (10% strongly) the storming of the U.S. Capitol in protest of the certification of Biden's victory.

Almost nine out of ten Texas Democrats (89%) strongly oppose the events of January 6 compared to 75% of Texas Independents and 51% of Texas Republicans. Summing together those Texans who strongly oppose and somewhat oppose the storming of the U.S. Capitol and those who somewhat and strongly support the storming of the U.S. Capitol respectively, 92% of Democrats, 85% of Independents, and 68% of Republicans oppose the storming of the Capitol, while 32% of Republicans, 15% of Independents, and 8% of Democrats support the storming of the U.S. Capitol that occurred on January 6.

The Evaluation of National and Texas Political Leaders

The respondents were questioned about their opinion of a select number of national and Texas political leaders using the question and response options (in italics) below.

For the following individuals, please indicate if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of them, or if you don't know enough about them to have an opinion

1. *Very Favorable.*
2. *Somewhat Favorable.*
3. *Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable.*
4. *Somewhat Unfavorable.*
5. *Very Unfavorable*
6. *Don't Know Enough.*

Table 1 contains the distribution of the respondents' favorability evaluations from the question above for 12 politicians: Texas Governor Greg Abbott, President Joe Biden, U.S. Congressman Joaquín Castro (D-San Antonio), former San Antonio Mayor and HUD Secretary Julián Castro, U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-Texas), Congressman Dan Crenshaw (R-Houston), U.S. Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas), Vice President Kamala Harris, former Congressman and 2018 U.S. Senate candidate Beto O'Rourke (D-El Paso), Texas Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick, Speaker of the Texas House Dade Phelan (R-Nederland), and former President Donald Trump.

Table 1: Texas and National Politician Favorability Ratings

Politician	Distribution of Population (%)					
	Very Favorable	Somewhat Favorable	Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Don't Know Enough
Greg Abbott	21	18	12	15	25	9
Joe Biden	26	15	11	5	37	6
Joaquín Castro	17	11	14	5	21	32
Julián Castro	17	12	14	4	24	29
Dan Crenshaw	15	10	17	7	17	34
John Cornyn	9	14	15	16	28	18
Ted Cruz	28	10	7	7	40	8
Kamala Harris	25	14	8	6	37	10
Beto O'Rourke	21	14	11	6	35	13
Dan Patrick	14	13	15	6	29	23
Dade Phelan	3	6	21	5	8	57
Donald Trump	29	10	5	5	46	5

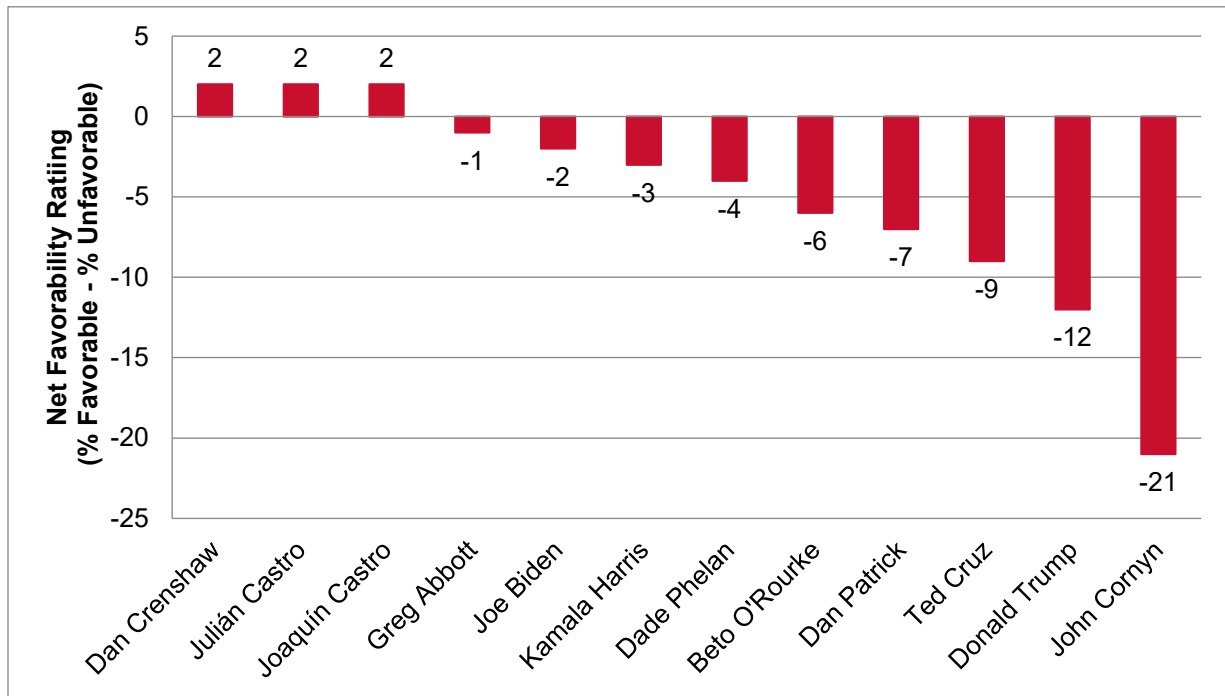
The four politicians with the highest proportion of Texans who have a very favorable opinion of them are former President Trump (29%), Senator Cruz (28%), President Biden (26%), and Vice President Harris (25%). The four politicians with the highest combined favorable (very favorable plus somewhat favorable) ratings are President Biden (41%), Governor Abbott (39%), Vice President Harris (39%), and former President Trump (39%).

The four politicians with the highest proportion of Texans who have a very unfavorable opinion of them are former President Trump (46%), Senator Cruz (40%), President Biden (37%), and Vice President Harris (37%). The four politicians with the highest combined unfavorable (very unfavorable plus somewhat unfavorable) ratings are former President Trump (51%), Senator Cruz (47%), Vice President Harris (43%), and President Biden (42%).

The four politicians about whom the largest proportion of respondents did not know enough about to have an opinion are Speaker Phelan (57%), Congressman Crenshaw (34%), Congressman Castro (32%), and former San Antonio Mayor Castro (29%).

Figure 1 provides the net favorability rating for the politicians in **Table 1**. The net favorability rating is calculated by summing the proportion of respondents who have a very favorable or somewhat favorable opinion of the politician, summing the proportion of respondents who have a very unfavorable or somewhat unfavorable opinion of the politician, and then subtracting the proportion of unfavorable opinions from the proportion of favorable opinions.

Figure 1: Net Favorability Rating of Texas & National Politicians Among Texans

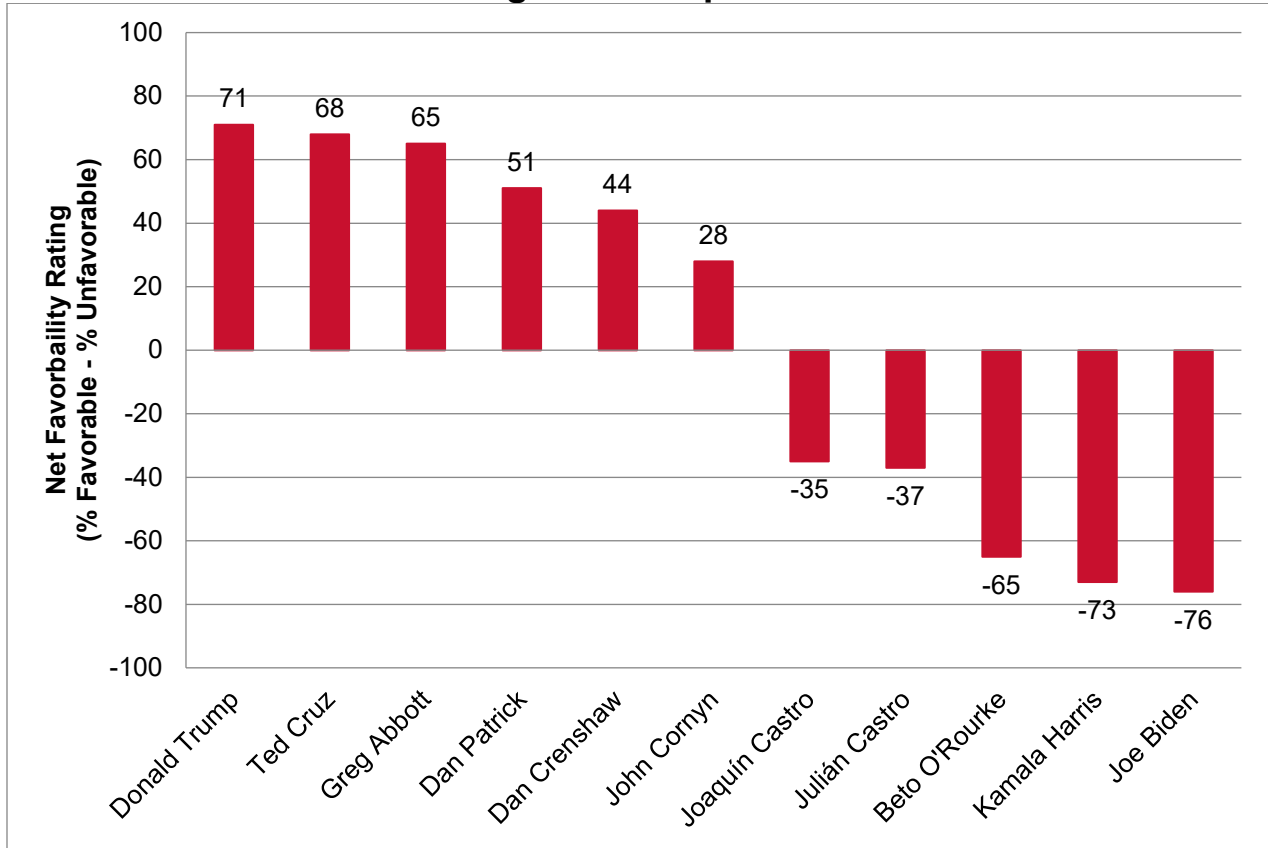


Three politicians have positive net favorability ratings, indicating a larger proportion of Texans have a favorable rather than an unfavorable opinion of them. They are Congressman Crenshaw (2%), former San Antonio Mayor Castro (2%), and Congressman Castro (2%). This trio in positive territory is followed in terms of net favorability by Governor Abbott (-1%), President Biden (-2%), Vice President Harris (-3%), and Speaker Phelan (-4%).

The five politicians with the lowest net favorability ratings are former Senator Cornyn (-21%), President Trump (-12%), Senator Cruz (-9%), Lieutenant Governor Patrick (-7%), and former Congressman O'Rourke (-6%).

Figure 2, Figure 3, and Figure 4 provide the politicians' net favorability ratings for respondents who identify as Republicans, Democrats, and Independents respectively, with the exception of Phelan, whose level of name recognition is much more limited than that of the other 11 politicians and therefore is not included.

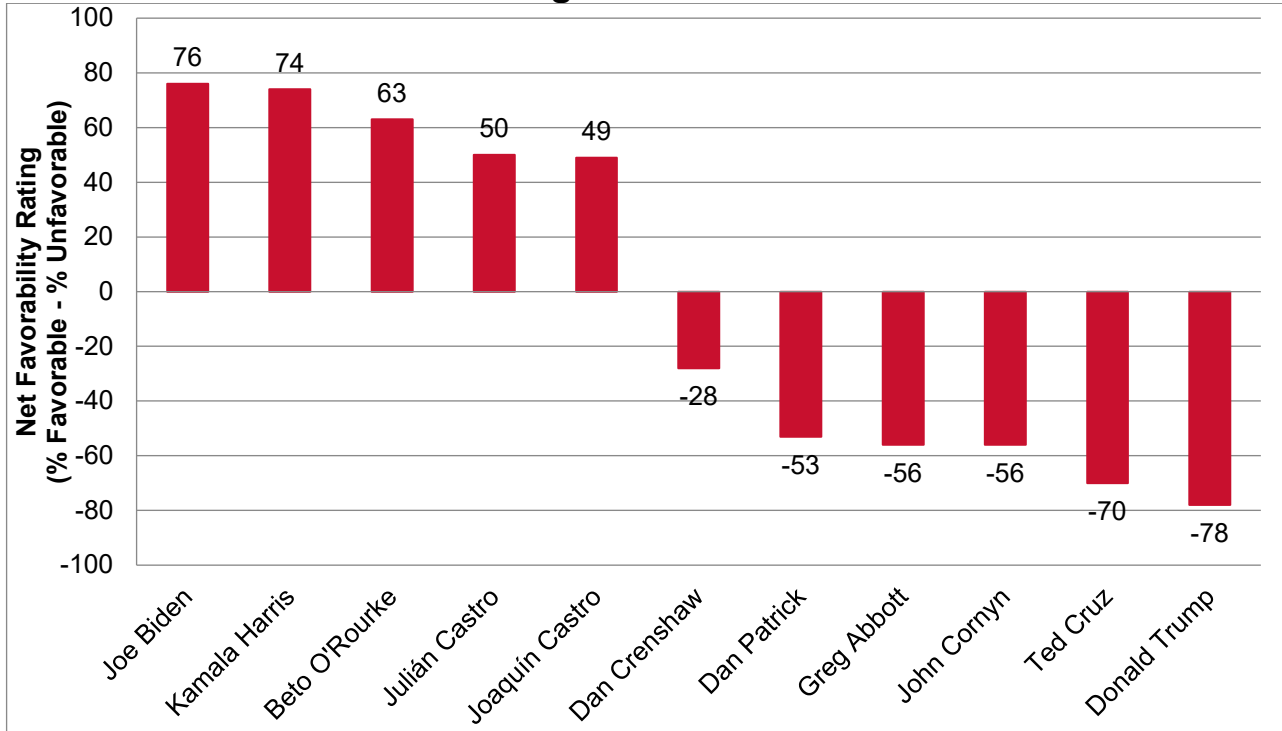
**Figure 2: Net Favorability Rating of Texas & National Politicians
Among Texas Republicans**



Former President Donald Trump (71%) has the highest net favorability rating among Texas Republicans (see **Figure 2**), followed closely by Senator Cruz (68%), and Governor Abbott (65%). The Republican politician with the lowest net favorability rating among Texas Republicans is Senator Cornyn (28%).

All of the Democratic politicians have a negative net favorability rating among Texas Republicans. President Biden (-76%), Vice President Harris (-73%), and former Congressman O'Rourke (-65%) have the lowest net favorability ratings among Texas Republicans while Congressman Castro (-35%) and former San Antonio Mayor Castro (-37%) have the highest.

Figure 3: Net Favorability Rating of National & Texas Politicians Among Texas Democrats

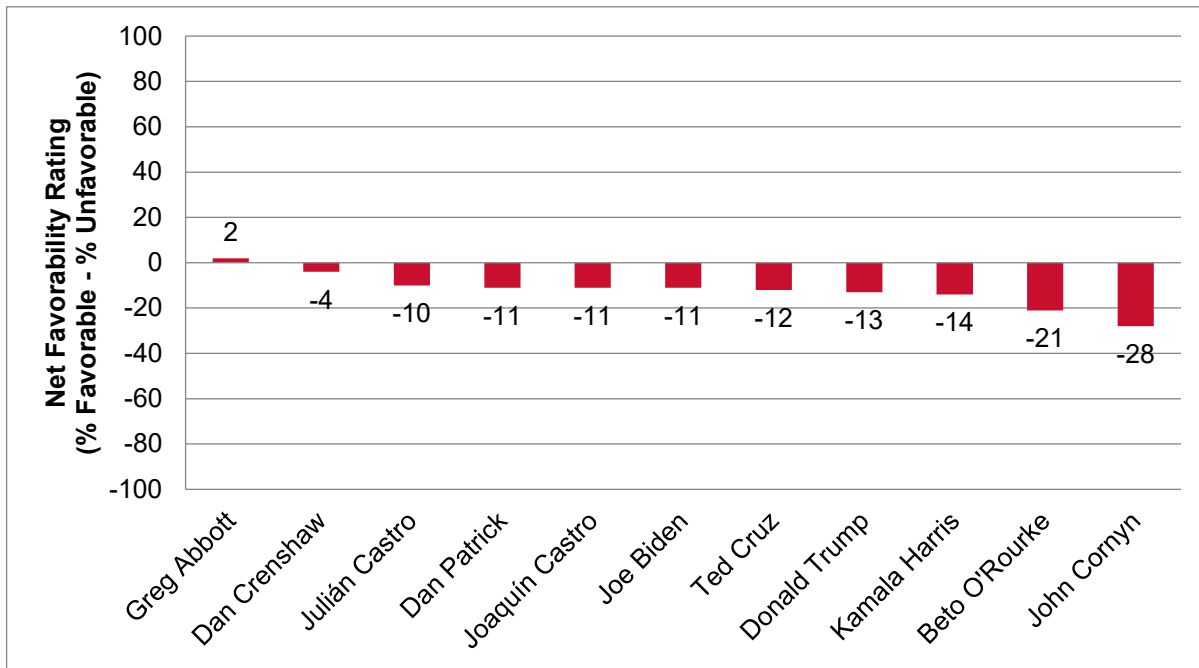


President Biden (76%) has the highest net favorability rating among Texas Democrats (see **Figure 3**), followed closely by Vice President Harris (74%) and then by former Congressman O'Rourke (63%). Congressman Castro (49%) and former San Antonio Mayor Castro (50%) have the lowest net favorability ratings among Texas Democrats.

All of the Republican politicians have a negative net favorability rating among Texas Democrats. Former President Trump (-78%) and Senator Cruz (-70%) have the lowest net favorability ratings while Congressman Crenshaw (-28%) has the highest net favorability rating, with Lieutenant Governor Patrick (-53%), Governor Abbott (-56%), and Senator Cornyn (-56%) in between these two extremes.

Governor Abbott (2%) is the only politician who has a positive net favorability rating among Texas Independents (see **Figure 4**), followed closely by Congressman Crenshaw (-4%). The two politicians with the lowest net favorability rating among Texas Independents are Senator Cornyn (-28%) and former Congressman O'Rourke (-21%). The remaining seven politicians are closely packed together, ranging from a high of -10% for former San Antonio Mayor Castro to a low of -14% for Vice President Harris.

Figure 4: Net Favorability Rating of Texas & National Politicians Among Texas Independents



The Existence of Widespread Voter Fraud in the 2020 Presidential Election

Texans were queried about their opinion regarding the existence of widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election. They were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement (in italics) below.

Do you agree or disagree with the statement that there was widespread fraud in the 2020 presidential election?

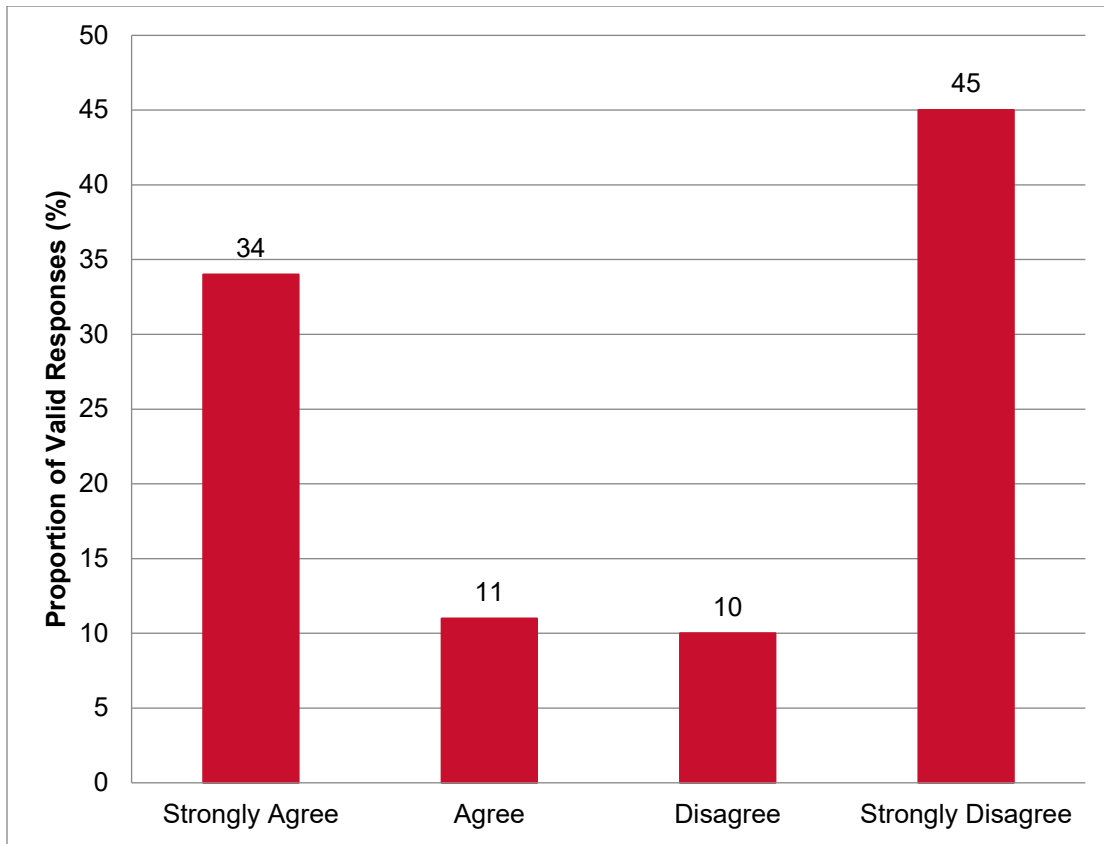
1. *Strongly Agree*
2. *Agree*
3. *Disagree*
4. *Strongly Disagree*
5. *Don't know*

Table 2 and **Figure 5** display the responses by the sample population to this question, with Table 1 including the distribution both with and without the “Don’t Know” responses, and Figure 1 and the subsequent tables focusing on the distribution of the valid responses (i.e., excluding the respondents who answered “Don’t Know”).

Table 2: There Was Widespread Voter Fraud in the 2020 Presidential Election

Response	Agreement with Statement (%)	
	All	Excluding Don't Know
Strongly Agree	31	34
Agree	10	11
Disagree	9	10
Strongly Disagree	41	45
Don't Know	9	

Figure 5: Agreement With the Statement that: There Was Widespread Voter Fraud in the 2020 Presidential Election



Texans are divided in regard to their agreement with the statement that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election (see **Table 2** and **Figure 5**). More than half (55%) of Texans disagree with the statement, with almost half (45%) strongly disagreeing and another 10% who disagree. In contrast, 45% agree with the statement, with a little more than a third (34%) strongly agreeing and another 11% who agree.

Table 3 provides the distribution of the responses to the voter fraud question by gender. The sample population has slightly more women (51%) than men (49%). There do not exist any significant gender differences in regard to agreement or disagreement with the statement that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election.

Table 3: Gender & There Was Widespread Voter Fraud in the 2020 Presidential Election

Response	Agreement with Statement (%)		
	All	Women	Men
Strongly Agree	34	34	34
Agree	11	10	12
Disagree	10	9	11
Strongly Disagree	45	47	43

Table 4 provides the distribution of the responses to the voter fraud question by ethnicity/race. The ethnic/racial composition of the sample population is: Anglos (47%), Latinos (35%), African Americans (13%), All Others (5%). Anglos (42%) are significantly more likely than both Latinos (28%) and African Americans (19%) to strongly agree with the statement that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election. Conversely, African Americans (53%) and Latinos (50%) are significantly more likely than Anglos (38%) to strongly disagree with the statement that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election.

Table 4: Ethnicity/Race & There Was Widespread Voter Fraud in the 2020 Presidential Election

Response	Agreement with Statement (%)			
	All	Anglos	Latinos	African Americans
Strongly Agree	34	42	28	19
Agree	11	13	8	14
Disagree	10	7	14	14
Strongly Disagree	45	38	50	53

Table 5 provides the distribution of the responses to the voter fraud question by generation. The sample population is distributed across three aggregate generational categories in the following way: Silent Generation (born between 1928 and 1945) and Baby Boomers (1946-1964) at 33%, Generation X (1965-1980) at 25%, and Millennials (1981-1996) and Generation Z (1997-2003) at 42%. Members of the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers (49%) are significantly more likely than members of Gen-X (36%), and especially Millennials and members of Generation Z (20%), to strongly agree that there was widespread fraud. In contrast, Millennials and members of Generation Z (50%) are significantly more likely than members of the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers (39%) to strongly disagree with the statement that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election.

Table 5: Generation & There Was Widespread Voter Fraud in the 2020 Election

Response	Agreement with Statement (%)			
	All	Silent Generation & Baby Boomers	Gen-X	Millennials & Generation Z
Strongly Agree	34	49	36	20
Agree	11	9	9	14
Disagree	10	3	10	16
Strongly Disagree	45	39	45	50

Table 6 provides the distribution of the responses to the voter fraud question by level of educational attainment. The highest educational attainment of two-fifths of the sample population (41%) is high school or lower, while 31% attended some college or obtained a two-year degree, with the remaining 28% having either a four-year degree or a post-graduate degree as their highest level of educational attainment. Texans with a four-year or post-graduate degree (53%) as their highest level of educational attainment are significantly more likely than those whose highest level of educational attainment is a high school degree or less (41%) to strongly disagree that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election. Other than that, there do not exist any noteworthy educational differences for this item.

Table 6: Education & There Was Widespread Voter Fraud in the 2020 Presidential Election

Response	Agreement with Statement (%)			
	All	Primary or High School	Some College or 2 Year Degree	4 Year Degree or Post-Grad Degree
Strongly Agree	34	32	38	32
Agree	11	12	11	10
Disagree	10	15	8	5
Strongly Disagree	45	41	43	53

Table 7 and **Figure 6** provide the distribution of the responses to the voter fraud question by partisan identification. Democrats account for 31% of the respondents, Republicans for 27% and Independents for 30%. The remaining 12% of respondents are either unsure about their partisanship (8%) or identify with another party or group (4%). There exist profound partisan differences in beliefs regarding whether or not there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election.

Two-thirds of Republicans (66%) strongly agree that there was widespread voter fraud, with an additional 17% agreeing that there was widespread fraud, for a total of more than four-fifths (83%) of Texas Republicans who believe that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election.

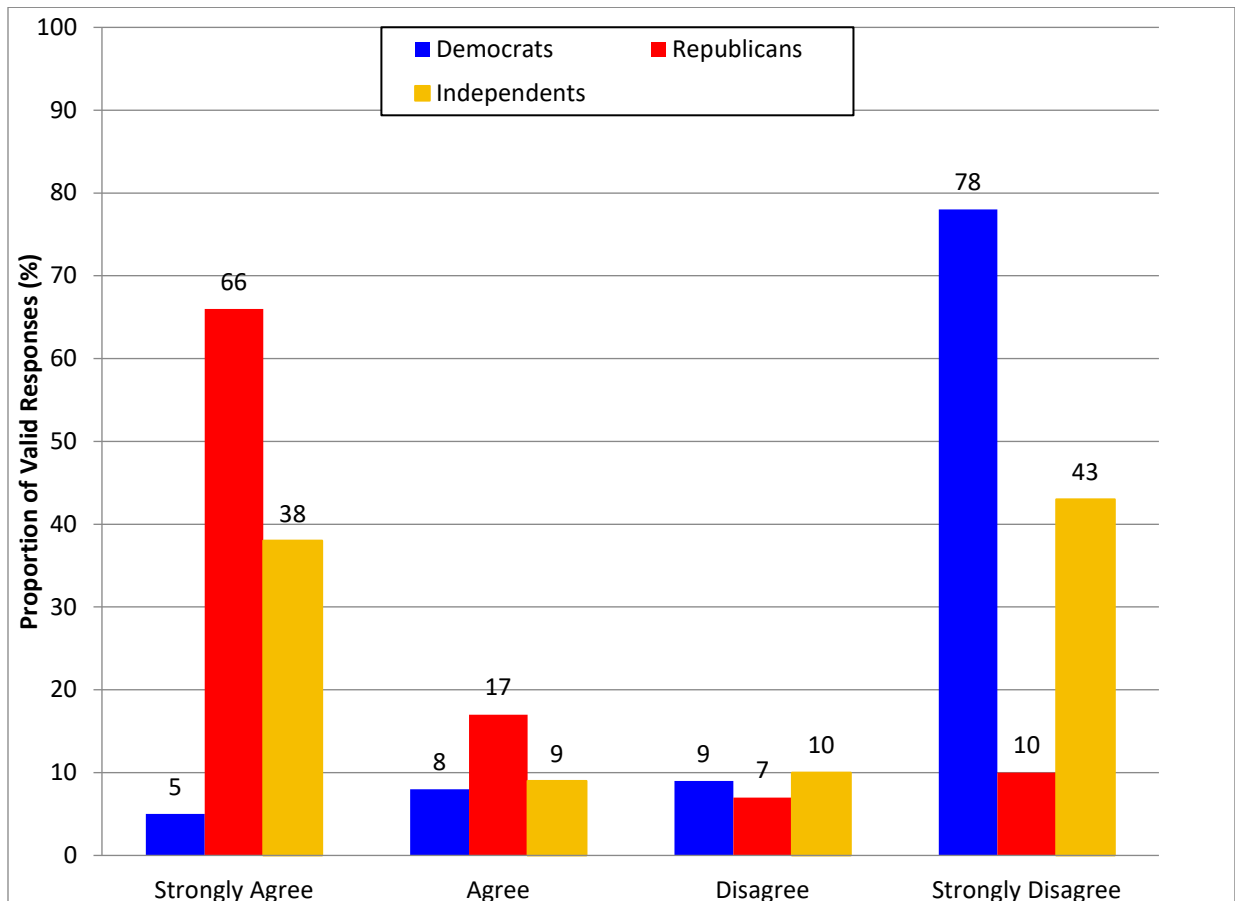
In sharp contrast, more than three-fourths of Democrats (78%) strongly disagree with the statement that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election, with an additional 9% disagreeing that there was widespread fraud, for a total of more than four-fifths (87%) of Democrats who do not believe there was widespread voter fraud in 2020.

Independents are equidistant between these two extremes, with 38% strongly agreeing that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election and 43% strongly disagreeing, with the final distribution including the strongly agree and agree and strongly disagree and disagree responses respectively resulting in near equal proportions of Independents who believe (47%) and do not believe (53%) that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election.

Table 7: Party ID & There Was Widespread Voter Fraud in the 2020 Presidential Election

Response	Agreement with Statement (%)			
	All	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Strongly Agree	34	5	66	38
Agree	11	8	17	9
Disagree	10	9	7	10
Strongly Disagree	45	78	10	43

Figure 6: Partisanship and Agreement With the Statement that: There Was Widespread Voter Fraud in the 2020 Presidential Election



Support for and Opposition to the Storming of the U.S. Capitol

The survey was fielded between January 12 and January 20 in the immediate aftermath of the storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6 by supporters of then President Donald Trump in protest of the certification of President Joe Biden’s Electoral College victory which at the time was taking place inside. The question below (in italics) was utilized.

On January 6, supporters of President Trump stormed the US Capitol to protest lawmakers certifying Joe Biden’s election victory. Based on what you have read or heard about this, do you support or oppose these actions?

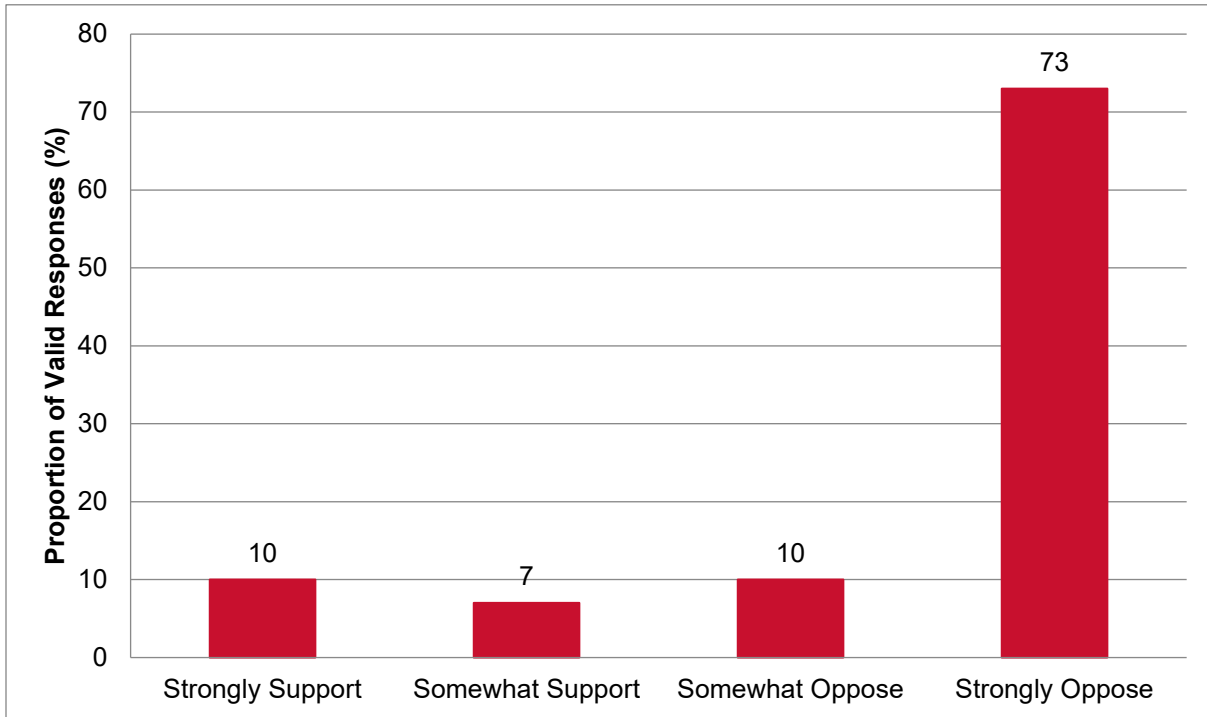
1. *Strongly Support*
2. *Somewhat Support*
3. *Somewhat Oppose*
4. *Strongly Oppose*
5. *Don’t Know*

Table 8 and **Figure 7** display the responses by the sample population to this question, with **Table 8** including the distribution both with and without the “Don’t Know” responses, and **Figure 7** and the subsequent tables (with the distributions by gender, ethnicity/race, generation, education, partisan identification) focusing on the distribution of the valid (i.e., excluding the “Don’t Knows”) responses.

Table 8: Support for the Protest and Storming of the Capitol on January 6

Response	Distribution of Population (%)	
	All	Excluding Don't Know
Strongly Support	9	10
Somewhat Support	7	7
Somewhat Oppose	9	10
Strongly Oppose	66	73
Don't Know	9	

Figure 7: Do You Support or Oppose the January 6 Storming of the U.S. Capitol to Protest the Certification of Biden's Victory?



An overwhelming majority of Texans (73%) strongly oppose the January 6 storming of the U.S. Capitol with another 10% somewhat opposing the action, for a total of more than four-fifths of Texans (83%) who oppose the January 6 events. In contrast, 10% of Texans strongly support the protest with another 7% somewhat supporting the actions which occurred on January 6 in Washington D.C.

With the exception of women being significantly more likely than men to strongly oppose, there do not exist any significant gender (Table 9), ethnicity/race (Table 10), or educational differences (Table 12) in regard to support for, or opposition to, the storming of the U.S. Capitol. A modest generational difference exists (see Table 11), with members of the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers (77%) significantly more likely to strongly oppose the events than Millennials and members of Generation Z (69%).

Table 9: Gender & Support for the Protest and Storming of the Capitol on January 6

Response	Distribution of Population (%)		
	All	Women	Men
Strongly Support	10	6	13
Somewhat Support	7	7	8
Somewhat Oppose	10	9	11
Strongly Oppose	73	78	68

Table 10: Ethnicity/Race & Support for the Protest and Storming of the Capitol on January 6

Response	Distribution of Population (%)			
	All	Anglos	Latinos	African Americans
Strongly Support	10	8	11	15
Somewhat Support	7	10	5	4
Somewhat Oppose	10	11	11	4
Strongly Oppose	73	71	73	77

Table 11: Generation & Support for the Protest and Storming of the Capitol on January 6

Response	Distribution of Population (%)			
	All	Silent Generation & Baby Boomers	Gen-X	Millennials & Generation Z
Strongly Support	10	6	8	14
Somewhat Support	7	8	8	7
Somewhat Oppose	10	9	11	10
Strongly Oppose	73	77	73	69

Table 12: Education & Support for the Protest and Storming of the Capitol on January 6

Response	Distribution of Population (%)			
	All	Primary or High School	Some College or 2 Year Degree	4 Year Degree or Post-Grad Degree
Strongly Support	10	12	10	7
Somewhat Support	7	6	8	9
Somewhat Oppose	10	12	8	9
Strongly Oppose	73	70	74	75

In contrast to the predominantly similar findings among different socio-demographic groups, there exist sharp partisan differences in support for and opposition to the events of January 6 (see **Table 13** and **Figure 8**). Almost nine in 10 Democrats (89%) are in strong opposition to the January 6 events compared to three-quarters (75%) of Independents and a slight absolute majority (51%) of Republicans. And, while a mere 18% of Republicans are in strong support of the protest and storming of the U.S. Capitol, this proportion is three times the percentage of Democrats (6%) in strong support. Additionally, the proportion of Republicans (32%) who either strongly support or somewhat support the storming of the U.S. Capitol to protest the certification of Biden's victory is four times the proportion of Democrats (8%) and more than double the proportion of Independents (15%) who support the event.

Table 13: Party ID & Support for the Protest and Storming of the Capitol on January 6

Response	Distribution of Population (%)			
	All	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Strongly Support	10	6	18	8
Somewhat Support	7	2	14	7
Somewhat Oppose	10	3	17	10
Strongly Oppose	73	89	51	75

Figure 8: Partisanship and Support for the January 6 Storming of the U.S. Capitol to Protest the Certification of Biden's Victory

