

TEXAS VOTES 2026

DATA CENTERS &
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



Hobby School of Public Affairs
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON





Texas Votes 2026
Data Centers and Artificial Intelligence
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The Hobby School of Public Affairs at the University of Houston conducted a representative survey of Texas voters who are expected to cast a ballot in the November 2026 midterm elections. Voters were contacted via SMS text message and directed to an online survey platform with the option to answer the survey in English or Spanish. The survey was fielded between October 10 and October 14, 2026. With a margin of error of +/- 2.19 percentage points, the overall sample population of 2,000 Texas likely voters was adjusted via multidimensional calibration weighting using demographic, historical electoral, and geographic benchmarks.

This report analyzes the opinions of Texas likely voters about the impact of data centers in Texas, support for policies to regulate data centers, and beliefs about the future consequences of artificial intelligence for the economy, education, society, and them personally.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

69% of Texas likely voters are extremely or very concerned about the impact of data centers on electricity prices, while 18% are somewhat concerned and 13% are not very or not at all concerned.

69% of Texas likely voters are extremely or very concerned about the impact of data centers on water supply, while 15% are somewhat concerned and 16% are not very or not at all concerned.

65% of Texas likely voters are extremely or very concerned about the impact of data centers on power outages, while 18% are somewhat concerned and 17% are not very or not at all concerned.

53% of Texas likely voters are extremely or very concerned about the impact of data centers on noise pollution, while 23% are somewhat concerned and 24% are not very or not at all concerned.

53% of Texas likely voters are extremely or very concerned about the impact of data centers on air pollution, while 20% are somewhat concerned and 27% are not very or not at all concerned.

45% of Texas likely voters believe that in communities where they are being built, data centers will have an extremely or very beneficial impact on technological advancement, 32% a somewhat beneficial impact, and 23% a not very or not at all beneficial impact.

40% of Texas likely voters believe that in communities where they are being built, data centers will have an extremely or very beneficial impact on improved electrical infrastructure, 26% a somewhat beneficial impact, and 34% a not very or not at all beneficial impact.

34% of Texas likely voters believe that in communities where they are being built, data centers will have an extremely or very beneficial impact on tax revenue, 28% a somewhat beneficial impact, and 38% a not very or not at all beneficial impact.

33% of Texas likely voters believe that in communities where they are being built, data centers will have an extremely or very beneficial impact on job creation, 27% a somewhat beneficial impact, and 40% a not very or not at all beneficial impact.

76% of Texas likely voters believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would increase the amount they pay for electricity, while 7% believe it would decrease the amount they pay and 17% say it would have no effect.

63% of Texas likely voters believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would increase the amount of tax revenue collected by local government, while 15% believe it would decrease local government revenue collection and 22% say it would have no effect.

61% of Texas likely voters believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would decrease the value of homes in their community, while 20% believe it would increase home values and 19% say it would have no effect.

99% of Texas likely voters support a policy that would require data center companies pay for the electricity grid upgrades needed to serve their data centers, while 1% oppose this policy.

79% of Texas likely voters support a policy that would limit the number of data centers that can be built in Texas, while 21% oppose this policy.

65% of Texas likely voters believe that over the next 10 years AI will do more to hurt society as a whole, while 29% believe it will do more to help society as a whole, and 6% believe it will not make a difference.

63% of Texas likely voters believe that over the next 10 years AI will do more to hurt education, while 32% believe it will do more to help education, and 5% believe it will not make a difference.

54% of Texas likely voters believe that over the next 10 years AI will do more to hurt the U.S. economy, while 37% believe it will do more to help the U.S. economy, and 9% believe it will not make a difference.

Texas likely voters are relatively evenly split between those who believe over the next 10 years AI will do more to help (35%) and hurt (37%) them personally, with 28% believing it will not make a difference.

SURVEY POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Women account for 54% of these Texas likely voters, men for 45%, and those whose gender identity is something else for 1%. White Texans represent 60% of these likely voters, Latino Texans 23%, and Black Texans 12%, with the remaining 5% spread among those with another ethnic/racial identity or a multiracial identity. Almost one-fifth (18%) of the population is between the ages of 18 and 34, 31% is between the ages of 35 and 54, and 51% is age 55 and older. The proportion of likely voters with a four-year college degree (44%) is 12 percentage points less than the proportion of likely voters who do not possess a four-year degree (56%). The distribution of partisan identifiers among these likely voters is 42% Republican, 31% Democratic and 23% Independent, with 4% identifying with another party or group or unsure of their partisanship. Based on a variable provided by L2, a leading voter data firm, that is calculated using an advanced analysis of U.S. Census data, 42% of these likely voters are classified as living in an urban area of the state, 38% in a suburban area, and 20% in a rural area. In the November 2026 gubernatorial election, Republican Greg Abbott (49%) leads Democrat Gina Hinojosa (46%) by 3 percentage points, with 2% intending to vote for Libertarian Pat Dixon and 3% undecided.

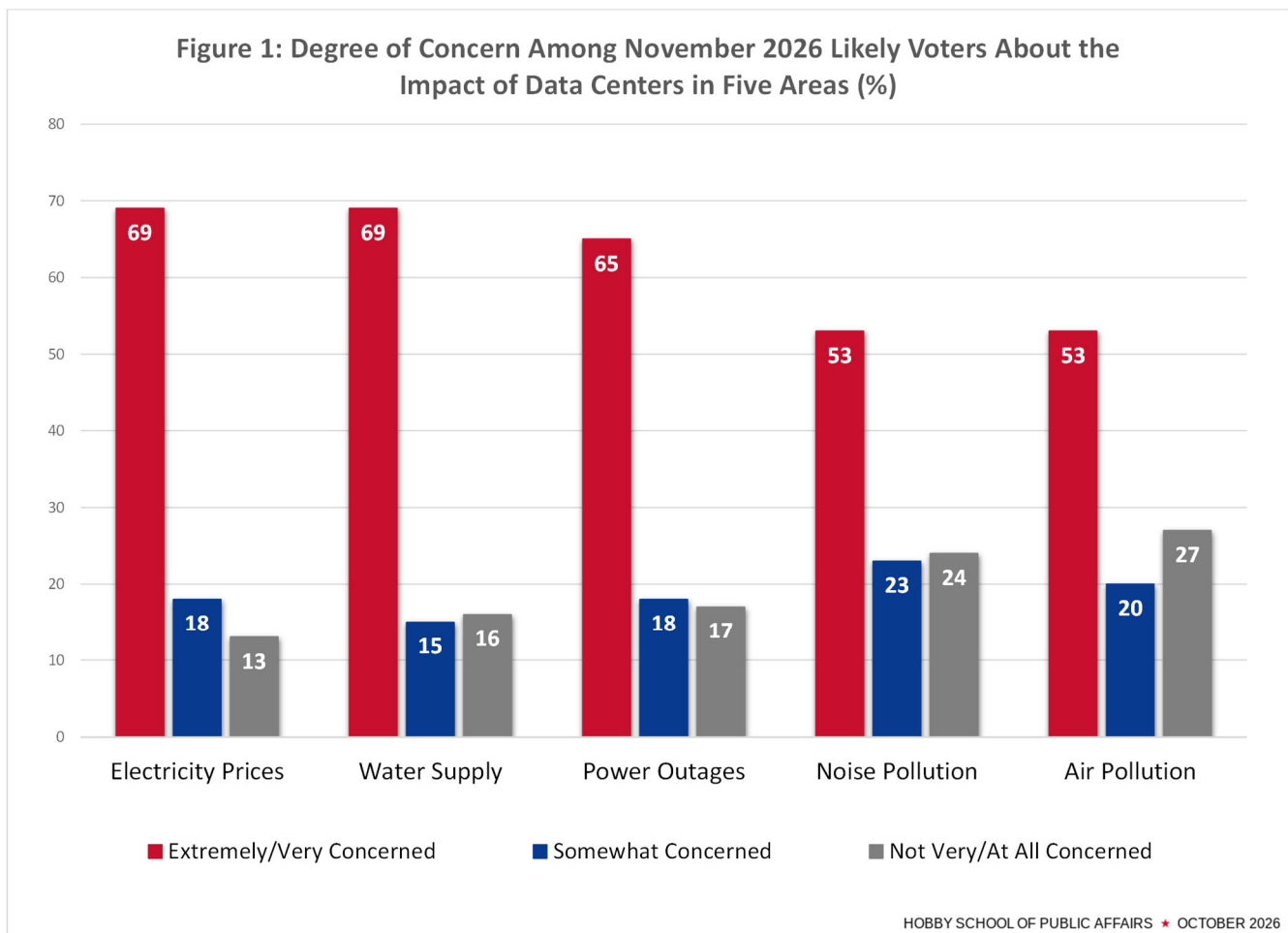
DEGREE OF CONCERN ABOUT THE IMPACT OF DATA CENTERS IN FIVE THEMATIC AREAS

These likely voters were asked the following question:

As you may know, data centers are buildings that house computer servers and equipment used to process information online. They support a wide range of internet services, including artificial intelligence (AI), online banking, and cloud storage. How concerned are you, if at all, about the impacts of data centers in the Texas communities where they are built when it comes to each of the following?

The five areas where likely voters were asked to assess the impact of data centers were air pollution, electricity prices, noise pollution, power outages, and water supply. The response options included extremely concerned, very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, not at all concerned, and unsure. The small proportion who answered unsure are excluded in the following analysis.

Figure 1 provides the proportion of these likely voters who are extremely or very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not very or not at all concerned about the impact of data centers in the communities where they are being built across these five thematic areas.



More than two-thirds (69%) of likely voters are either extremely (50%) or very (19%) concerned about the impact of data centers on electricity prices, while 18% are somewhat concerned and only 13% either not very (9%) or not at all (4%) concerned.

More than two-thirds (69%) of likely voters are either extremely (52%) or very (17%) concerned about the impact of data centers on water supply, while 15% are somewhat concerned and only 16% either not very (11%) or not at all (5%) concerned.

Almost two-thirds (65%) of likely voters are either extremely (47%) or very (18%) concerned about the impact of data centers on power outages, while 18% are somewhat concerned and only 17% either not very (11%) or not at all (6%) concerned.

A little more than one-half (53%) of likely voters are either extremely (36%) or very (17%) concerned about the impact of data centers on noise pollution, while 23% are somewhat concerned and 24% either not very (16%) or not at all (8%) concerned.

A little more than one-half (53%) of likely voters are either extremely (37%) or very (16%) concerned about the impact of data centers on air pollution, while 20% are somewhat concerned and 27% either not very (17%) or not at all (10%) concerned.

Table 1 provides the proportion of likely voters who are extremely or very concerned about the impact of data centers across these five thematic areas, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, education, region of residence, partisanship, and 2026 gubernatorial vote intention.

Table 1: Proportion of Likely Voters Who are Extremely or Very Concerned About the Impact of Data Centers in Five Areas, Among Key Sub-Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Electricity Prices	Water Supply	Power Outages	Noise Pollution	Air Pollution
Overall		69	69	65	53	53
Gender	Women	75	76	73	60	63
	Men	62	51	55	43	41
Ethnicity/Race	White	61	63	57	45	44
	Latino	81	78	73	59	63
	Black	87	86	85	75	81
Age	18-34	81	81	72	68	65
	35-54	70	68	65	49	51
	55+	65	66	62	50	50
Education	4 Yr College Degree	65	65	59	49	49
	No 4 Yr College Degree	73	73	69	55	57
Urban-Rural Residence	Urban	73	72	68	57	60
	Suburban	67	68	64	50	50
	Rural	67	67	68	48	44
Partisanship	Democratic	93	93	89	81	85
	Independent	70	71	66	53	54
	Republican	51	51	45	31	28
2026 Governor Vote Intention	Abbott	54	56	46	32	27
	Hinojosa	94	92	84	82	80

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There are stark partisan differences in the level of concern about the impact of data centers in these five areas. A significantly higher proportion of Democrats than Republicans are either extremely or very concerned about the impact of data centers on electricity prices (93% to 51%), water supply (93% to 51%), power outages (89% to 45%), noise pollution (81% to 31%), and air pollution (85% to 28%), with Independents occupying a position relatively equidistant between Democrats and Republicans.

These partisan differences are also present among likely voters who intend to vote for Democrat Gina Hinojosa and Republican Governor Greg Abbott in the 2026 gubernatorial election, with Hinojosa voters significantly more likely than Abbott voters to be extremely or very concerned about the impact of data centers on electricity prices (94% to 54%), water supply (92% to 56%), power outages (84% to 46%), noise pollution (82% to 32%), and air pollution (80% to 27%).

Compared to the strong partisan and vote intention differences among these likely voters regarding concern about the impact of data centers across these five areas, other socio-demographic differences are relatively modest. The largest difference in concern regarding electricity prices, water supply, power outages, noise pollution and air pollution is related to ethnicity/race, with Black voters significantly more likely than White voters to be either extremely or very concerned. It is however important to note that more than half of White voters are either extremely or very concerned about the impact of data centers on electricity prices, water supply and power outages.

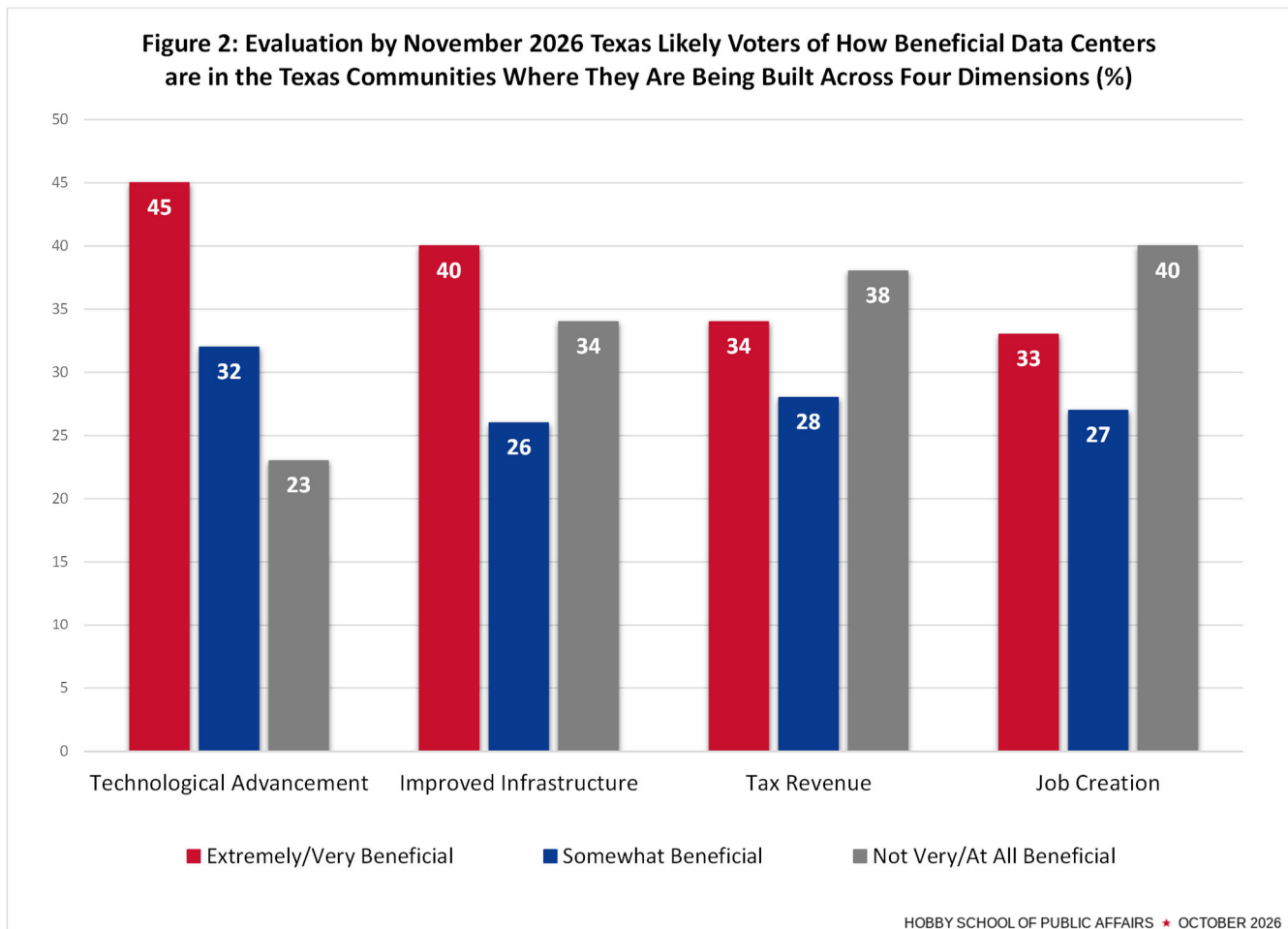
HOW BENEFICIAL DATA CENTERS ARE IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS FOUR DIMENSIONS

These likely voters were asked the following question:

How beneficial, if at all, do you think data centers are in the Texas communities where they are built when it comes to each of the following?

The four dimensions assessed included improved infrastructure such as expanded electricity grids and additional power generation, job creation, tax revenue, and technological advancement. The response options were extremely beneficial, very beneficial, somewhat beneficial, not very beneficial, not at all beneficial, and unsure. The small proportion of respondents who answered unsure are excluded from the following analysis.

Figure 2 provides the proportion of likely voters who believe the impact of data centers in the communities in which they are being built will be extremely or very beneficial, somewhat beneficial, or not very or not at all beneficial across each of four dimensions.



Almost one-half (45%) of likely voters believe the impact of data centers on technological advancement in the communities where they are being built will be either extremely (23%) or very (22%) beneficial, while 32% believe it will be somewhat beneficial and 23% believe it will either be not very (14%) or not at all (9%) beneficial.

Two-fifths (40%) of likely voters believe the impact of data centers on improved infrastructure (e.g., expanded electrical grid and power generation) in the communities where they are being built will be either extremely (22%) or very (18%) beneficial, while 26% believe it will be somewhat beneficial and 34% believe it will either be not very (16%) or not at all (18%) beneficial.

Just over one-third (34%) of likely voters believe the impact of data centers on tax revenue in the communities where they are being built will be either extremely (18%) or very (16%) beneficial, while 28% believe it will be somewhat beneficial and 38% believe it will either be not very (20%) or not at all (18%) beneficial.

One-third (33%) of likely voters believe the impact of data centers on job creation in the communities where they are being built will be either extremely (18%) or very (15%) beneficial, while 27% believe it will be somewhat beneficial and 40% believe it will either be not very (23%) or not at all (17%) beneficial.

Table 2 provides the proportion of likely voters who believe the impact of data centers will be beneficial (extremely or very) or not beneficial (not very or not at all) for each of these four dimensions, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, education, region of residence, partisanship, and 2026 gubernatorial vote intention.

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Technological Advancement		Improved Infrastructure		Tax Revenue		Job Creation	
		Beneficial	Not Beneficial	Beneficial	Not Beneficial	Beneficial	Not Beneficial	Beneficial	Not Beneficial
Overall		45	23	40	34	34	38	33	40
Gender	Women	40	26	36	37	29	41	29	43
	Men	51	20	45	30	40	34	37	35
Ethnicity/Race	White	45	23	39	33	35	37	34	39
	Latino	45	24	43	32	35	37	35	40
	Black	41	23	41	39	36	48	26	41
Age	18-34	24	46	20	57	21	62	17	62
	35-54	42	25	28	35	29	42	29	36
	55+	54	14	58	25	42	27	40	29
Education	4 Yr College Degree	41	20	35	30	31	40	29	43
	No 4 Yr College Degree	48	26	44	38	37	37	35	37
Urban-Rural Residence	Urban	43	24	39	37	32	40	31	42
	Suburban	47	23	42	33	36	35	34	39
	Rural	45	21	39	29	35	38	34	35
Partisanship	Democratic	27	36	23	55	17	59	17	58
	Independent	40	26	36	38	26	46	26	50
	Republican	62	11	55	16	51	20	48	20
2026 Governor Vote Intention	Abbott	65	9	57	14	52	15	50	18
	Hinojosa	24	37	21	56	15	62	15	61

There are profound partisan differences in the proportion of likely voters who believe that data centers are extremely or very beneficial to Texas communities across these four key dimensions. Republicans are significantly more likely than Democrats to believe that data centers are beneficial for technological advancement (62% to 27%), improved electrical infrastructure (55% to 23%), tax revenue (51% to 17%), and job creation (48% to 17%). Conversely, Democrats are significantly more likely than Republicans to believe that data centers are not very or not at all beneficial for technological advancement (36% to 11%), improved electrical infrastructure (55% to 16%), tax revenue (59% to 20%), and job creation (58% to 20%).

Similarly, across the board, Abbott voters are significantly more likely than Hinojosa voters to believe that the construction of data centers is extremely or very beneficial across all four dimensions, just as Hinojosa voters are significantly more likely than Abbott voters to believe that the construction is extremely or very beneficial across all four dimensions.

The most prominent differences that are not related to partisanship or vote intention revolve around age. Younger voters between the ages of 18 and 34 are significantly less likely than older Texans (especially those age 55 and older) to believe that data centers being built in their communities will be extremely or very beneficial in regards to technological advancement (24% to 54%), improved electrical infrastructure (20% to 58%), tax revenue (21% to 42%), and job creation (17% to 40%). Similarly, they are also much more likely than their elders (especially those 55 and older) to think that the construction of data centers will be not very or not at all beneficial for technological advancement (46% to 14%), improved electrical infrastructure (57% to 25%), tax revenue (62% to 27%), and job creation (62% to 29%).

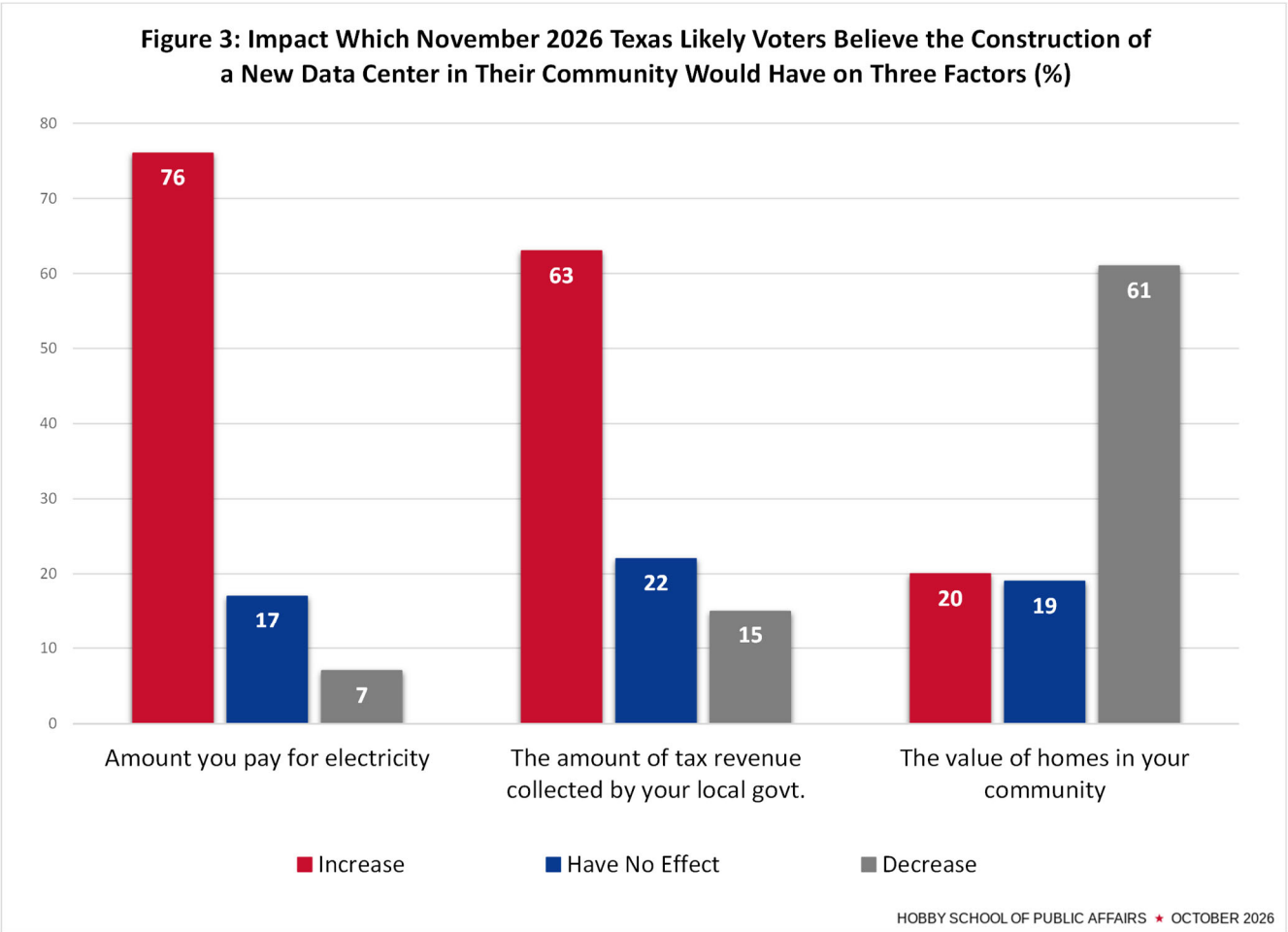
IMPACT OF CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW DATA CENTER IN OWN COMMUNITY ON 3 FACTORS

These likely voters were asked the following question:

Do you think that the construction of a new data center in your community would increase or decrease the amount you pay for electricity, the value of homes in your community, and the amount of tax revenue collected by your local government?

The response options included increase, decrease, have no effect, and unsure. The small proportion who answered unsure are excluded from the following analysis.

Figure 3 provides the proportion of likely voters who believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would increase, decrease, or have no effect on the amount they pay for electricity, the amount of tax revenue collected by their local government, and the value of homes in their community.



More than three out of four (76%) likely voters believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would result in an increase in the amount they pay for electricity, while 7% believe it would decrease the amount they pay, and 17% believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would have no effect on the amount they pay for electricity.

More than three out of five (63%) likely voters believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would result in an increase in the amount of tax revenue collected by their local government, while 15% believe it would result in a decrease, and 22% believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would have no effect on the amount of tax revenue collected by their local government.

More than three out of five (61%) likely voters believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would result in a decrease in the value of homes in their community, while 20% believe it would result in an increase, and 19% believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would have no effect on the value of homes in their community.

Table 3 provides the proportion of likely voters who believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would increase or decrease the amount they pay for electricity, the amount of tax revenue collected by local government and the value of homes in their community, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, education, region of residence, partisanship, and 2026 gubernatorial vote intention.

Table 3: Likely Voter Opinion on Whether Construction of New Data Center in Their Community Would Increase or Decrease, Among Key Sub-Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Amount Pay for Electricity		Local Govt. Tax Revenue		Value of Homes	
		Increase	Decrease	Increase	Decrease	Increase	Decrease
Overall		76	7	63	15	20	61
Gender	Women	80	6	62	16	17	67
	Men	71	8	64	14	24	53
Ethnicity/Race	White	69	9	60	14	17	61
	Latino	83	6	65	18	26	57
	Black	90	3	68	16	26	64
Age	18-34	89	3	56	19	13	77
	35-54	79	8	58	16	16	66
	55+	69	8	68	13	25	51
Education	4 Yr College Degree	76	6	58	15	16	64
	No 4 Yr College Degree	76	8	66	15	24	58
Urban-Rural Residence	Urban	80	5	59	17	19	63
	Suburban	74	8	65	13	19	59
	Rural	69	9	65	14	23	58
Partisanship	Democratic	96	1	52	21	17	76
	Independent	81	3	56	17	11	69
	Republican	55	14	75	9	29	42
2026 Governor Vote Intention	Abbott	54	14	76	8	27	42
	Hinojosa	93	2	48	22	13	78

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Democrats (96%) are significantly more likely than Republicans (55%) to believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would result in an increase in the amount they pay for electricity, although more than one-half of Republicans believe they would pay more for electricity if a new data center was built in their community. Republicans (75%) are significantly more likely than Democrats (52%) to believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would increase the amount of tax revenue collected by the local government, although more than one-half of Democrats do believe that a new data center's construction would result in more local tax revenue. Democrats (76%) are significantly more likely than Republicans (42%) to believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would decrease the value of homes in the community.

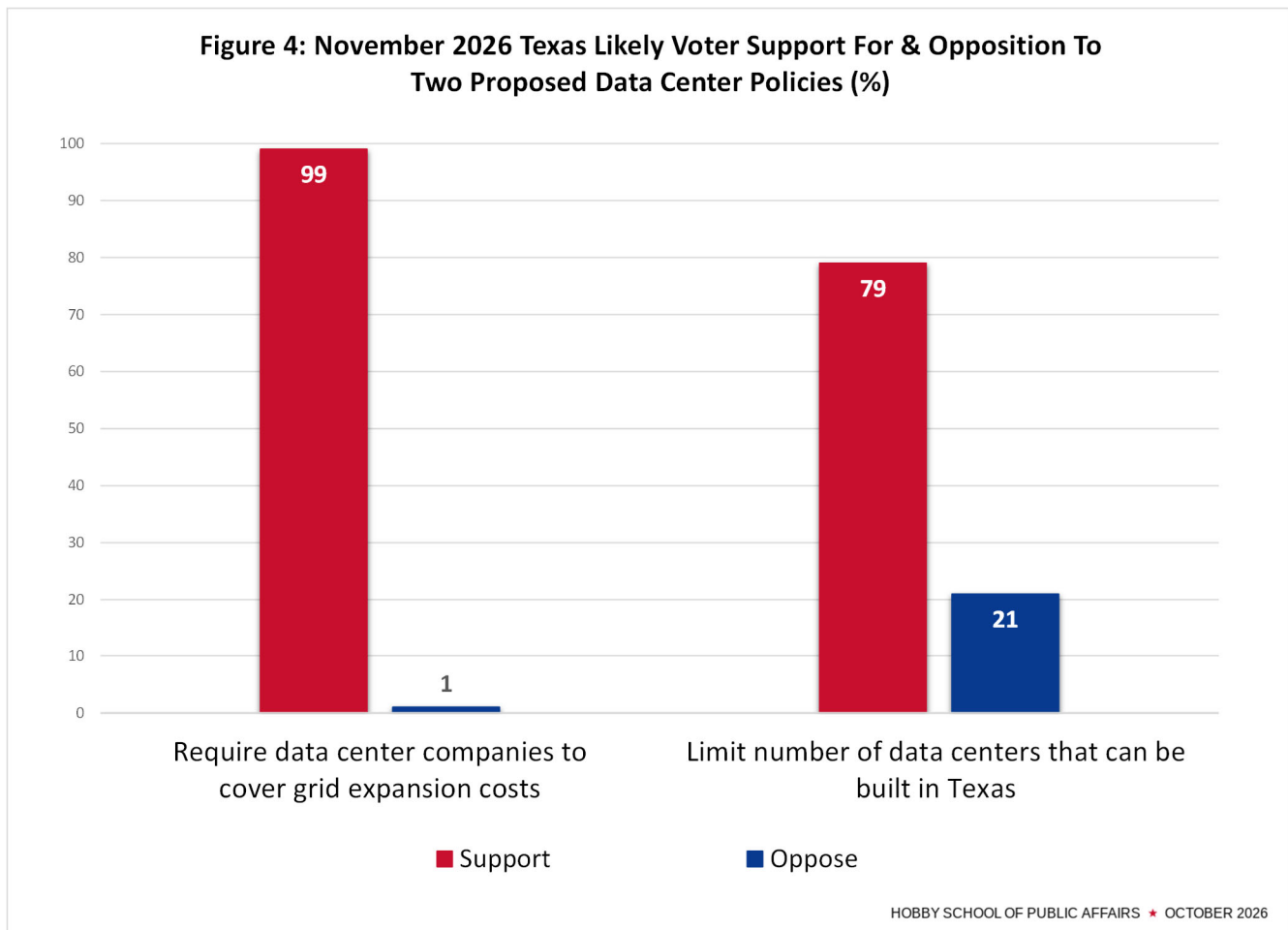
Hinojosa voters are significantly more likely than Abbott voters to believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would increase the amount they pay for electricity (93% to 54%) and decrease the value of homes in their community (78% to 42%). In contrast, Abbott voters are significantly more likely than Hinojosa voters to believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would increase the amount of tax revenue collected by local government (76% to 48%). Of note though, more than one-half of Abbott voters believe the construction of a new data center would increase the amount they pay for electricity and more than one-half of Hinojosa voters believe that the construction of a new data center would increase the amount of tax revenue collected by local government.

The most noteworthy non-partisan or vote intention differences in opinions regarding the impact of the construction of a new data center on the amount paid for electricity, local government tax revenue collection and the value of homes are found regarding the former and latter factors. Black voters (90%) and voters between the ages of 18 and 34 (89%) are significantly more likely than White voters (69%) and voters age 55 and older (69%) to believe, respectively, that the construction of a new data center in their community would result in an increase in the amount they pay for electricity. Similarly, 77% of voters between the ages of 18 and 34, but only 51% who are age 55 and older, believe that the construction of a new data center in their community would decrease the value of homes in their community.

SUPPORT FOR AND OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED DATA CENTER REGULATION POLICIES

These likely voters were asked if they would support or oppose two different policies related to the regulation of data centers in Texas. The first policy involves “requiring companies that build data centers in Texas to pay for the electricity grid upgrades needed to serve their data centers”, while the second policy involves “limiting the number of new data centers that can be built in Texas”. The response options included strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, strongly oppose, and unsure. The small proportion who answered unsure are excluded from the following analysis.

Figure 4 provides the proportion of likely voters who support (strongly or somewhat) or oppose (strongly or somewhat) each of these proposed policies.



Virtually all (99%) of likely voters either strongly (89%) or somewhat (10%) support a policy requiring companies that build data centers to pay for the electricity grid upgrades needed to serve their data centers, with only 1% of likely voters either somewhat (0%) or strongly (1%) opposing this policy.

Nearly four-fifths (79%) of likely voters either strongly (56%) or somewhat (23%) support limiting the number of new data centers that can be built in Texas, while 21% of likely votes either somewhat (12%) or strongly (9%) oppose this policy.

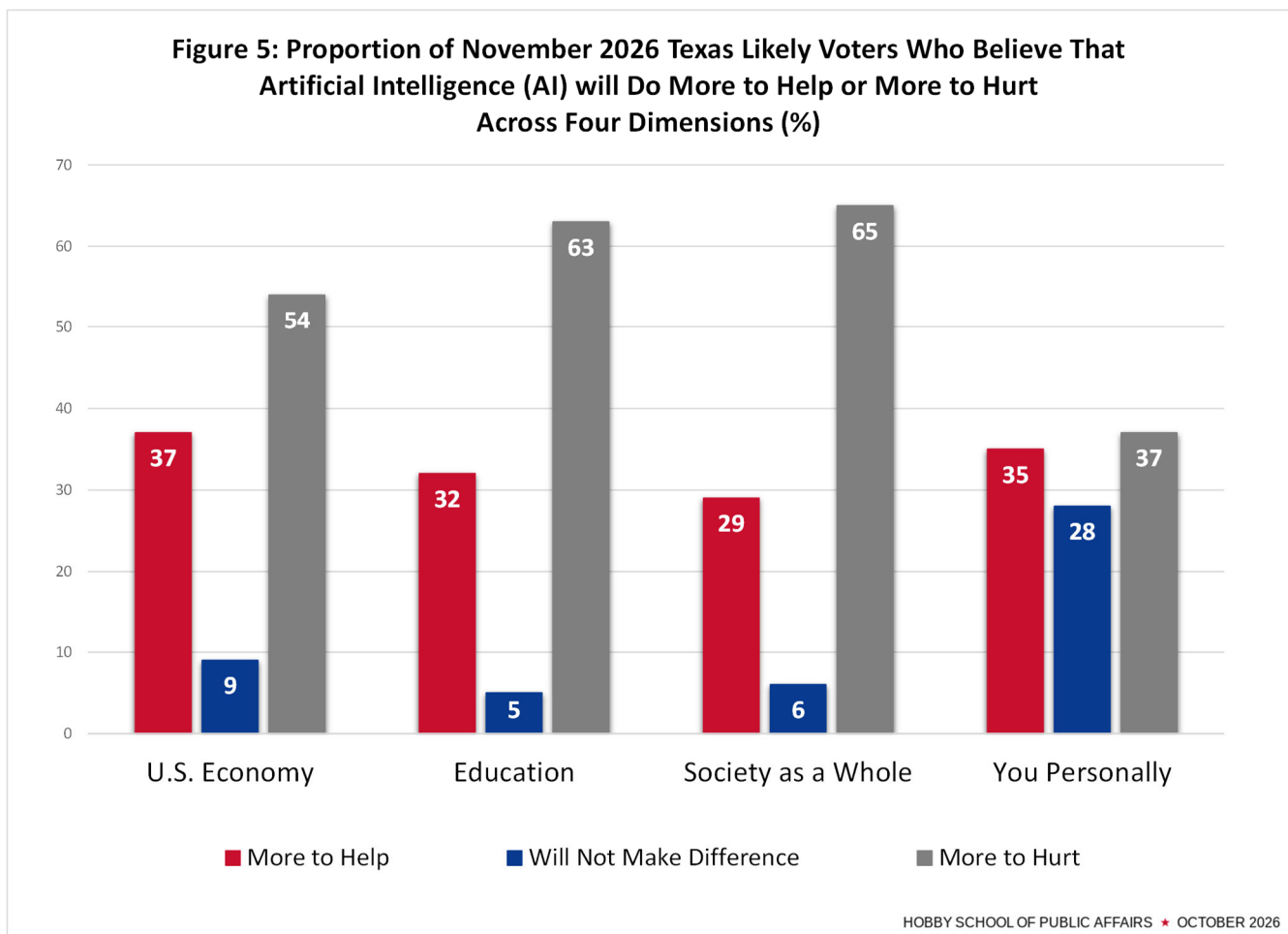
BELIEF ABOUT AI DOING MORE TO HELP OR HURT ACROSS FOUR DIMENSIONS

These likely voters were asked the following question:

In the next 10 years, do you think Artificial Intelligence, or AI, will do more to help or do more to hurt each of the following, or will it not make a difference?

The four dimensions the respondent was asked to assess included education, society as a whole, the U.S. economy, and you personally. The response options included more to help, more to hurt, will not make much difference, and unsure. The small proportion that answered unsure are excluded from the following analysis.

Figure 5 provides the proportion of likely voters who believe that over the next 10 years AI will do more to help, do more to hurt, or will not make a difference for the U.S. economy, education, society as a whole, and them personally.



Significantly more of these likely voters believe that over the next 10 years AI will do more to hurt (54%) than help (37%) the U.S. economy, with 9% of the opinion that it will not make a difference.

Significantly more of these likely voters believe that over the next 10 years AI will do more to hurt (63%) than help (32%) education, with 5% of the opinion that it will not make a difference.

Significantly more of these likely voters believe that over the next 10 years AI will do more to hurt (65%) than help (29%) society as a whole, with 6% of the opinion that it will not make a difference.

In contrast to these overall views about the impact of AI on the U.S. economy, education and society as a whole, likely voters are split relatively evenly between those who believe it will do more to help (35%) and hurt (37%) them personally, with 28% believing that AI will not make a difference for them.

Table 4 provides the proportion of likely voters who believe that artificial intelligence (AI) over the next ten years will do more to help and hurt the U.S. economy, education, society as a whole, and them personally, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, education, region of residence, partisanship, and 2026 gubernatorial vote intention.

Table 4: Proportion of Likely Voters Who Believe AI Will Help or Hurt in Next 10 Years, Among Key Sub-Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	U.S. Economy		Education		Society as a Whole		You Personally	
		Help	Hurt	Help	Hurt	Help	Hurt	Help	Hurt
Overall		37	54	32	63	29	65	35	37
Gender	Women	28	64	26	70	23	72	28	42
	Men	47	42	38	55	36	56	42	31
Ethnicity/Race	White	41	49	35	60	32	61	38	33
	Latino	33	56	30	65	26	67	30	45
	Black	19	76	23	74	21	75	28	43
Age	18-34	25	68	16	83	18	78	29	44
	35-54	34	57	29	65	25	70	40	36
	55+	42	47	39	54	36	56	34	36
Education	4 Yr College Degree	38	53	30	64	28	65	39	35
	No 4 Yr College Degree	35	55	33	62	30	64	32	39
Urban-Rural Residence	Urban	32	48	28	61	27	68	33	40
	Suburban	39	52	36	58	32	62	38	37
	Rural	41	48	33	68	29	63	33	33
Partisanship	Democratic	13	81	17	80	15	83	22	55
	Independent	34	56	30	64	26	68	35	40
	Republican	57	32	45	48	43	47	45	22
2026 Governor Vote Intention	Abbott	60	29	46	47	45	46	47	22
	Hinojosa	14	80	18	79	14	83	23	53

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Texas Republicans are significantly more likely than Texas Democrats to be of the opinion that over the next 10 years AI will be more likely to help the U.S. economy (57% to 13%), education (45% to 17%), society as a whole (43% to 15%), and them personally (45% to 22%). Conversely, Texas Democrats are significantly more likely than Texas Republicans to be of the opinion that over the next 10 years AI will be more likely to hurt the U.S. economy (81% to 32%), education (80% to 48%), society as a whole (83% to 47%), and them personally (55% to 22%).

The most noteworthy differences unrelated to partisanship or vote intention tend to revolve around gender, ethnicity/race, and age. In general, White voters and men are, respectively, notably more likely than Black voters and women to believe AI will help the U.S. economy, 41% to 19% and 47% to 28%, respectively. Similarly, Black voters and women are, respectively, significantly more likely than White voters and men to believe that AI will hurt the U.S. economy, 76% to 49% and 64% to 42%, respectively. Other notable differences include voters between the ages of 18 to 34 being significantly more likely than voters 55 and older to believe that AI will tend to hurt education (83% to 54%) and hurt society as a whole (78% to 56%).

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