

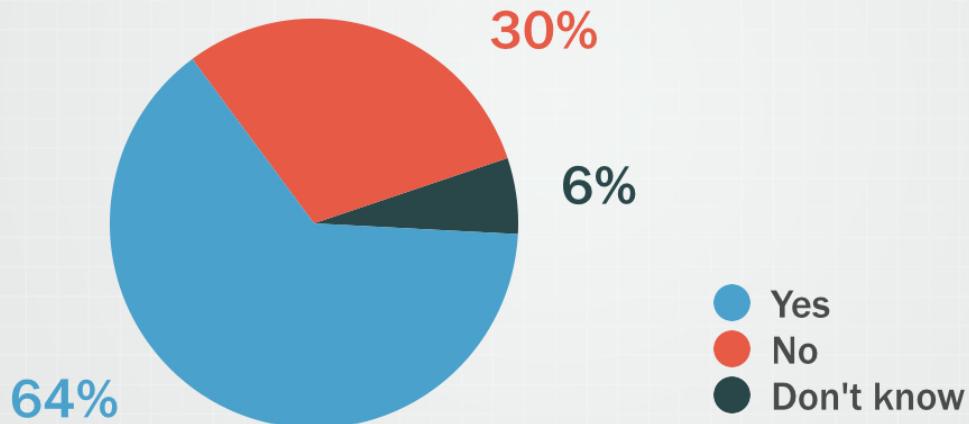
# **“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE**

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll*

*for the week of 18 July 2014*

# INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

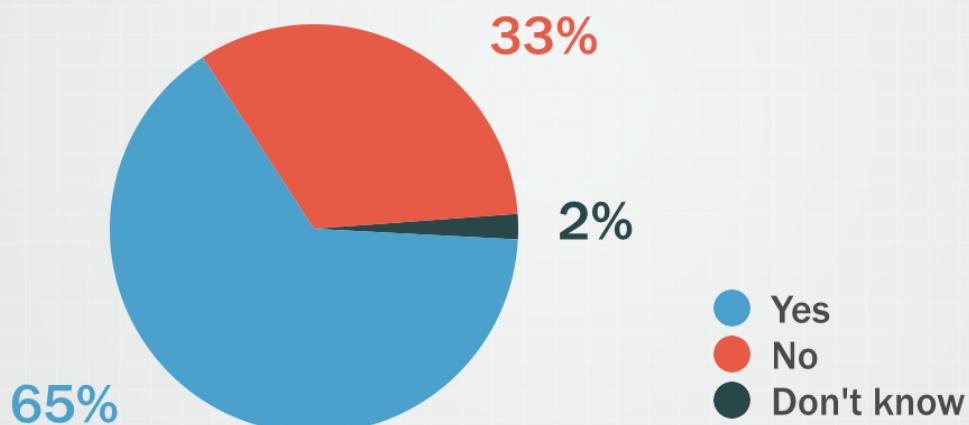
SHOULD LOCATIONS AND AMOUNTS OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS BE PUBLIC?



Inside Intelligence is an informal survey of political and government insiders in Texas and is not meant to measure public opinion.

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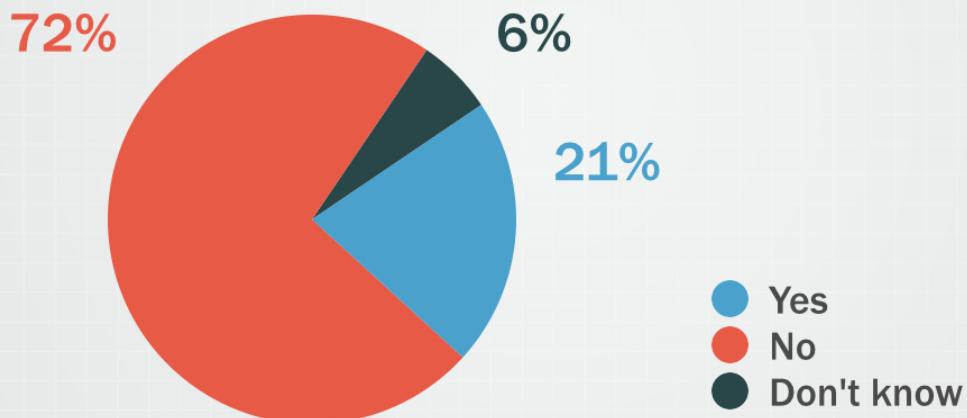
SHOULD WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE BE REQUIRED IN TEXAS?



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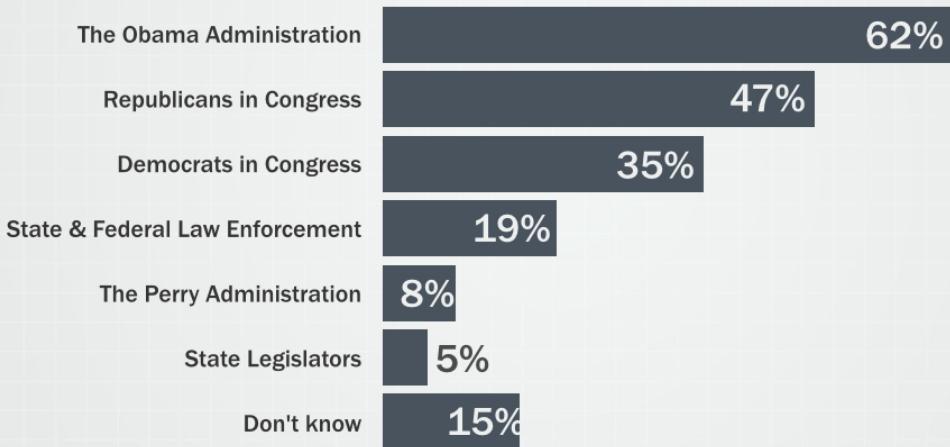
WILL LOCAL GOVERNMENTS BE REIMBURSED FOR CARING FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN?



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# INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

WHO'S TO BLAME FOR THE SURGE OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN TEXAS?



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***Should government-required reports on the locations and amounts of hazardous chemicals stored in the state be readily available to the public?***

- "That would be foolish; duh, don't you think the bad guys would love to know? But, the locations and inventory should definitely be kept by TX DPS."
- "This is not a wedge issue; however, community right to know laws and the need for homeland security will need to be reconciled in future legislative sessions."
- "Not sure in today's environment that we need to advertise where shit is that can be blown up by crazy people."
- "Should we give government required road maps to terrorists?"
- "They should be reported to the state and provided to local leadership, but not publicly available."
- "Its a no-brainer!!"
- "Why should such important information be kept from the public?"
- "This is a fine line because it's not only a public health and safety issue, but it's a security issue as well. Clearly the public should know what's in and near their neighborhoods, but we don't want to publish the location of this stuff--who knows what bad guys (drug cartels, terrorists, etc.) will try to do with it."
- "Reports should be made available under reasonable circumstances. For security reasons, they should not, however, be easily attainable by just anyone."
- "If they are safe there is no reason to hide them. If they are unsafe, they shouldn't be there."
- "Sensitive info can be redacted and access limited to public safety agencies, etc."
- "Residents have a right to know this information collected at taxpayer expense."
- "That way, you can decide if you want to live close to one or not (i.e.- West, TX)"
- "Yes. Sorta. Industry should at least report what hazardous materials they have on their site. First Responders ought to know what they're getting into. And any future placement damn sure be away from schools and hospitals etc."
- "IF those sites have serious security systems/ protocols in practice!"
- "Do we really want a full color map of targets for potential terrorists? I understand the community's right to know, but maybe we could redact or summarize the government report before releasing it?"
- "First, the definition of what is 'hazardous' can be very subjective and poorly understood by the public.

Some basic information may be appropriate to disclose, but for the most part concerns about security and business privacy are valid."

- "The chemicals should be reported to state and local officials with the need to know. Those officials should have a plan to deal with any situation."
- "Not to the public - there must be a compelling reason for the 'public' to know where the chemicals are stored. However, SOMEONE should know what kind of chemicals, etc. are being stored near residential areas, schools and in our communities. (Let's not forget West!!)"
- "The government can collect the info, but results will be the same: Those who live near such facilities rarely ask for such info nor do they have the means to move to another part of town even if they wanted to. They don't build these things near neighborhoods in the good part of town."
- "With exception for locations/materials that should be kept confidential for homeland security purposes, but first responders should have all access."

- "Need to balance public's right to know with security risks (terrorist attacks)."
- "Why not?"
- "Only if you want to make it easier for the next Timothy McVeigh."
- "I never cared before. Don't think I'll be caring in the future, either."
- "This is a no-brainer. Any homeland security concerns are corporate spin to fight transparency."
- "Statutes might have to be changed to accomplish this because of antiterrorism legislation passed in 2003."
- "Local Governments should be required to provide information to the community but it is not the responsibility of the state to keep a list to give to everyone. Public safety is the only reason for having a list of the locations. Since the state does not run the local first responders, the state doesn't have any business giving it out."
- "Why don't we just put a target on the facilities? No, as long as regulators are doing their job and first responders know what's stored where, the public safety is protected."

### *Should Texas employers be required to provide workers compensation insurance for their employees?*

- "The current system works. Trading off reduced tort liability in exchange for subscribing to workers' comp, has given both employers and employees

the flexibility to choose what works for them."

- "Another no-brainer"

- "Rather than providing help to workers, it creates a funding scheme for unscrupulous lawyers."
- "If an employee is hurt on the job, then companies will pay one way or another--either through the state system, through a private policy, or through the courts. No use in forcing companies of all sizes and danger levels to take part in a one-size-fits-all system that wasn't designed to cover their specific needs."
- "Large employers, yes. Small employers, no."
- "Texas actually does as well as other states on dealing with injured workers as Sen. Duncan's report showed the other year."
- "We have the highest rate of deaths by construction workers by far - wonder why?"
- "Very bad idea"
- "You can say comp is voluntary in Texas, but the penalties in court for not providing it are huge."
- "Despite some recent reports that suggest otherwise, the system in Texas is working and working well."
- "No fear of uneven playing field; we are the only state w/o mandatory comp"
- "So long as there is a workers compensation insurer of last resort. Texas Mutual does not really serve that purpose any longer."
- "With the exception of very small employers"
- "Of course."
- "I think employers with high injury risk jobs should provide workers' comp coverage. Could be self insured or traditional comp policy. Low risk jobs should not be required to have comp insurance."
- "Only for jobs that require some physical labor. Not for desk jobs."
- "Insurance should be optional for employers. The smart ones would offer it, though."
- "Minimal coverage or repeal tort reform. Your choice GOP."
- "They should have the option."
- "This is not an issue"

***Do you think state and local governments will be fully reimbursed for the costs of housing, medicine and other services for those immigrants?***

- "Not a chance; just another unfunded 'mandate' from the feds because this is of their doing, but they care not how it's paid for."
- "They're refugees, not immigrants."
- "Are you kidding me? Have we been reimbursed for Katrina? Ike? Or what Texans have spent to date trying to secure our border?"

- "Not sure the current DC administration will repay the current Texas administration for any costs."
- "Maybe under a different president."
- "Do not understand the question. What immigrants... No context"
- "Your question demonstrates the ignorance of the issue. In the case of Central America they are likely classified as refugees. Get someone staff that understands immigration."
- "Who's going to pay?"
- "For years we have asked about 100% federal reimbursement for emergency (including deliveries) health care services for illegal immigrants. Even though Medicaid pays the usual match, they never accepted the argument that they control foreign policy and therefore should bear the cost for the financial burdens that are not equally distributed across the country."
- "Of course not! Nor will the churches, individuals or any other group helping out. But the government entities will get some assistance but not completely reimbursed because the Congressional Republicans will not pass the total appropriations needed."
- "It is wrong for government to gouge taxpayers for a bottomless pit of expenses for countless numbers of persons for an absolutely unknown period of time. All the expenses would be for substandard care, since the BEST care those children can get is to be reunited with their parents and families."
- "No one knows what to do with these people.... and the citizens will pay whether it is federal or local or state or even non-profits."
- "Should they? Without a doubt. Will they? When Hell freezes over."
- "The federal government has been AWOL on this issues. They won't do their job. They won't pay us for doing it for them."
- "Are you kidding? No way the federal government would even consider doing such--- are you really paying attention to the fact that our federal government is borrowing 48 cents or more of every dollar being spent so that derelicts have incentives to not join the workforce."
- "Not just no, but hell no. Even prior to this new 'influx' Texas wasn't being reimbursed the full costs. Why on earth would the feds change now?"
- "hahahahaha."
- "Depends on stupid Congress!"
- "At least half will tap one or more welfare-style programs. School and health costs alone will dwarf any federal reimbursement."
- "Yes, the Texas border is now like the County emergency room for indigent care and our Yankee brothers and sisters should share that cost."
- "Sure. But from which magical pot of money?"
- "By whom?"
- "Was Houston 'fully reimbursed' for taking care of US citizens during

Katrina? Does the federal government 'fully reimburse' anyone, ever?"

- "Yes, just in time for Christmas."
- "When did that ever happen?"
- "By feds, as well as the education and health care that the federal courts required us to provide years ago"
- "If state and local governments get half of what they will spend, that will be a victory."
- "Not as I don't see Congress voting the billions Obama is asking for"
- "Since when were local governments fully reimbursed for anything?"

• "But what remains to be determined is the untold costs and benefits of having such an influx of 'refugees.'"

- "Those who will turn their backs on a child - any child - are un-Texan by definition."
- "50% would be good."
- "Will be - no. Should be, as in any disaster relief - yes."
- "Although does it really matter if the fed government is reimbursing the states? The money all comes from taxpayers at some point. And if Texas covers the costs directly, we can probably do it more efficiently."
- "NO WAY!"

***Who do you blame for the swollen population of immigrant children who have crossed the Mexican border into the U.S.? [Check all that apply]***

- "Complete incompetence and dereliction of duty by POTUS."
- "Also U.S. foreign policy and drug policy for most of the previous century. There's a reason most of the kids are coming from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, but not Nicaragua."
- "Our State Dept. can easily tie foreign aid dollars sent to Central America to real government reforms that will protect their citizens and provide them with opportunities in their own countries. Thus far, it refuses to do so."

- "There is no leadership in DC from anyone in either party on this issue."
- "Jean Raspail's book 'The Camp of the Saints' seems appropriate reading for the topic even if a bit dated and possibly xenophobic."
- "How about the countries they came from?"
- "It's a combination of horrendous poverty in Central America and Mexico, the lure of a better life here, and Democrats wanting to accept immigrants to populate their roles. Plus the failed U.S. drug policy."

- "Plenty of blame to go around. It is what happens when politicians are not looking at a problem comprehensively and trying to solve it, but are, instead, putting politics first."
- "Once again, you are showing a lot of ignorance. This is a problem that started two decades ago."
- "None of the above. Horrible crime, the drug war and the sex trade are the reasons this is happening. The same reason the legislation was passed and signed by George W. Bush. No one in a safe, healthy environment leaves their home and family or puts their children in at risk unless it is the only option."
- "Michelle Obama affirmed it in remarks to LULAC."
- "Its the lawlessness, violence, bad economies and lack of education in Central America that is to blame"
- "Casting blame will not solve the problem. People escaping human rights issues and poverty have ALWAYS streamed to the U.S. We are a magnet for the less fortunate. Even those who live in horrendous poverty by American standards may have it better than in their home country. People from trouble spots around the world will continue to be attracted to this country."
- "Members of both political parties in Congress are to blame for the inaction taking place in DC. They are too concerned about scoring political points with their respective base of supporters before the mid-term elections in November. As a result, neither group is willing to set aside their differences to work out a compromise with respect to the immigration/border security issue."
- "In addition to many of these options, you left off the drug cartels, certain charities that turn a blind eye to illegal border crossings, and certain governments south of the border who are abdicating their own responsibilities to their people."
- "Our borders are a federal responsibility--- we presently have the poorest excuse of a federal government that has existed in the past 75 years, with very little promise for improvement."
- "Throw in the Mexican government, drug gangs in Central America. The situation is a complete clusterf\*@\*."
- "Let's call it what it is. It's not the Obama administration as if it might be some nameless bespectacled desk jockey setting the policy. It is President Barack H. Obama himself."
- "Republicans led by W passed TVRPA in 2008 that lets these kids stay for at least some period of time."
- "My answer is not 'Don't Know' but rather, I blame the countries of origin and geopolitical current events outside of the control of the US. That really should have been a choice, folks."
- "The US demand for drugs and US foreign policies that stem way back including the refusal of our federal government to do 'nothing' and that includes all of them!"
- "The proximate cause of this crisis is Obama's 2012 executive order

enacting Dream Act amnesty for young people. This created the current flood of refugees exploiting a 2008 law requiring elaborate due process for OTM refugee children. Congress should have amended or repealed the 2008 once the loophole was noticed, but neither GOP nor Democrats have move to do so."

- "I think the state has done as much as we can possibly do to control this situation but at the end of the day - it's a federal issue."
- "I think they finally translated Emma Lazarus' poem into Spanish: 'Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!'"
- "None of the above. I doubt any of these items are on mamma y papa's mind as they say adios y Buena suerta to their beloved 7 year old whom they want to at least have a chance to avoid squalor, violence and a dead end."
- "It is a refugee crisis. America has a responsibility to follow the law and provide these children refugees protection under the law, as well as provide humanitarian treatment."
- "Newsflash: people respond to incentives. When Obama announced from the White House that 'we won't deport,' the balance of incentives tilted hugely in favor of people rushing the border."
- "And let's not leave out the Mexican government through whose country these children seem to move unseen and unheard."

• "The immigrants themselves are the cause, not any US officials. Good Lord, do we think those people were shipped up to the US border against their will?"

- "All of the above. Bush administration instituted a more humanitarian procedure, squalor in central America, unscrupulous coyotes, and our failure to develop an effective response strategy."
- "All of the above..."
- "Some of the dwindling number of groups still in the President's camp are the Latino activists. They view this as an asylum issue."
- "None of the above is a better choice. Our shortcoming (federally) has been not having better relations with our southern neighbors and helping them with their problems. (Drugs and violence) I blame ALL politicians and parties who are not willing to set partisanship aside and work together for the good of the people.... I emphasize both parties and their leadership!"
- "Perhaps you should blame the 'American Dream'! Everyone wants to live in a safe neighborhood, attend school, have food to eat and a place to lay down each night. Do you blame these parents for thinking that America - that land of promise- is the place to send their children? A law was passed and signed into law by then President George W. Bush - it was a law which had unintended consequences - the 'perception' that kids alone would be allowed asylum in the US. Sadly, we will have to inform parents, the governments etc. that this was a MISTAKE and

congress needs to take responsibility to FIX the issue. President Obama did not INVITE or encourage them to come any more than President Bush did! In the mean time - THEY ARE CHILDREN! They do not have Diseases (but sadly the children of all the crazies who choose not to vaccinate their children DO and they are the ones spreading CURABLE childhood illnesses in our schools!)."

- "The administration has admitted the warning signs were there with increasing numbers every year - and they did nothing."
- "There is no sound bite villain in this drama."
- "None of the above. Most of the blame lies with the criminal elements causing children to flee and the lack of action by authorities in Mexico and the other affected countries. If Congress fails to pass the supplemental funding to better deal with the situation, the blame in our country will lie with the Republicans in Congress."
- "Nothing in any immigration reform bill except more border security would have made a difference. President Obama owns this one. Once he exercised 'enforcement discretion' & issued the executive order, he sent a message--maybe not what he intended--but a message nonetheless."
- "Activities of drug cartels in their countries and the conditions they live in. They are not invited they are sent by desperation and fear"
- "They had a chance to address problem when Bush was president and refused to do so."

- "None of the above. I blame narcoterrorism and dysfunctional governments south of the border, and drug-using Americans north of it."

- "Congress, Presidents, violence, poverty, opportunity, and other outside influences."

- "The biggest piece of blame is not on the list: failed economies of the countries south of the US. If those countries were better places to live and work, we wouldn't have an immigration problem."

- "They are not immigrant children. They are refugees fleeing untenable conditions. If any person bellyaching about getting tough at the border would spend any time in the countries from which they are fleeing, they would have a very different view. I would challenge any person to say that, if they by luck of birth were born in Guatemala or a similar country, that they wouldn't do anything in their power to get their kids to safety."

- "What a flawed set of choices. Please add: Ourselves, The drug war, Latin American poverty, urban violence in Central American cities"

- "Option on your survey not shown: The gang activity in three Central American nations is mostly responsible. The influx of unaccompanied migrant children has been going on for several years and is just now capturing the attention of the public and the media. Interviews with many of the new immigrants have shown that U.S. immigration policy has had little to do with their motivations for leaving their countries."

- "We should have federal and state armed guards along the border and immediately take them back across as they are captured. There should be no amnesty from this point forward. We should not have to provide any care for those who are not lawful citizens of our state and our nation."
- "I blame the governments in Mexico and Central America."
- "The administration and all of congress for failure to reform immigration policy."
- "This is a man made mess, caused by the President."
- "None of the above. Try 'fleeing drug-gang violence.'"
- "Remember when the President said 'that the border with Mexico and the United States was safer than it ever was in history.?'"
- "The political situation in Central and South America has caused the current situation with immigrant. The reason for that is complex and focuses on US policy in that area as well US consumption of illegal drugs. So if you need to point a finger--all the above and then some."
- "I blame poor people in Central America who are totally bereft of hope for the future. So, I guess there's no one to blame."

***Our thanks to this week's participants:*** Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Brandon Aghamalian, Brandon Alderete, Clyde Alexander, George Allen, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Dave Beckwith, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, David Cabrales, Lydia Camarillo, Kerry Cammack, Thure Cannon, Snapper Carr, William Chapman, Elna Christopher, Harold Cook, Kevin Cooper, Beth Cubriel, Randy Cubriel, Curtis Culwell, Denise Davis, Hector De Leon, Eva De Luna-Castro, June Deadrick, Holly DeShields, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jeff Eller, Jon Fisher, Neftali Garcia, Norman Garza, Dominic Giarratani, Stephanie Gibson, Kinnan Golemon, Daniel Gonzalez, John Greytok, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, John Heasley, Ken Hodges, Laura Huffman, Deborah Ingersoll, Richie Jackson, Cal Jillson, Mark Jones, Robert Jones, Lisa Kaufman, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Ramey Ko, Sandy Kress, Dale Laine, Nick Lampson, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Luke Legate, Myra Leo, Richard Levy, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Mike McKinney, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Steve Murdock, Keir Murray, Nelson Nease, Keats Norfleet, Pat Nugent, Gardner Pate, Robert Peeler, Bill Pewitt, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Richard Pineda, Allen Place, Kraege Polan, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Jay Propes, Karen Reagan, Patrick Reinhart, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, Grant Ruckel, Tyler Ruud, Jason Sabo, Luis Saenz, Andy Sansom, Jim Sartwelle, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Bruce Scott, Robert Scott, Ben Sebree, Bradford Shields, Nancy Sims, Jason Skaggs, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Larry Soward, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Tom Spilman, Jason Stanford, Bob Strauser, Colin Strother, Sherry Sylvester, Gerard Torres, Trey Trainor, Vicki Truitt, Ware

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