

The background of the entire page is a collage of circular buttons and American flag motifs. The buttons are arranged in a dense, overlapping pattern. Many of the buttons feature the word "VOTE" in bold, blue, sans-serif capital letters. The buttons also incorporate the colors and patterns of the United States flag, including red and white stripes and blue fields with white stars. The overall aesthetic is patriotic and election-focused.

TEXAS DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY ELECTION SURVEY 2020

The Race for the
U.S. Senate Nomination

HOBBY
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Texas Democratic Primary Election Survey 2020 The Race for the U.S. Senate Nomination

The University of Houston Hobby School of Public Affairs conducted an online survey among likely Democratic primary voters in Texas to identify the leading candidates for the Democratic nominees for president and U.S. senator, opinions of salient policies and approval ratings of key national and state politicians. The survey was fielded between February 6 and February 18 with 1,352 YouGov respondents, resulting in a confidence interval of +/-2.7%. The results of this survey will be presented in three separate reports. The first report found at uh.edu/hobby/texasprimary2020 focuses principally on the vote intention in the Texas Democratic presidential primary election. This report focuses on the vote intention in the Texas Democratic senate primary election. A third report will examine the position of Texas Democratic primary voters on a range of policies, especially related to the Green New Deal and health care, and the evaluation of national and state politicians.

The 2020 Texas Democratic Senate Primary

Occurring in the shadow of the Democratic presidential primary is the 2020 Texas Democratic senate primary. The survey data reveal several dynamics within the race: between half and three-quarters of Texas Democratic primary voters know little to nothing about the 12 Democratic senate candidates, there almost certainly will be a runoff, one of the candidates in the runoff will be MJ Hegar, and any one of up to a half dozen Democrats could join Hegar in the May runoff.

Texas Democratic Senate Candidates are Not Well Known

More than half of likely Texas Democratic Primary voters do not know enough about every candidate to have an opinion of them (see Table 1 on page 2). Even the most well known candidates are unknown quantities for between one half (52.3% for MJ Hegar) and two-thirds (70.4% for Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez) of Texas Democratic primary voters, with Royce West (63.1%) and Chris Bell (63.1%) in between. And the five least known candidates are unknown quantities for more than three out of every four likely Texas Democratic primary voters.

By and large, among those who know about them, the leading candidates are rated quite favorably. MJ Hegar is rated favorably by 38.1% of voters compared to 9.6% who rate her unfavorably. Comparable favorable and unfavorable ratings for the other leading candidates are Royce West, 26.4% to 10.5%; Chris Bell, 27.5% to 9.5%; and Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, 21.9% to 7.8%.

Table 1: Favorability Ratings of the Democratic Senate Candidates

Candidate Evaluation (%)					
Candidate	Very Favorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	No Opinion
Mary "MJ" Hegar	17.5	20.6	5.5	4.1	52.3
Royce West	8.7	17.7	6.5	4.0	63.1
Chris Bell	8.4	19.1	5.7	3.8	63.1
Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez	7.1	14.8	4.1	3.7	70.4
Annie "Mamá" Garcia	4.0	14.1	4.4	3.9	73.6
Michael Cooper	4.5	11.3	4.9	3.3	76.0
Amanda K. Edwards	5.5	15.4	4.5	3.5	71.2
Sema Hernandez	5.1	13.8	4.1	4.1	72.9
Adrian Ocegueda	3.1	10.2	5.2	4.2	77.4
Victor Hugo Harris	3.5	11.2	4.3	3.3	77.8
Jack Daniel Foster Jr.	4.2	8.6	4.9	3.2	79.2
D.R. Hunter	2.8	10.4	3.9	3.1	79.8

Texas Democratic Senate Primary Vote Intention

Table 2 contains the vote intention for the 12 Democratic candidates competing for the right to run against Republican Senator John Cornyn in November 2020. Three conclusions can be drawn from this table.

First, almost half (46.2%) of Democratic primary voters either don't know who they are going to vote for (37.4%) or at the time of the survey did not plan to vote for any of the 12 candidates (8.8%).

Second, among those voters who have a preference for a candidate, MJ Hegar dominates the field with 41.0% of the support of those who expressed a vote intention.

Third, several candidates have a realistic prospect of finishing second and going on to face Hegar in a May runoff. These candidates include Royce West (12.3%), Chris Bell (10.8%) and Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez (8.3%).

Table 2: Texas Senate Democratic Primary Vote Intention

Vote Intention (%)		
	All Voters	All Voters
Candidate	All Responses	Valid Responses
Mary "MJ" Hegar	22.0	41.0
Royce West	6.6	12.3
Chris Bell	5.8	10.8
Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez	4.4	8.3
Annie "Mamá" Garcia	2.9	5.4
Michael Cooper	2.9	5.4
Amanda K. Edwards	2.7	5.0
Sema Hernandez	2.4	4.5
Adrian Ocegueda	1.3	2.4
Victor Hugo Harris	1.2	2.3
Jack Daniel Foster Jr.	0.9	1.6
D.R. Hunter	0.6	1.1
No One/None of Them	8.8	-
Don't Know/No Opinion	37.4	-

Ethnicity/Race and Democratic Senate Vote Intention

Table 3 provides the distribution of support for the 12 Democratic senate candidates among Anglos, Latinos, African Americans, and members of other ethnic/racial groups (primarily Asian Americans and those with a multi-ethnic/racial identify). It also includes the proportion of members of the group who did not express a preference for a candidate, ranging from 40.7% of Anglos and 43.1% of African Americans to 52.5% of Others and 56.2% of Latinos being undecided on the eve of the start of early voting. These inter-group differences suggest that we should expect those candidates with the greatest appeal among Latino voters (e.g., MJ Hegar, Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez) to see their vote share disproportionately rise as these Latino voters pay closer attention to the senate election.

The data reveal that MJ Hegar's dominance is based heavily on her considerable support among Anglos, with 59.8% of Anglos with a preference intending to vote for Hegar. All of the other candidates' Anglo vote intention is in the single digits. Hegar's support is especially robust among Anglo women, 64.7% of whom intend to vote for her. Anglo women are expected to account for approximately one out of every three Texas Democratic primary voters this year.

Hegar (22.8%) is also the preferred candidate among Latinos, but to a lesser degree than among Anglos. Following closely behind Hegar is Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, who is the preferred candidate of nearly one in five Latinos (19.6%).

Only among African Americans is Hegar (18.1%) not the leading candidate. African Americans' preferred candidate is Royce West (28.5%). Two other candidates enjoy double-digit support among African Americans, Chris Bell (14.6%) and Amanda Edwards (12.0%).

Table 3: Ethnicity/Race and Democratic Senate Vote Intention

Distribution of Ethnic/Racial Group Vote Intention Across the Twelve Candidates (%)					
Candidate	Anglos	Latinos	African Americans	Others	Total
Mary "MJ" Hegar	59.8	22.8	18.1	41.0	41.0
Royce West	8.3	5.8	28.5	9.1	12.3
Chris Bell	9.0	9.4	14.6	19.2	10.8
Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez	4.5	19.6	4.7	8.4	8.3
Annie "Mamá" Garcia	3.5	7.7	6.8	7.8	5.4
Michael Cooper	2.8	10.9	5.9	1.9	5.4
Amanda K. Edwards	3.6	0.5	12.0	10.9	5.0
Sema Hernandez	2.7	10.0	3.6	0.0	4.5
Adrian Ocegueda	1.5	6.3	0.9	0.0	2.4
Victor Hugo Harris	1.1	5.5	2.1	0.0	2.3
Jack Daniel Foster Jr.	2.6	0.0	1.3	0.0	1.6
D.R. Hunter	0.7	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.1
Total	100.1	100.0	100.0	100.1	
<i>No One/Don't Know-No Opinion (%)</i>	40.7	56.2	43.1	52.5	

Gender and Democratic Senate Vote Intention

Table 4 provides the distribution of support for the 12 Democratic senate candidates among women and men. Among the leading candidates, Royce West and Chris Bell possess similar levels of support among women and men, 11.3% vs. 13.0% and 10.7% vs. 10.8% respectively. Conversely, MJ Hegar enjoys notably more support among women (44.4%) than among men (36.4%), with the opposite true for Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, who possesses more support among men (11.3%) than among women (6.0%).

Table 4: Gender and Democratic Senate Vote Intention

Distribution of Women and Men's Vote Intention Across the Twelve Candidates (%)			
Candidate	Women	Men	Total
Mary "MJ" Hegar	44.4	36.4	41.0
Royce West	11.3	13.6	12.3
Chris Bell	10.7	10.8	10.8
Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez	6.0	11.3	8.3
Annie "Mamá" Garcia	5.8	4.8	5.4
Michael Cooper	5.2	5.6	5.4
Amanda K. Edwards	6.4	3.2	5.0
Sema Hernandez	2.8	6.7	4.5
Adrian Ocegueda	2.7	2.1	2.4
Victor Hugo Harris	2.4	2.2	2.3
Jack Daniel Foster Jr.	1.6	1.5	1.6
D.R. Hunter	0.7	1.7	1.1
Total	100.0	99.9	100.1
<i>No One/Don't Know-No Opinion (%)</i>	49.4	41.2	

Generation and Democratic Senate Vote Intention

Table 5 details the support for the eight candidates among the five main generations present in the Texas electorate: The Silent Generation (born between 1928 and 1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Millennials (1980-1996), and Generation Z (1997-).

Frontrunner MJ Hegar has the highest vote intention among all five generations. However her support among the combined Silent Generation and Baby Boomer cohorts (47.3%) is notably greater than her support among the combined Millennial and Generation Z cohorts (30.4%), with Generation X in between (39.3%).

The same pattern exists for Royce West and Chris Bell who enjoy double-digit support among the two oldest generations combined (15.6%, 13.0%) and mid-single digit support among the two youngest generations combined (6.2%, 6.3%), with their Generation X supporters in between (11.9%, 10.8%).

Table 5: Generation and Democratic Presidential Primary Vote Intention

Distribution of Generational Support Across the Twelve Candidates (%)						
Candidate	Silent Generation (1928-1945)	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	Generation X (1965-1980)	Millennials (1981-1996)	Generation Z (1997-)	Total
Mary "MJ" Hegar	38.0	48.9	39.3	28.8	45.6	41.0
Royce West	12.7	16.1	11.9	6.8	0.0	12.3
Chris Bell	17.4	12.2	10.8	6.9	0.0	10.8
Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez	5.2	7.6	7.7	10.9	12.0	8.3
Annie "Mamá" Garcia	5.3	2.2	5.7	10.3	12.2	5.4
Michael Cooper	0.5	2.2	9.4	8.1	0.0	5.4
Amanda K. Edwards	9.0	4.3	4.8	6.0	0.0	5.0
Sema Hernandez	5.8	1.4	5.5	8.7	3.0	4.5
Adrian Ocegueda	0.0	2.6	0.8	4.6	8.2	2.4
Victor Hugo Harris	0.0	1.1	3.6	4.0	0.0	2.3
Jack Daniel Foster Jr.	3.8	1.5	0.4	2.1	6.7	1.6
D.R. Hunter	2.2	0.0	0.2	2.8	12.4	1.1
Total	99.9	100.1	100.1	100.0	100.1	100.1
<i>No One/Don't Know-No Opinion (%)</i>	45.4	44.4	42.5	49.7	68.9	

Ideological Orientation and Democratic Senate Vote Intention

Table 6 provides the distribution of support for the 12 Democratic senate candidates within the four ideological groups in which Democratic primary voters identify themselves: Very Liberal, Liberal, Moderate and Conservative. There is a clear relationship between ideology and the probability a voter has a vote preference in the Senate race, with 31.9% of voters who identify as Very Liberal not having a preference, compared to 43.0% for Liberal voters, 53.8% for Moderate voters and 60.5% for Conservative voters, almost double the value for Very Liberal voters.

There exist very few noteworthy differences in the degree of support enjoyed by the leading candidates among Very Liberal and Liberal voters.

There do however exist some notable differences between the share of the intended vote for candidates among Very Liberal and Liberal voters and among Moderate/Conservative voters. For instance, while

46.1% and 48.8% of Very Liberal and Liberal voters intend to vote for MJ Hegar, Hegar is the preferred choice of only 31.3% of Moderate and 11.8% of Conservative voters. And, while Chris Bell is supported by 9.4% and 7.8% of Very Liberal and Liberal voters, his support among Moderate voters is about twice as high at 17.3%.

Table 6: Ideological Orientation and Democratic Senate Vote Intention

Distribution of Support Within Four Ideological Groups Across the Twelve Candidates (%)					
Candidate	Very Liberal	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative*	Total
Mary "MJ" Hegar	46.1	48.8	31.3	11.8	41.0
Royce West	9.1	10.9	16.0	14.4	12.3
Chris Bell	9.4	7.8	17.3	10.9	10.8
Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez	9.5	9.0	7.9	0.7	8.3
Annie "Mamá" Garcia	6.2	4.6	6.1	2.7	5.4
Michael Cooper	1.9	5.4	7.8	10.8	5.4
Amanda K. Edwards	4.8	4.6	5.2	6.9	5.0
Sema Hernandez	7.5	2.8	4.3	4.8	4.5
Adrian Ocegueda	1.3	3.0	0.2	14.6	2.4
Victor Hugo Harris	1.3	1.3	1.0	13.5	2.3
Jack Daniel Foster Jr.	1.1	1.4	2.3	2.0	1.6
D.R. Hunter	1.8	0.3	0.6	7.0	1.1
Total	100.0	99.9	100.0	100.1	
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<i>No One/Don't Know-No Opinion (%)</i>	<i>31.9</i>	<i>43.0</i>	<i>53.8</i>	<i>60.5</i>	

* Includes those who identify as Conservative and Very Conservative.

Region and Democratic Senate Vote Intention

Table 7 displays the distribution of vote intention for the 12 Senate candidates in the state's four largest metropolitan areas (Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, Austin), in the Border (U.S.-Mexico) counties stretching from Cameron County on the Gulf Coast to El Paso on the New Mexico border, and in the remaining counties of the state not included in any of the prior five categories. Likely voters on the Border (66.6%), in San Antonio (55.3%) and outside of the four metro areas/border (54.1%) are most undecided about who to vote for in the Democratic senate primary, with Austin a sharp contrast, with only 31.0% of likely voters unsure about for whom to cast a ballot, a reality that can largely be attributed to metro Austin being "Hegar Country."

Several of the candidates possess a regional bailiwick where their support is notably higher than in the other regions. While MJ Hegar is in first place in all regions except the Border, her level of support in metro Austin, where she ran for Congress in 2018, is much higher (65.9%) than in any other region. Royce West's vote intention (26.3%) in DFW (which he represents in the Texas Senate) is more than triple that in any other region. And, both Chris Bell (25.9%) and Amanda Edwards (12.0%) fare much better in their home city of Houston than elsewhere.

Table 7: Region and Democratic Senate Vote Intention

Distribution of Democratic Senate Primary Vote Intention in Texas Metro Areas & Regions (%)							
Candidate	DFW	Houston	San Antonio	Austin	Border	Other	Total
Mary "MJ" Hegar	43.1	26.3	40.7	65.9	13.8	42.4	41.0
Royce West	26.3	8.6	3.5	3.6	0.0	7.9	12.3
Chris Bell	4.7	25.9	4.6	3.0	0.0	14.9	10.8
Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez	5.2	4.1	10.2	12.0	13.9	13.8	8.3
Annie "Mamá" Garcia	7.5	3.2	8.4	3.0	10.9	3.4	5.4
Michael Cooper	4.9	6.7	14.2	0.7	0.0	5.0	5.4
Amanda K. Edwards	2.4	12.1	2.1	3.1	0.0	5.0	5.0
Sema Hernandez	3.1	5.1	3.0	7.5	12.6	1.7	4.5
Adrian Ocegueda	1.5	2.1	5.4	0.0	17.8	0.8	2.4
Victor Hugo Harris	0.8	3.3	1.7	0.8	17.2	1.1	2.3
Jack Daniel Foster Jr.	0.5	1.7	3.4	0.0	1.6	3.9	1.6
D.R. Hunter	0.0	0.8	2.9	0.4	12.3	0.0	1.1
Total	100.0	99.9	100.1	100.0	100.1	99.9	
<i>No One/Don't Know-No Opinion (%)</i>	<i>37.2</i>	<i>47.0</i>	<i>55.3</i>	<i>31.0</i>	<i>66.6</i>	<i>54.1</i>	

Democratic Presidential Vote Intention of the Senate Candidates' Supporters

Table 8 provides information on which candidate the supporters of the four leading Democratic senate candidates intend to vote for in the Democratic presidential primary. The preferences of front-runner MJ Hegar’s supporters are relatively evenly distributed across the leading first and second tier presidential candidates, with higher than average support for Elizabeth Warren (29.3%) and notably lower than average support for Bernie Sanders (12.2%).

The leader among Royce West voters is Sanders (29.5%), followed by Joe Biden (19.9%) and Michael Bloomberg (19.1%). Notable is the very limited support by West voters for Warren (8.6%). Two out of five Chris Bell voters intend to cast a ballot for Biden (39.3%), followed by Michael Bloomberg (17.5%), with both Sanders (14.1%) and Warren (10.5%) the recipients of lower than average support.

Finally, the candidate with perhaps the clearest ideological profile in the presidential preferences of her voters is Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez. Two-fifths (42.4%) of her voters intend to vote for Sanders and one-fifth (21.0%) for Warren.

Table 8: Who the Leading Senate Candidates' Voters Support in the Democratic Presidential Primary

Distribution of the Presidential Vote Intention of the Leading Senate Candidates' Supporters (%)									
Candidate	Biden	Sanders	Warren	Bloomberg	Buttigieg	Klobuchar	Gabbard	Steyer	Total
Mary "MJ" Hegar	19.9	12.2	29.3	8.9	15.2	13.5	0.6	0.4	100.0
Royce West	21.4	29.5	8.6	19.1	13.9	4.9	1.7	0.9	100.0
Chris Bell	39.3	14.1	10.5	17.5	1.4	9.0	8.2	0.0	100.0
Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez	14.1	42.4	21.0	2.2	6.7	4.6	9.1	0.0	100.1