



# TEXAS DECIDES Part I

## The TxHPF | TEGNA 2023 Texas Legislative Session Issues Report

MAY 2023



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POLICY FOUNDATION



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## ABOUT THE TEXAS HISPANIC POLICY FOUNDATION

The Texas Hispanic Policy Foundation operates as a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, dedicated and committed to analyzing and exploring the political, economic, social, demographic, and familial attitudes and behaviors of Texas Hispanics. The Foundation conducts surveys, polls, research, data collection and analysis concerning the Hispanic population in Texas. You can find more information about the Foundation at [www.TxHPF.org](http://www.TxHPF.org).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This survey was carried out between May 8 and May 17 among 1,000 Texas registered voters and has a margin of error of +/- 2.9%.

86% of Texans support (57% strongly) Senate Bill 3, which would increase the residential homestead exemption from \$40,000 to \$70,000 (if under age 65) or to \$100,000 (65 and older).

85% of Texans support (55% strongly) House Bill 2, which would decrease the yearly appraisal cap from 10% to 5% for residential property and extend this benefit to commercial property.

When forced to choose between SB 3 and HB 2, 50% of Texans opt for SB 3 and 38% for HB 2, with 12% of Texans opposing both property tax relief proposals.

Texans born before 1965 are significantly more likely than all younger Texans to prefer SB 3 over HB 2 when forced to choose between the two bills.

58% of Texans support (25% strongly) and 42% oppose (29% strongly) legislation similar to that contained in Senate Bill 8 which would establish educational savings accounts/vouchers in Texas.

70% of Black Texans support SB 8 compared to 59% of Hispanic and 55% of white Texans.

71% and 67% of Republicans and Independents support SB 8 compared to 43% of Democrats.

Residents of exurb, regional hub and rural counties (56%) are not significantly less likely to support SB 8 than are residents of core urban (61%) or populous suburban (53%) counties.

60% of Texans oppose (38% strongly) House Bill 2127 which would preempt local regulations.

Older Texans belonging to the Baby Boomer/Silent Generation (74%) and Generation X (67%) are much more likely to oppose HB 2127 than the younger Millennials (42%) and Generation Z (35%).

67% of Democrats and 67% of Independents oppose HB 2127, as do 51% of Republicans.

65% of Texans support (41% strongly) Senate Bill 20, which would allow for the removal of district attorneys that have a blanket policy of refusing to prosecute classes of crimes under Texas law.

85% of Republicans support SB 20 compared to 66% of Independents and 43% of Democrats.

66% of Texans support (55% strongly) Senate Bill 14 which would prohibit medical professionals from providing puberty-inhibiting drugs, cross-sex hormones and surgical interventions to children under the age of 18. 34% of Texans oppose (26% strongly) SB 14.

89% of Republicans and 70% of Independents support SB 14 compared to 39% of Democrats.

70% of Texans support (54% strongly) Senate Bill 15 which would prohibit Texas public university athletic teams from allowing a student to compete on a team designated for one biological sex if that student's biological sex is opposite that designated for the team. 30% of Texans oppose (18% strongly) SB 15.

82% and 79% of Republicans and Independents support SB 15 compared to 42% of Democrats.

64% of Texans support (49% strongly) Senate Bill 12 that would classify drag shows as sexually oriented performances, which would prohibit individuals under the age of 18 from attending. 36% of Texans oppose (27% strongly) SB 12.

90% of Republicans and 67% of Independents support SB 12 compared to 35% of Democrats.

38% of Texans approve (14% strongly) and 62% disapprove (46% strongly) of the way that President Joe Biden is handling the situation at the U.S.-Mexico border.

55% of Texans approve (26% strongly) and 45% disapprove (32% strongly) of the way that Governor Greg Abbott is handling the situation at the U.S.-Mexico border.

70% of Democrats approve of Biden's handling of the situation at the border and 77% of Democrats disapprove of Abbott's handling of the situation at the border.

86% of Republicans approve of Abbott's handling of the situation at the border and 88% of Republicans disapprove of Biden's handling of the situation at the border.

30% of Independents approve of Biden's handling of the situation at the border compared to 52% who approve of Abbott's handling of the situation at the border.

74% of Texans support (52% strongly) sending the Texas National Guard to patrol the border.

74% of Texans support (48% strongly) the creation of a Texas Border Protection Unit (HB 7/20).

71% of Texans support (46% strongly) sending DPS officers to patrol the border.

62% of Texans support (46% strongly) Texas building a border wall.

60% of Texans support (37% strongly) Texas spending \$2.5-\$3.0 billion a year on border security.

Hispanic Texans are less likely to support all five border security policies than are white and Black Texans, but more than three-fifths of Hispanics still support sending the Texas National Guard (64%) and DPS (65%) to patrol the border and creating a Texas border patrol unit (64%).

This is the first report of three drawing on a survey of 1,000 Texas registered voters carried out between May 8 and May 17 of 2023 (confidence interval of +/- 2.9%). The responses are weighted to provide a population that is representative of Texas registered voters (for more information on the methodology, see the methodological appendix).

In this report we analyze the attitudes and opinions of Texans related to legislation that has been under consideration by the Texas Legislature during the 2023 legislative session. The legislation examined includes property tax relief, school choice/vouchers, local control, policies related to the state's transgender population and drag shows, and immigration and border security policies.

## **1. SURVEY POPULATION**

The distribution of the Texas registered voters surveyed based on their ethnic/racial self-identification is 58% white/Anglo, 23% Hispanic/Latino, 13% Black/African American and 6% with a mixed or other ethnic/racial identity. The gender distribution of the population is 53% women and 47% men. In regard to generations, 37% of the population belongs to the combined Silent Generation (born between 1928 and 1945) and Baby Boomers (1946-1964) cohort, 25% to Generation X (1965-1980), 27% to the Millennial (1981-1996) generation and 11% to Generation Z (1997-2005). The partisan identification of this population is 43% Republican, 42% Democrat, 12% Independent and 3% Unsure. Among the respondents who voted in the 2020 presidential election, 51.3% voted for Donald Trump, 46.9% for Joe Biden and 1.8% for minor party candidates.

The analysis below focuses on this general population of registered voters as well as these registered voters broken down by ethnicity/race, gender, generation, partisanship, and region. Four regional categories are employed: major urban counties (Bexar, Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, Travis), populous suburban counties adjacent to these major urban counties (Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Montgomery, Hays, Williamson, Collin, Denton, Rockwall), border counties (Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, Zapata, Webb, Maverick, Kinney, Val Verde, Terrell, Brewster, Presidio, Jeff Davis, Hudspeth, El Paso), and exurb, rural and regional urban hub counties (226 counties). Close to half (45%) of these registered voters reside in the major urban counties, 18% in the populous suburban counties, 7% in the border counties, and 30% elsewhere in the state's exurb, regional hub and rural counties.

## **2. PROPERTY TAX RELIEF**

During the 2023 regular session of the Texas Legislature Texas House and Texas Senate each presented distinct approaches to providing property tax relief for Texans.

The Texas Senate legislation (Senate Bill 3) would raise the residential homestead exemption from the current amount of \$40,000 to \$70,000 for homeowners under the age of 65 and to \$100,000 for homeowners 65 and older.

The Texas House legislation (House Bill 2) would reduce the current appraised value cap on Texas residential property from a yearly maximum increase of 10% to a yearly maximum increase of 5%, and apply this 5% cap to both residential and commercial property.

In the survey the respondents were asked to what extent they support (strongly or somewhat) or oppose (strongly or somewhat) each of these proposals (the proposals were provided and rotated, but the chambers in which they originated were not mentioned).

As Table 1 makes abundantly clear, both House Bill 2 (HB 2) and Senate Bill 3 (SB 3) enjoy very strong support among Texans, with 86% supporting SB 3 (57% strongly) and 85% supporting HB 2 (55% strongly). In this table as well as throughout this report, “don’t know” responses are excluded.

**Table 1: Support For & Opposition To Property Tax Relief Proposals: HB 2 and SB 3**

| <b>Property Tax Relief</b>                           | <b>Strongly Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Oppose</b> | <b>Strongly Oppose</b> |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| House Bill 2:<br>5% Appraisal Cap                    | 55                      | 30                      | 10                     | 5                      |
| Senate Bill 3:<br>\$70/\$100k<br>Homestead Exemption | 57                      | 29                      | 7                      | 7                      |

Table 2 examines support for HB 2 and for SB 3 among ethnic/racial, gender, generational, partisan and regional sub-groups. By and large there do not exist any noteworthy sub-group differences, with one main exception. Hispanic Texans are notably less likely than white Texans to support both HB 2 (73% vs. 87%) and SB 3 (77% vs. 90%), and Black Texans are significantly less likely than white Texans to support SB 3 (76% vs. 90%). However, more than 70% of all ethnic/racial sub-groups support both HB 2 and SB 3.

**Table 2: Support For Property Tax Relief Proposals Among Sub-Groups**

| Group            | Sub-Group       | Support for HB 2 (%) | Support for SB 3 (%) |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Total Population |                 | 85                   | 86                   |
| Ethnicity/Race   | White           | 87                   | 90                   |
|                  | Hispanic        | 73                   | 77                   |
|                  | Black           | 81                   | 76                   |
| Gender           | Women           | 82                   | 84                   |
|                  | Men             | 89                   | 87                   |
| Generation       | Boomer/Silent   | 87                   | 93                   |
|                  | Generation X    | 83                   | 86                   |
|                  | Millennial      | 83                   | 76                   |
|                  | Generation Z    | 88                   | 82                   |
| Partisan ID      | Republican      | 83                   | 90                   |
|                  | Independent     | 79                   | 85                   |
|                  | Democrat        | 89                   | 82                   |
| Region           | Core Urban      | 84                   | 84                   |
|                  | Suburban        | 86                   | 90                   |
|                  | Rural/Exurb/Hub | 88                   | 90                   |
|                  | Border          | 77                   | 70                   |

The respondents were then asked that if they could support only one of these proposals (once again rotated), would they support the proposal to increase the homestead exemption, the proposal to lower the appraisal cap, or would they support neither proposal. When forced to choose between HB 2 and SB 3, 50% of Texans opt for SB 3 while 38% opt for HB 2 (see Table 3). The remaining 12% support neither property tax relief plan.

Table 3 also examines the preference for the three property tax relief proposals among ethnic/racial, gender, generational, partisan and regional sub-groups. By and large there do not exist any noteworthy sub-group differences, with one principal exception. Members of the Boomer/Silent Generation are significantly more likely than the members of all three other generational cohorts to prefer SB 3 (64% vs. 47%, 39% and 29%) and significantly less likely than the members of all three other generational cohorts to prefer HB 2 (28% vs. 40%, 47% and 48%).



**Table 3: Preference for the Three Property Tax Relief Options Among Sub-Groups**

| Group            | Sub-Group       | Prefer HB 2<br>Appraisal Cap (%) | Prefer SB 3<br>Homestead (%) | Prefer<br>Neither (%) |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total Population |                 | 38                               | 50                           | 12                    |
| Ethnicity/Race   | White           | 38                               | 52                           | 10                    |
|                  | Hispanic        | 40                               | 43                           | 17                    |
|                  | Black           | 36                               | 49                           | 15                    |
| Gender           | Women           | 35                               | 50                           | 15                    |
|                  | Men             | 41                               | 49                           | 10                    |
| Generation       | Boomer/Silent   | 28                               | 64                           | 8                     |
|                  | Generation X    | 40                               | 47                           | 13                    |
|                  | Millennial      | 47                               | 39                           | 14                    |
|                  | Generation Z    | 48                               | 29                           | 23                    |
| Partisan ID      | Republican      | 40                               | 52                           | 8                     |
|                  | Independent     | 45                               | 42                           | 13                    |
|                  | Democrat        | 35                               | 50                           | 15                    |
| Region           | Core Urban      | 38                               | 50                           | 12                    |
|                  | Suburban        | 41                               | 49                           | 10                    |
|                  | Rural/Exurb/Hub | 36                               | 53                           | 11                    |
|                  | Border          | 42                               | 36                           | 22                    |

### 3. SCHOOL CHOICE

In the survey the respondents were asked the extent to which they supported (strongly or somewhat) or opposed (strongly or somewhat) school choice legislation as broadly proposed in Senate Bill 8.

Legislation is under consideration in the Texas Legislature which would use tax dollars to create an educational savings account (ESA) for some Texas K-12 students of up to \$8,000 that could be used to pay for tuition at an accredited private school, online schooling or for private tutors. ISDs with 20,000 or more students would receive approximately \$6,000 less in funding for every current student who receives an ESA and leaves the ISD, while ISDs with less than 20,000 students would, for the next 5 years only, receive approximately \$4,000 more in funding for every current student who receives an ESA and leaves the ISD.

Table 4 reveals that 58% of Texans support (25% strongly) school choice/voucher legislation while 42% of Texans oppose (29% strongly) school choice/voucher legislation.

**Table 4: Support For & Opposition To School Choice/Voucher Legislation (%)**

| <b>Proposal</b> | <b>Strongly Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Oppose</b> | <b>Strongly Oppose</b> |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Senate Bill 8   | 25                      | 33                      | 13                     | 29                     |

Table 5 examines support for SB 8 among ethnic/racial, gender, generational, partisan and regional sub-groups. There exist four significant sub-group differences in support for school choice/voucher legislation. First, Black Texans (70%) are significantly more likely than white (55%) and Hispanic (59%) Texans to support school choice/voucher legislation. Second, men (66%) are significantly more likely than women (58%) to support school choice/voucher legislation. Third, members of Generation Z (75%) and Millennials (68%) are significantly more likely than their elders in the Boomer/Silent Generation (49%) and Generation X (53%) to support school choice/voucher legislation. Fourth, Republicans (71%) and Independents (67%) are significantly more likely to support school choice/voucher legislation than Democrats (43%). Of note, Texans who reside in the state's exurb, regional hub and rural counties (56%) are neither significantly more nor less likely to support school choice/vouchers than are Texans who reside in the state's core urban counties (61%) and populous suburban counties (53%).

**Table 5: Support for School Choice/Voucher Legislation Among Sub-Groups**

| <b>Group</b>     | <b>Sub-Group</b> | <b>Support For School Choice/Vouchers (%)</b> |
|------------------|------------------|---|
| Total Population |                  | 58  |
| Ethnicity/Race   | White            | 55  |
|                  | Hispanic         | 59  |
|                  | Black            | 70  |
| Gender           | Women            | 58  |
|                  | Men              | 66  |
| Generation       | Boomer/Silent    | 49  |
|                  | Generation X     | 53  |
|                  | Millennial       | 68  |
|                  | Generation Z     | 75  |
| Partisan ID      | Republican       | 71  |
|                  | Independent      | 67  |
|                  | Democrat         | 43  |
| Region           | Core Urban       | 61  |
|                  | Suburban         | 53  |
|                  | Rural/Exurb/Hub  | 56  |
|                  | Border           | 61  |

#### 4. LOCAL CONTROL

In the survey the respondents were asked about their support for (strongly or somewhat) or opposition to (strongly or somewhat) two legislative proposals related to local control.

The first question asked if the respondent supports or opposes legislation that would preempt some local regulation of matters currently decided by city and county officials and instead grant such regulatory power to state officials in Austin to determine the regulations for these matters at the city and county levels (see House Bill 2127).

The second question asked if the respondent supports or opposes legislation that would allow for the removal of district and county attorneys that adopt or enforce a policy of categorically refusing to prosecute entire classes of crimes which are illegal under Texas state law (see Senate Bill 20).

Table 6 reveals notably different levels of support among Texans for these two pieces of legislation related to local control. While two out of three (65%) Texans support (41% strongly) legislation that if passed would allow for the removal of district and county attorneys that refuse to prosecute entire classes of crime which are illegal under Texas law as specified in SB 20, only two out of five (40%) Texans support (a mere 13% strongly) the legislative goals of HB 2127 to preempt local regulations. And, while only one in five Texans (22%) strongly opposes SB 20, two in five (38%) strongly oppose HB 2127.

**Table 6: Support For & Opposition To  
Preempting Local Regulations & Removing District Attorneys/County Attorneys**

| <b>Local Control Proposal</b>            | <b>Strongly Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Oppose</b> | <b>Strongly Oppose</b> |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Preempt Local Regulations (HB 2127)      | 13                      | 27                      | 22                     | 38                     |
| Remove District/County Attorneys (SB 20) | 41                      | 24                      | 13                     | 22                     |

Table 7 examines support for HB 2127 (preempt local regulations) and SB 20 (removal of district and county attorneys) among ethnic/racial, gender, generational, partisan and regional sub-groups. There exist four significant sub-group differences in regard to support for the legislation contained in these two bills. First, Black Texans (55%) are significantly more likely than white Texans (36%) to support HB 2127. Second, men (44%) are significantly more likely than women (36%) to support HB 2127. Third, Generation Z (65%) and Millennials (58%) are significantly more likely than their elders in the Boomer/Silent Generation (26%) and Generation X (33%) to support HB 2127. Fourth, Republicans (49%) are significantly more likely than Independents (33%) and Democrats (33%) to support HB 2127, although it is important to note that HB 2127 does not enjoy absolute majority support among Texan Republicans, 51% of whom oppose it. Fifth, Republicans (85%) are significantly more likely than Independents (66%) and, especially Democrats (43%), to support SB 20.

**Table 7: Support For Preempting Local Regulations &  
Removing District Attorneys/County Attorneys Among Sub-Groups**

| <b>Group</b>     | <b>Sub-Group</b> | <b>Support for State<br/>Preemption of Local<br/>Regulations:<br/>HB 2127 (%)</b> | <b>Support for Removal of<br/>DAs/CAs that Do Not<br/>Enforce State Law:<br/>SB 20 (%)</b> |
|------------------|------------------|---|--|
| Total Population |                  | 40  | 65   |
| Ethnicity/Race   | White            | 36  | 68   |
|                  | Hispanic         | 45  | 61   |
|                  | Black            | 55  | 60   |
| Gender           | Women            | 36  | 62   |
|                  | Men              | 44  | 69   |
| Generation       | Boomer/Silent    | 26  | 68   |
|                  | Generation X     | 33  | 59   |
|                  | Millennial       | 58  | 65   |
|                  | Generation Z     | 65  | 71   |
| Partisan ID      | Republican       | 49  | 85   |
|                  | Independent      | 33  | 66   |
|                  | Democrat         | 33  | 43   |
| Region           | Core Urban       | 49  | 64   |
|                  | Suburban         | 35  | 60   |
|                  | Rural/Exurb/Hub  | 32  | 70   |
|                  | Border           | 40  | 66   |

## **5. TRANSGENDER & DRAG SHOW POLICIES**

In the survey the respondents were asked about their support for (strongly or somewhat) or opposition to (strongly or somewhat) two policies that would affect the state's transgender population under the age of 18 and another related to the attendance at drag shows by minors.

First, the respondents were asked if they support or oppose legislation that would prohibit medical professionals from providing puberty-inhibiting drugs, cross-sex hormones and surgical interventions to children under 18 for the purpose of altering the child's biological characteristics to align with their perceived gender identity (see Senate Bill 14).

Second, the respondents were asked if they support or oppose legislation that would prohibit Texas public college/university teams from allowing a student to compete on a team designated for one biological sex if that student's biological sex is opposite that designated for the team; female students would still be able to play on male teams if no equivalent sport was offered for females (see Senate Bill 15).

Third, the respondents were asked if they support or oppose legislation that would classify drag shows as sexually oriented performances, which would prohibit individuals under the age of 18 from attending drag shows (see Senate Bill 12).

Table 8 reveals that approximately two-thirds of Texans support SB 15 (70%), SB 14 (66%) and SB 12 (64%), with substantial proportions of Texans strongly supporting SB 15 (54%), SB 14 (55%) and SB 12 (49%). In contrast, between one in five (18%) and one in four (27% and 26%) Texans strongly oppose SB 15, SB 14 and SB 12 respectively.

**Table 8: Support For & Opposition To Transgender and Drag Show Policy Proposals**

| <b>Policy Proposal</b>   | <b>Strongly Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Oppose</b> | <b>Strongly Oppose</b> |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Prohibit Transgender Gender-Affirming Treatment for Minors<br>SB 14    | 55                      | 11                      | 8                      | 26                     |
| Prohibit Transgender Women Athletes in Women's College Sports<br>SB 15 | 54                      | 16                      | 12                     | 18                     |
| Classify Drag Shows as Sexually Oriented Performances<br>SB 12         | 49                      | 15                      | 9                      | 27                     |

Table 9 examines support for SB 14, SB 15 and SB 12 among ethnic/racial, gender, generational, partisan and regional sub-groups. By and large there do not exist any noteworthy sub-group differences, with the exception of in regard to partisanship and gender. Republicans and Independents are significantly more likely than Democrats to support SB 14 (89% and 70% vs. 39%), SB 15 (82% and 79% vs. 42%) and SB 15 (90% and 67% vs. 35%), with Republicans also significantly more likely to support SB 14 and SB 12 than Independents. Men are significantly more likely than women to support SB 15 (75% vs. 65%) and SB 12 (68% vs. 60%).

**Table 9: Support For Transgender and Drag Show Policy Proposals Among Sub-Groups**

| <b>Group</b>     | <b>Sub-Group</b> | <b>Support For Prohibiting Gender-Affirming Care for Transgender Minors SB 14 (%)</b> | <b>Support for Prohibiting Transgender Women in Women's College Sports SB 15 (%)</b> | <b>Support For Classifying Drag Shows as Sexually Oriented Performances SB 12 (%)</b> |
|------------------|------------------|---|--|---|
| Total Population |                  | 66  | 70   | 64  |
| Ethnicity/Race   | White            | 68  | 72   | 67  |
|                  | Hispanic         | 62  | 64   | 58  |
|                  | Black            | 63  | 65   | 58  |
| Gender           | Women            | 63  | 65   | 60  |
|                  | Men              | 70  | 75   | 68  |
| Generation       | Boomer/Silent    | 71  | 74   | 70  |
|                  | Generation X     | 63  | 66   | 57  |
|                  | Millennial       | 64  | 69   | 63  |
|                  | Generation Z     | 62  | 65   | 63  |
| Partisan ID      | Republican       | 89  | 82   | 90  |
|                  | Independent      | 70  | 79   | 67  |
|                  | Democrat         | 39  | 42   | 35  |
| Region           | Core Urban       | 61  | 65   | 70  |
|                  | Suburban         | 64  | 69   | 61  |
|                  | Rural/Exurb/Hub  | 76  | 76   | 73  |
|                  | Border           | 60  | 70   | 59  |



## 6. IMMIGRATION AND BORDER SECURITY

The respondents were first asked the extent to which they approve (strongly or somewhat) or disapprove (strongly or somewhat) of the way President Joe Biden and Governor Greg Abbott are respectively handling the situation at the U.S.-Mexico border (see Table 10).

Notably more Texans approve of Governor Abbott's handling of the situation at the U.S.-Mexico border than approve of President Biden's handling of the situation at the border, with 55% approving of Abbott's border performance (26% strongly) and 38% approving of Biden's border performance (14% strongly). In contrast, nearly one-half of Texans (46%) strongly disapprove of Biden's handling of the situation at the border compared to the nearly one-third (32%) of Texans who strongly disapprove of Abbott's handling of the situation at the border.

**Table 10: Approval of Way Pres. Biden & Gov. Abbott Are Handling the Situation at Border**

| <b>Executive</b> | <b>Strongly Approve</b> | <b>Somewhat Approve</b> | <b>Somewhat Disapprove</b> | <b>Strongly Disapprove</b> |
|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| President Biden  | 14                      | 24                      | 16                         | 46                         |
| Governor Abbott  | 26                      | 29                      | 13                         | 32                         |

Table 11 examines the approval of the way President Biden and Governor Abbott are handling the situation at the border among ethnic/racial, gender, generational, partisan and regional sub-groups. Five sets of sub-group differences are noteworthy. First, Black Texans are significantly more likely to approve of Biden's handling of the situation at the border than are white and Hispanic Texans (73% vs. 33% and 37%), with the obverse true for Abbott's handling of the situation at the border where the approval of white Texans is significantly greater than that of Black and Hispanic Texans (62% vs. 47% and 40%). Second, men (61%) are significantly more likely than women (49%) to approve of Abbott's handling of the situation at the border. Third, members of Generation Z (58%) and Millennials (51%) are significantly more likely to approve of the way that Biden is handling the situation at the border than are their elders in the Boomer/Silent Generation (28%) and Generation X (33%). Fourth, while 70% of Democrats approve of Biden's border performance, the same is true of only 30% of Independents and 12% of Republicans. And, while 86% of Republicans approve of Abbott's handling of the situation at the border, the same is only true for 52% of Independents and 23% of Democrats. Finally, significantly more residents of the state's core urban counties (49%) than those Texans residing elsewhere in the state approve of Biden's handling of the border situation.

**Table 11: Support For Way Biden & Abbott Are Handling Border Situation Among Sub-Groups**

| Group            | Sub-Group       | Approve of Biden Handling Situation at Border (%) | Approve of Abbott Handling Situation at Border (%) |
|------------------|-----------------|---|--|
| Total Population |                 | 38  | 55   |
| Ethnicity/Race   | White           | 33  | 62   |
|                  | Hispanic        | 37  | 40   |
|                  | Black           | 73  | 47   |
| Gender           | Women           | 39  | 49   |
|                  | Men             | 38  | 61   |
| Generation       | Boomer/Silent   | 28  | 57   |
|                  | Generation X    | 33  | 50   |
|                  | Millennial      | 51  | 52   |
|                  | Generation Z    | 58  | 64   |
| Partisan ID      | Republican      | 12  | 86   |
|                  | Independent     | 30  | 52   |
|                  | Democrat        | 70  | 23   |
| Region           | Core Urban      | 49  | 57   |
|                  | Suburban        | 33  | 52   |
|                  | Rural/Exurb/Hub | 29  | 59   |
|                  | Border          | 23  | 47   |

The respondents were then asked the extent which they support (strongly or somewhat) or oppose (strongly or somewhat) the following five state immigration and border security related policies:

- Texas building a wall on the state's border with Mexico.
- Texas deploying National Guard soldiers to patrol along the border with Mexico.
- Texas sending Department of Public Safety (DPS) officers to patrol along the border with Mexico.
- Texas spending between \$2.5 and \$3.0 billion dollars every year on border security.
- Texas creating a special Border Protection Unit to focus on border security (see House Bills 7/20).

All five of these policies enjoy majority support among Texans, ranging from the 60% and 62% who support Texas spending \$2.5 to \$3.0 billion a year on border security and support Texas building a border wall respectively, to 74% and 74% who support Texas creating a border protection unit and deploying the Texas National Guard to the border (see Table 12).

Intermediate between these four policies is the proposal to send DPS officers to the border, which enjoys the backing of 71% of Texans.

**Table 12: Support For & Opposition To Five Texas Immigration & Border Security Policies**

| <b>Policy Proposal</b>                          | <b>Strongly Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Support</b> | <b>Somewhat Oppose</b> | <b>Strongly Oppose</b> |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Build Border Wall                               | 46                      | 16                      | 10                     | 28                     |
| Deploy National Guard to Border                 | 52                      | 22                      | 9                      | 17                     |
| Send DPS Officers to Border                     | 46                      | 25                      | 12                     | 17                     |
| Spend \$2.5 to \$3.0 Billion on Border Security | 37                      | 23                      | 16                     | 24                     |
| Create a Texas Border Protection Unit           | 48                      | 26                      | 9                      | 17                     |

Table 13 examines the level of support for these five immigration/border security related policy proposals among ethnic/racial, gender, generational, partisan and regional sub-groups. While there do not exist any noteworthy generational or gender differences in support for these five proposals (with a modest gender exception on spending \$2.5-\$3.0b on border security), there do exist profound partisan differences along with some important ethnic/racial and regional differences.

Republicans across the board are significantly more likely to support all five policy proposals than Democrats, with Independents tending to occupy an intermediate position between the two groups of partisans, albeit most commonly leaning closer to Republicans than to Democrats. And, Hispanic Texans are universally less likely to support all five policy proposals than both white Texans and Black Texans, with the gap separating white and Hispanic Texans greatest in regard to support to build the border wall (67% vs. 47%) and spending \$2.5 to \$3.0 billion on border security (66% vs. 47%). That said, close to half of Hispanics support these former two policies and more than three-fifths support (64% to 65%) the other three policies. Similarly, support for these five policies is lower among border residents than among those elsewhere in the state, although a notable majority of Texans who live on the border from Brownsville to El Paso support sending the members of the Texas National Guard (58%) and DPS officers (64%) to patrol border as well as creating a Texas border patrol unit (65%).

**Table 13: Support For Five Texas Immigration & Border Security Policies Among Sub-Groups**

| <b>Group</b>        | <b>Sub-Group</b> | <b>Build<br/>Border<br/>Wall</b> | <b>National<br/>Guard to<br/>Border</b> | <b>DPS<br/>Officers<br/>to Border</b> | <b>\$2.5-3.0b<br/>on<br/>Border<br/>Security</b> | <b>Create<br/>TX<br/>Border<br/>Unit</b> |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|
|                     |                  |                                  |   |                                       |  |  |
| Total<br>Population |                  | 62                               | 74                                      | 71                                    | 60   | 74                                       |
|                     |                  |                                  |   |                                       |  |  |
| Ethnicity/Race      | White            | 67                               | 76                                      | 72                                    | 66   | 78                                       |
|                     | Hispanic         | 47                               | 64                                      | 65                                    | 47   | 64                                       |
|                     | Black            | 59                               | 80                                      | 71                                    | 56   | 75                                       |
|                     |                  |                                  |   |                                       |  |  |
| Gender              | Women            | 60                               | 73                                      | 69                                    | 56   | 72                                       |
|                     | Men              | 64                               | 75                                      | 73                                    | 65   | 77                                       |
|                     |                  |                                  |   |                                       |  |  |
| Generation          | Boomer/Silent    | 68                               | 82                                      | 79                                    | 65   | 78                                       |
|                     | Generation X     | 54                               | 72                                      | 70                                    | 62   | 78                                       |
|                     | Millennial       | 58                               | 67                                      | 62                                    | 52   | 69                                       |
|                     | Generation Z     | 64                               | 68                                      | 66                                    | 62   | 67                                       |
|                     |                  |                                  |   |                                       |  |  |
| Partisan ID         | Republican       | 91                               | 94                                      | 93                                    | 85   | 95                                       |
|                     | Independent      | 65                               | 83                                      | 69                                    | 65   | 75                                       |
|                     | Democrat         | 29                               | 50                                      | 48                                    | 34   | 52                                       |
|                     |                  |                                  |   |                                       |  |  |
| Region              | Core Urban       | 59                               | 71                                      | 71                                    | 59   | 73                                       |
|                     | Suburban         | 65                               | 74                                      | 69                                    | 58   | 73                                       |
|                     | Rural/Exurb/Hub  | 66                               | 82                                      | 73                                    | 66   | 80                                       |
|                     | Border           | 51                               | 58                                      | 64                                    | 50   | 65                                       |

## 7. METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

The Texas Hispanic Policy Foundation conducted an online survey sample of 1,000 Texas registered voters carried out between May 8 and May 17 of 2023, utilizing YouGov data collection systems and processes, and including a Hispanic oversample. Instrument design, research oversight and survey analysis were all carried out by the Texas Hispanic Policy Foundation. The sampling frame is a politically representative "modeled frame" of adults, based upon the American Community Survey (ACS) public use microdata file, public voter file records, the 2020 Current Population Survey (CPS) Voting and Registration supplements, the 2020 National Election Pool (NEP) exit poll, and the 2020 CES surveys, including demographics and 2020 presidential vote. The matched cases were weighted to the sampling frame using propensity scores. The matched cases and the frame were combined and a logistic regression was estimated for inclusion in the frame. The propensity score function included age, gender, race/ethnicity, and years of education. The propensity scores were grouped into deciles of the estimated propensity score in the frame and post-stratified according to these deciles. The weights were then post-stratified on 2020 Presidential vote choice, and a four-way stratification of gender, age (4-categories), race (4-categories), and education (4-categories), to produce the final weight.