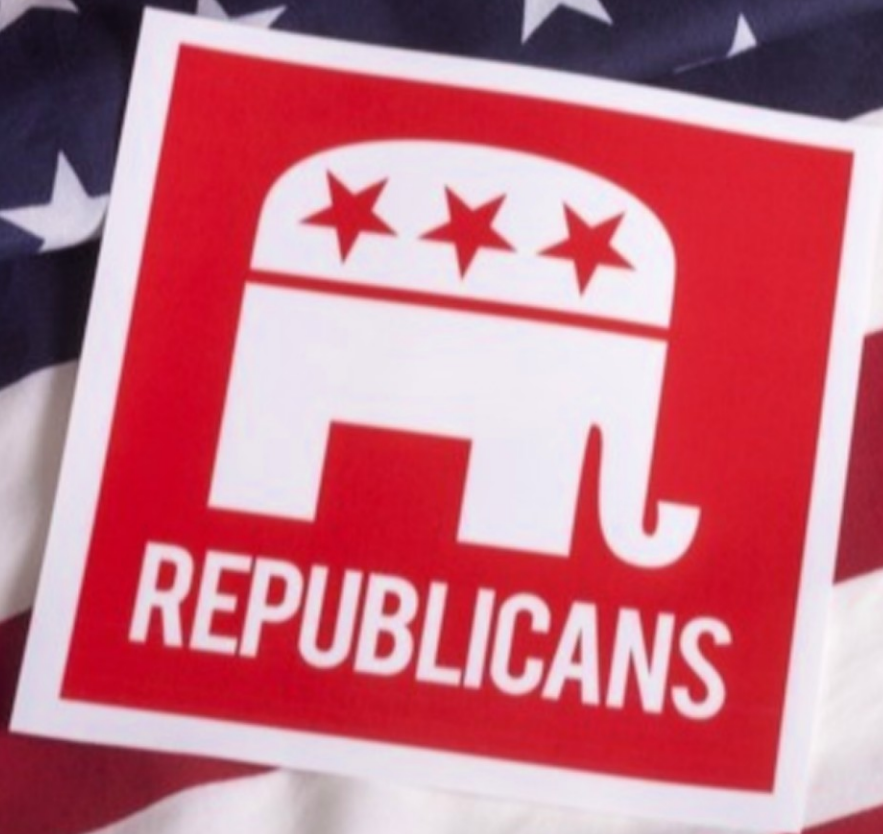


TEXAS REPUBLICAN PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTIONS 2026

U.S. SENATE, ATTORNEY GENERAL &
RAILROAD COMMISSIONER



Hobby School of Public Affairs
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON





Texas Republican Primary Runoff Elections 2026

U.S. Senate, Attorney General & Railroad Commissioner

May 2026

The Hobby School of Public Affairs at the University of Houston conducted a representative survey of likely May 2026 Texas Republican primary runoff voters to assess their vote intention and opinions in the Republican Texas U.S. Senate, Texas Attorney General and Texas Railroad Commissioner primary runoff elections.

Voters were contacted via SMS text message and directed to an online survey platform between April 28 and May 1, 2026. The sample population is 1,200 (with a margin of error of +/- 2.83%) and is representative of voters who are likely to participate in the statewide May 2026 Texas Republican primary runoff elections.

Future reports will examine vote intention and voter opinions among likely voters in the May 2026 Democratic Party primary runoff elections in Harris County and Texas Congressional District 18 and in the Republican Party primary runoff election in Texas Congressional District 9.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ken Paxton (48%) leads John Cornyn (45%) by 3 percentage points among Texans who are likely to vote in the May 2026 Texas U.S. Senate Republican primary runoff election, with 7% unsure how they would vote.

Paxton retains the support of 95% of those May likely voters who cast a ballot for him in March while Cornyn retains the support of 91% of his March voters who plan to vote in the runoff. Runoff voters who cast a ballot for Wesley Hunt in March favor Paxton over Cornyn, 54% to 35%.

Cornyn leads Paxton by 10 percentage points (52% to 42%) among likely voters who possess a four-year college degree, while Paxton leads Cornyn by 17 percentage points (55% to 38%) among likely voters who do not possess a four-year college degree.

50% and 43% of likely May voters have a favorable and unfavorable opinion of Paxton, respectively, with 7% not knowing enough about him to have an opinion.

47% and 49% of likely May voters have a favorable and unfavorable opinion of Cornyn, respectively, with 4% not knowing enough about him to have an opinion.

Mayes Middleton (48%) leads Chip Roy (39%) by 9 percentage points among Texans who are likely to vote in the May 2026 Texas Attorney General Republican primary runoff election, with 13% unsure how they would vote.

Middleton retains the support of 93% of those May likely voters who cast a ballot for him in March, while Roy retains the support of 91% of his March voters who plan to vote in the runoff. Likely runoff voters who cast a ballot for Joan Huffman in March are split evenly between those who intend to vote

for Middleton (39%) and Roy (40%), while those who voted for Aaron Reitz favor Middleton (54%) over Roy (38%).

Middleton leads Roy by 15 percentage points (51% to 36%) among likely voters who do not have a four-year college degree, while the two candidates are effectively tied (44% to 43%) among likely voters with a four-year college degree.

Likely primary voters who intend to vote for John Cornyn in the U.S. Senate runoff are equally split between Middleton (43%) and Roy (45%), while Middleton leads Roy 54% to 38% among those likely voters who intend to vote for Ken Paxton in the May U.S. Senate runoff.

53% and 20% of likely May voters have a favorable and unfavorable opinion of Middleton, respectively, with 27% not knowing enough about him to have an opinion.

45% and 38% of likely May voters have a favorable and unfavorable opinion of Roy, respectively, with 17% not knowing enough about him to have an opinion.

Jim Wright (35%) leads Bo French (28%) by 7 percentage points among Texans who are likely to vote in the May 2026 Texas Railroad Commissioner Republican primary runoff election, with, though, nearly two-fifths (37%) of likely voters still unsure for whom they would vote in this contest.

Likely primary voters who intend to vote for John Cornyn in the U.S. Senate runoff favor Wright over French by a 28-percentage point margin (46% to 18%), while French leads Wright by 13 percentage points (39% to 26%) among those who intend to vote for Ken Paxton in May.

47% and 51% of likely May primary voters don't know enough about Wright or French to have an opinion about them, while 33% and 35% have a favorable opinion, and 20% and 14% have an unfavorable opinion, respectively.

81% of likely May Republican primary runoff voters have a favorable opinion of Vice President JD Vance, 77% a favorable opinion of President Donald Trump, 76% a favorable opinion of U.S. Senator Ted Cruz, and 75% a favorable opinion of Texas Governor Greg Abbott.

MAY 2026 REPUBLICAN PRIMARY RUNOFF LIKELY VOTER POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Men represent 51% of this population and women 49%. White likely voters account for 81% of this population of 2026 Republican primary runoff likely voters, Latino likely voters for 13%, and those identifying with other ethnic/racial groups for 6%. More than two-thirds (68%) of these likely voters are age 55 and older, while 25% are between the ages of 35 and 54 and 7% are between the ages of 18 and 34. A little more than half (52%) of these likely voters possess a four-year college degree, while 48% do not. Republicans account for 76% of this population, Independents for 20% and Democrats for 1%, with 3% identifying as something else or being unsure about their partisanship.

THE TEXAS U.S. SENATE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION

In the March 3, 2026 Texas U.S. Senate Republican primary election, U.S. Senator John Cornyn won 42.0% of the vote, followed by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton with 40.6%, Congressman Wesley Hunt with 13.5% and five other candidates who combined won 3.9% of the vote. Since no candidate surpassed the 50% threshold needed to avoid a runoff, Cornyn and Paxton are facing off in a May 26, 2026 primary runoff election.

Figure 1 provides the reported March 3 U.S. Senate primary vote of those Texans who are likely to vote in the May 2026 primary runoff election. These results exclude the 3% of likely May voters who did not cast a ballot in the March 3 primary election. Among these likely voters, 42% report having cast a ballot for Cornyn and an identical 42% report that they voted for Paxton in the March primary, with 14% voting for Hunt and 2% for another candidate.

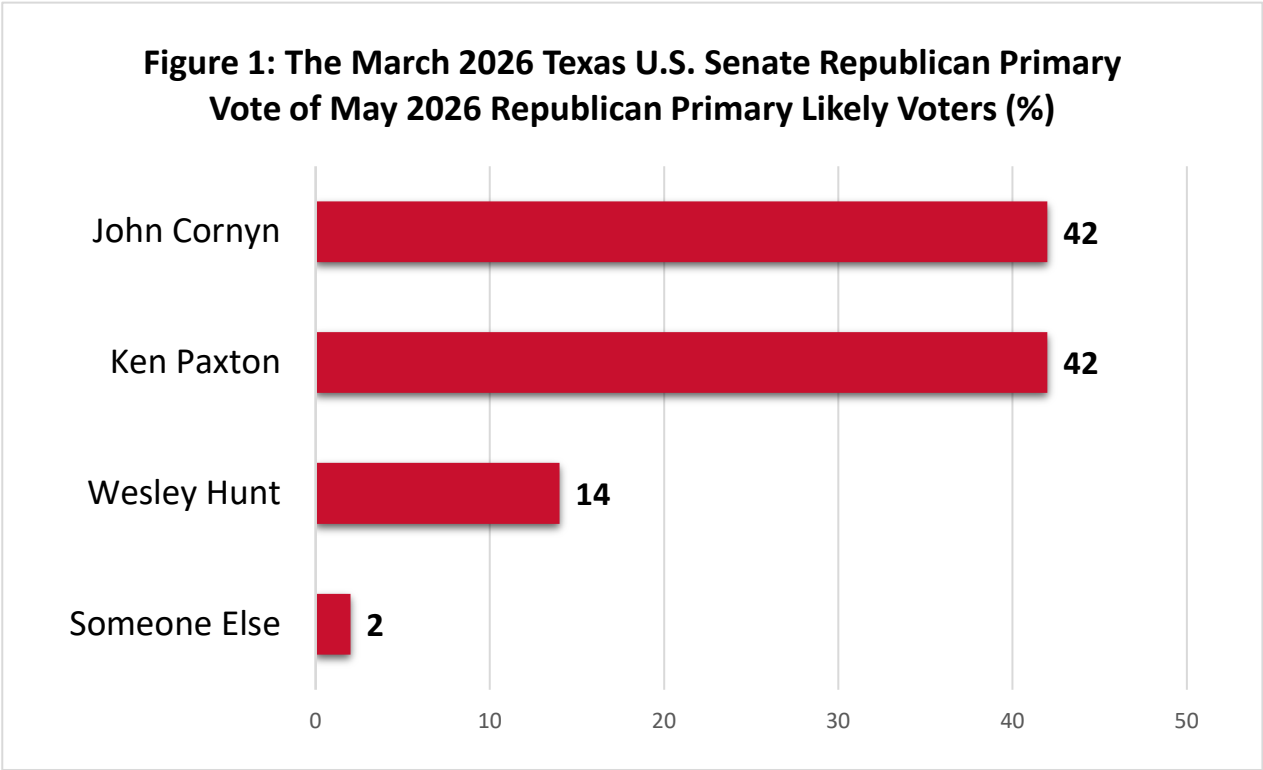


Figure 2 provides the proportion of these likely voters who have a favorable and unfavorable opinion of Ken Paxton and John Cornyn, as well as the proportion of likely voters who didn't know enough about these U.S. Senate candidates to have an opinion of them, one way or another. One-half (50%) of likely voters have a favorable opinion of Paxton and 43% have an unfavorable opinion, with 7% not knowing enough about the Texas Attorney General to have an opinion of him. Slightly less than half (47%) of likely voters have a favorable opinion of Cornyn and 49% have an unfavorable opinion, with 4% not knowing enough about the U.S. Senator to have an opinion of him. Overall, Paxton's net-favorability rating (percentage favorable minus percentage unfavorable) among these likely primary voters is +7%, while Cornyn's is -2%.

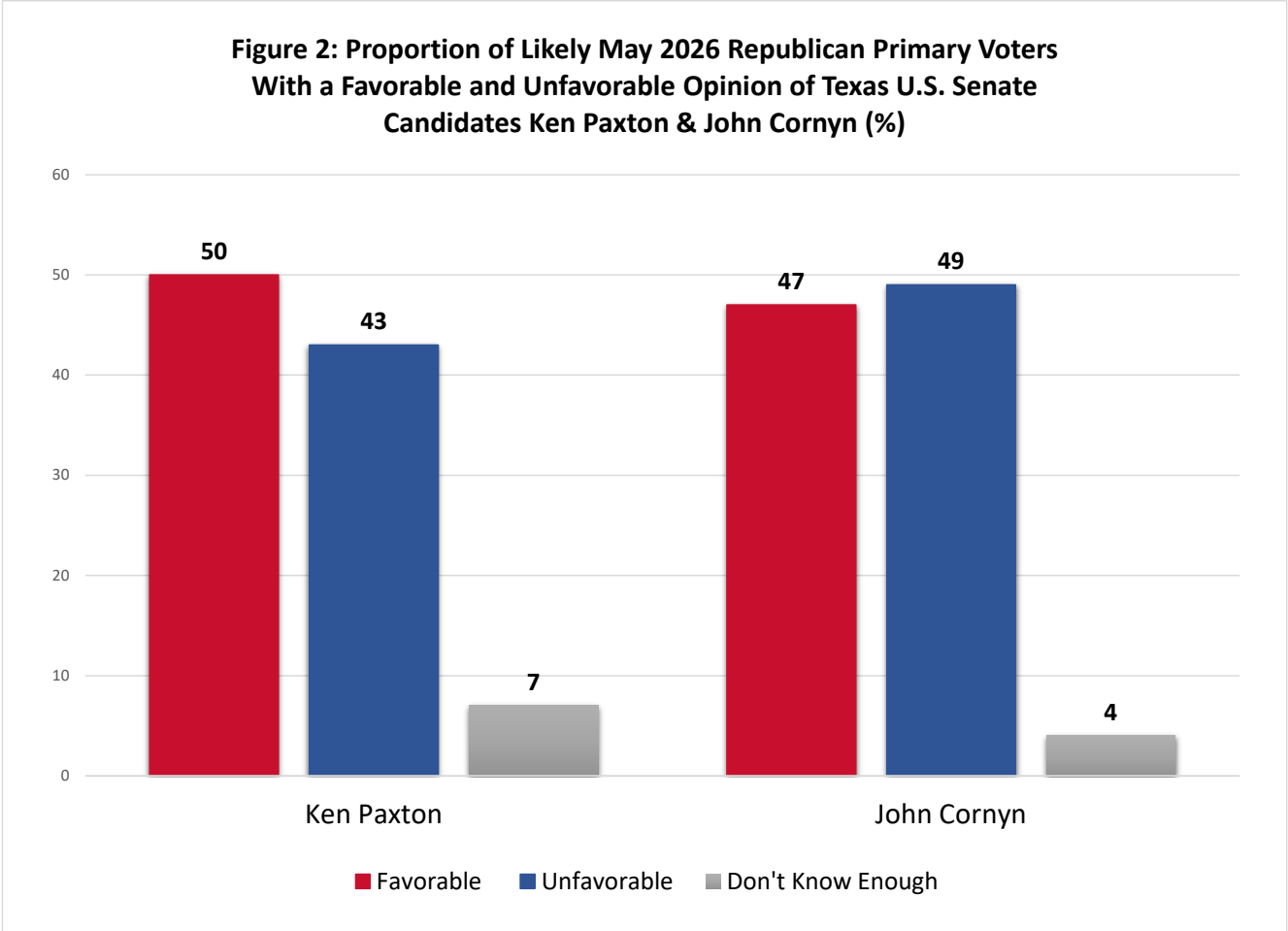
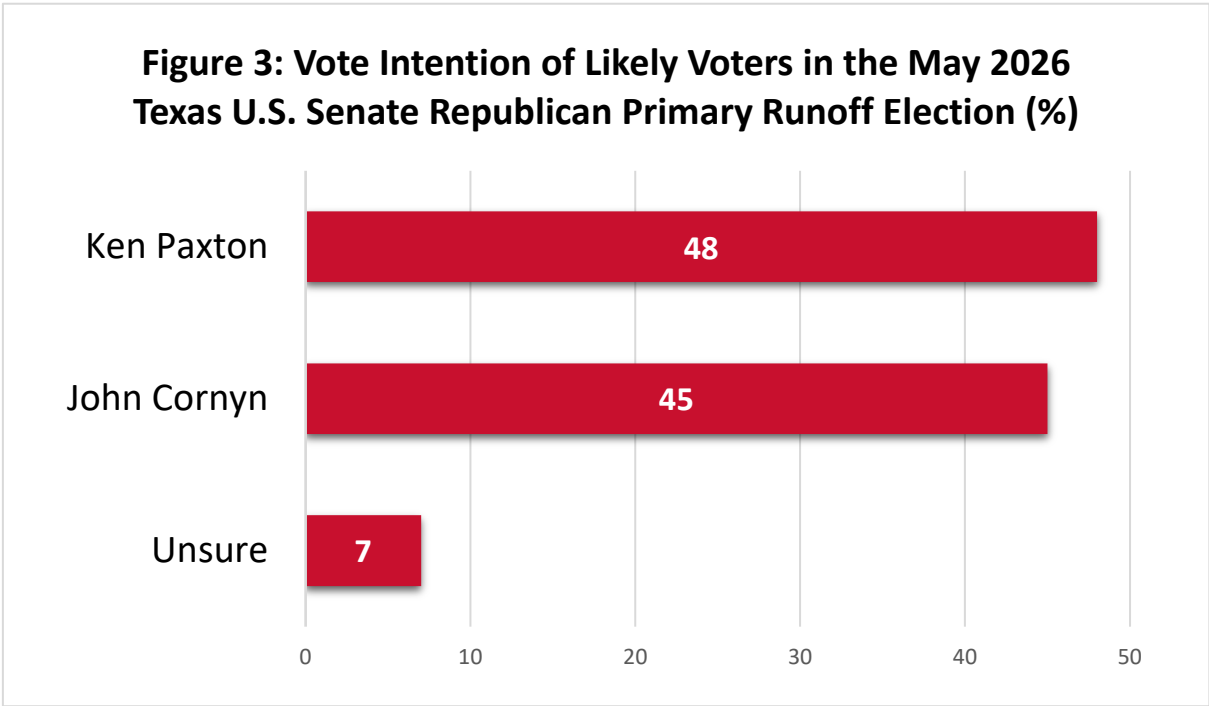


Figure 3 provides the vote intention of likely voters in the May 2026 Republican Texas U.S. Senate primary runoff election. Paxton (48%) leads Cornyn (45%) by three percentage points, with 7% of likely voters still unsure about whom they would vote for in this contest.



Among the 7% who remain unsure about their May vote, 24% and 19% have a favorable opinion of Cornyn and Paxton, respectively, while 57% and 61% have an unfavorable opinion of Cornyn and Paxton, respectively. One-fifth of these unsure likely voters, 19% and 20%, do not know enough about Cornyn and Paxton to have an opinion of them, respectively.

Table 1 provides the vote intention for the Republican Texas U.S. Senate primary runoff election, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, education, partisan identification, and vote in the March 3 Republican Texas U.S. Senate primary election.

Table 1: Vote Intention in the U.S. Senate May GOP Runoff Among Key Socio-Demographic Sub-Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Ken Paxton	John Cornyn	Unsure
Overall		48	45	7
Gender	Men	49	46	5
	Women	47	45	8
Ethnicity/Race	White	47	47	6
	Latino	53	38	9
	All Others	58	39	3
Age	18-34	44	49	7
	35-54	52	41	7
	55+	48	46	6
Education	4 Yr College Degree	42	52	6
	No 4 Yr College Degree	55	38	7
Partisan Identification	Republican	49	45	6
	Independent	43	47	10
March 3 U.S. Senate Vote	John Cornyn	5	91	4
	Ken Paxton	95	3	2
	Wesley Hunt	54	35	11
	Someone Else/Didn't Vote	11	41	48

The most noteworthy socio-demographic differences in vote intention for the two candidates revolve around education, and to a lesser extent, ethnicity/race. Cornyn leads Paxton by 10 percentage points (52% to 42%) among likely voters whose highest level of educational attainment is a four-year college degree or higher, while Paxton leads Cornyn by 17 percentage points (55% to 38%) among likely voters whose highest level of educational attainment is less than a four-year college degree. And, while the two candidates are deadlocked at 47% among White voters, Paxton holds a notable advantage over Cornyn among the one-fifth (19%) of likely May GOP primary voters who are not White, 53% to 38% among Latinos and 58% to 39% among those who identify as Black, Asian American, Native American or something else. When the non-White likely voters are combined into a single group, Paxton holds a 17-percentage point advantage over Cornyn, 55% to 38%.

Table 1 also provides the vote intention of likely runoff voters based on their reported vote in the March 3 first round of the Republican Texas U.S. Senate primary. Among likely May voters who cast a ballot for Paxton in March, 95% intend to vote for him again in May, while 3% intend to vote for Cornyn and 2% are unsure about for whom they will vote. Among likely May voters who cast a ballot for Cornyn in March, 91% intend to vote for him again in May, while 5% intend to vote for Paxton and 4% are unsure about for whom they will vote. Among the likely May voters who cast a ballot for Wesley Hunt in March, 54% intend to vote for Paxton and 35% for Cornyn in May, with 11% unsure. Among the 5% of likely May voters who either voted for someone else in March, or did not vote in March, 41% intend to vote for Cornyn and 11% for Paxton, with nearly one-half (48%) unsure about whom they will vote for in May.

The likely voters were asked which of six different policy issues matters the most to them when deciding who to vote for in the May 2026 Texas U.S. Senate Republican primary runoff election. The six issues presented to these likely voters were election integrity, immigration and border security, inflation and cost of living, jobs and the economy, second amendment rights, and violent crime.

Table 2 provides the proportion of all likely voters (Overall), Paxton voters, Cornyn voters and of unsure voters who selected the issue as the policy issue which matters the most to them when deciding for whom to vote in the May 2026 U.S. Senate primary runoff. Among all likely May Republican primary runoff voters, the top three issues are immigration and border security (33%), inflation and the cost of living (25%) and election integrity (22%), followed by jobs & the economy (14%), and with second amendment rights (4%) and violent crime (2%) in the low single digits. Paxton voters are significantly more likely than Cornyn voters to say that immigration and border security (40% to 28%) and election integrity (31% to 13%) are the issues that matter the most to them when deciding for whom to vote, while Cornyn voters are significantly more likely than Paxton voters to cite inflation and the cost of living (36% to 13%) as the policy issue that matters the most to them when deciding for whom to vote, with a similar pattern (albeit not statistically significant) also observed in the related economic issue of jobs and the economy (19% to 8%). The top issue for unsure voters is inflation and the cost of living (39%), followed by immigration and border security (27%).

Table 2: The Most Important Policy Issue & Vote Intention Among Likely May Republican Primary Voters (%)

Policy Issue	Overall	Paxton Voters	Cornyn Voters	Unsure Voters
Immigration & Border Security	33	40	28	27
Inflation & the Cost of Living	25	13	36	39
Election Integrity	22	31	13	16
Jobs & the Economy	14	8	19	16
Second Amendment Rights	4	6	2	1
Violent Crime	2	2	2	1

The likely voters also were asked which of the two Republican U.S. Senate candidates (Cornyn or Paxton) they believe would be the strongest Republican general election candidate against Democrat James Talarico in November of 2026. Table 3 provides the proportion of likely voters overall who believe Cornyn and Paxton would be the stronger GOP candidate in November, along with the proportion who believe neither would be a stronger candidate than the other in the contest against Talarico. These likely voters are evenly divided at 43% in regard to which candidate they believe gives the Republican Party the best chance to defeat Talarico in November, with 14% of the opinion that neither Cornyn nor Paxton is a stronger November candidate than the other. Among Paxton voters, 86% believe Paxton is the stronger November candidate and 4% that Cornyn is the stronger candidate, with 10% of the opinion that neither is stronger than the other. Among Cornyn voters, 86% believe Cornyn is the stronger November candidate and 2% that Paxton is the stronger candidate, with 12% of the opinion that neither is stronger than the other. Two-thirds (67%) of unsure voters believe that neither candidate is stronger than the other, with 24% believing Cornyn is the stronger candidate and 9% believing Paxton is the stronger candidate.

Table 3: The Stronger GOP Candidate to Run Against James Talarico (D) & Vote Intention Among Likely May Republican Primary Voters (%)

Stronger GOP Candidate	Overall	Paxton Voters	Cornyn Voters	Unsure Voters
John Cornyn	43	4	86	24
Ken Paxton	43	86	2	9
Neither Stronger Than Other	14	10	12	67

THE TEXAS ATTORNEY GENERAL REPUBLICAN PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION

In the March 3, 2026 Texas Attorney General Republican primary election, Texas State Senator Mayes Middleton won 39.1% of the vote, followed by Congressman Chip Roy with 31.6%, Texas State Senator Joan Huffman with 15.1%, and former U.S. Assistant Attorney General Aaron Reitz with 14.2%. Since no candidate surpassed the 50% threshold needed to avoid a runoff, Middleton and Roy are facing off in a May 26, 2026 primary runoff election.

Figure 4 provides the reported March 3 Texas Attorney General primary election vote of those Texans who are likely to vote in the May 2026 primary runoff election. Among these likely voters, 43% cast a ballot for Middleton in the March primary and 37% cast a ballot for Roy, with 10% voting for Huffman and 10% voting for Reitz. These results exclude the 3% of likely voters who did not cast a ballot in the March 3 primary election, along with the 15% of likely May voters who reported that they do not remember for whom they voted in the first round of the Texas Attorney General primary election.

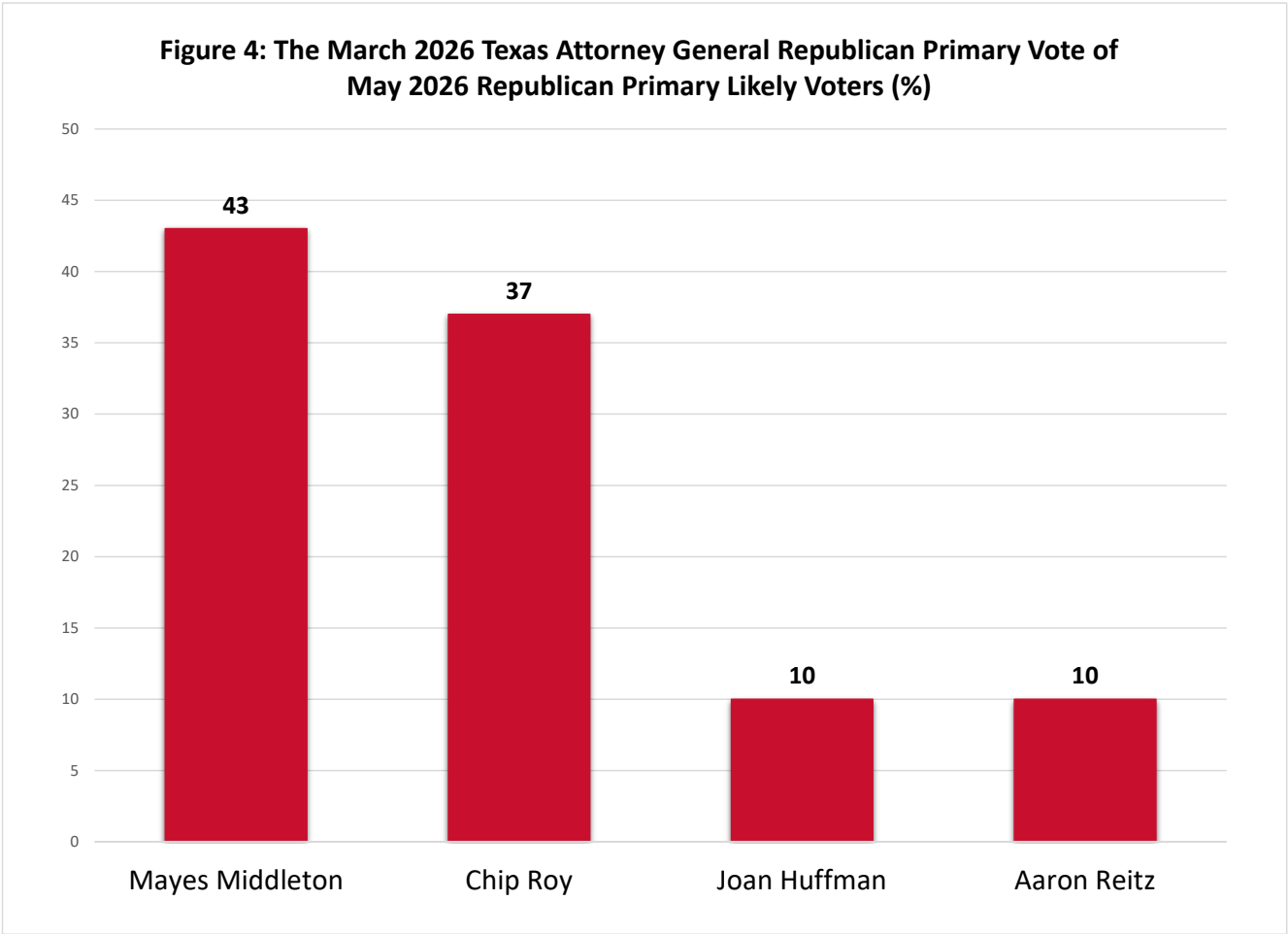


Figure 5 provides the proportion of these likely voters with a favorable and unfavorable opinion of Mayes Middleton and Chip Roy, as well as the proportion of likely voters who didn't know enough about the Texas Attorney General candidates to have an opinion of them one way or another. More than half (53%) of likely voters have a favorable opinion of Middleton and 20% an unfavorable opinion, with 27% not knowing enough about the Texas State Senator to have an opinion of him. Slightly less than half (45%) of likely voters have a favorable opinion of Roy and 38% an unfavorable opinion, with 17% not knowing enough about the U.S. Congressman to have an opinion of him. Overall, Middleton's net-favorability rating (percentage favorable minus percentage unfavorable) among these likely primary voters is +33%, while Roy's is +7%.

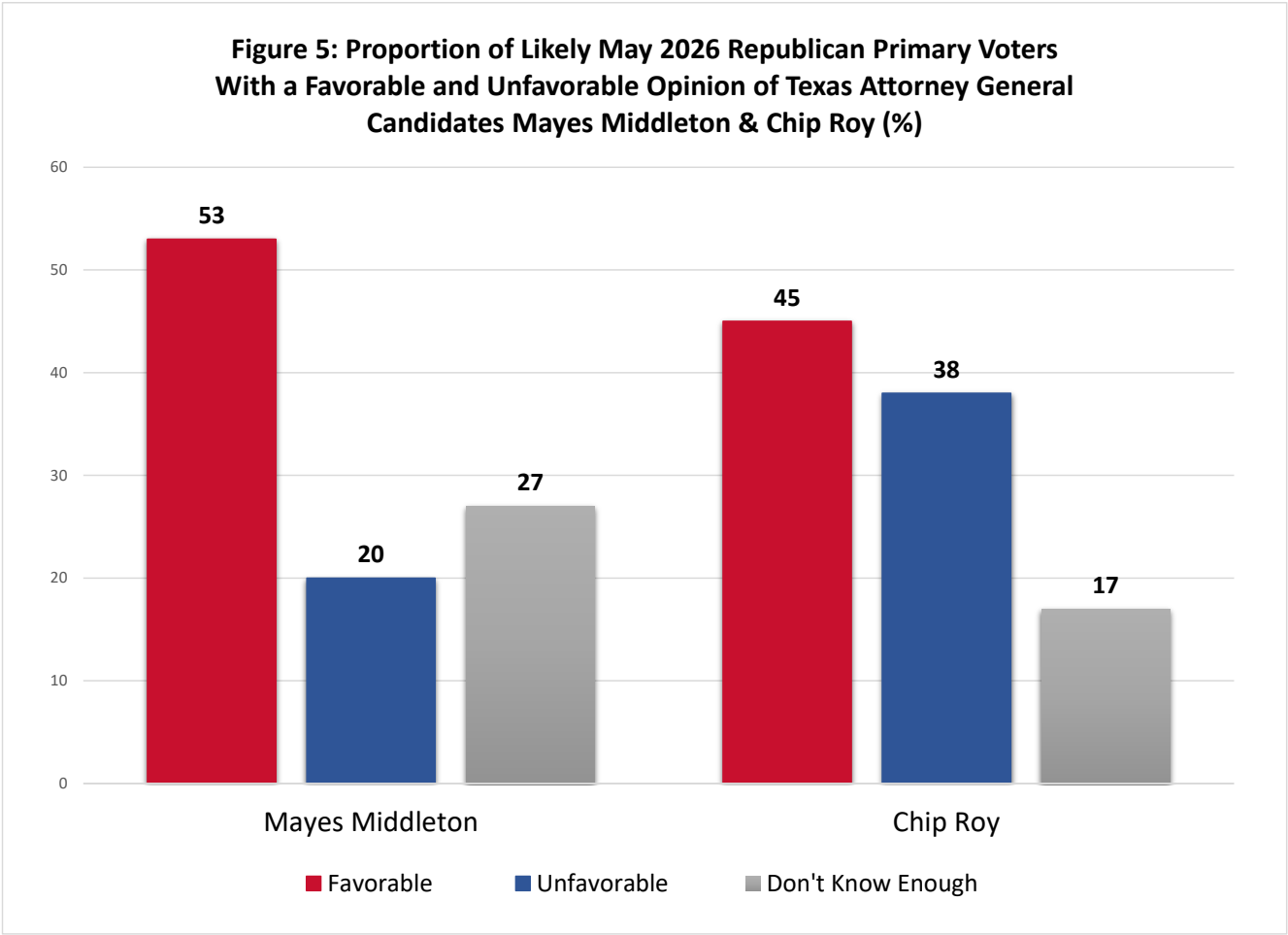
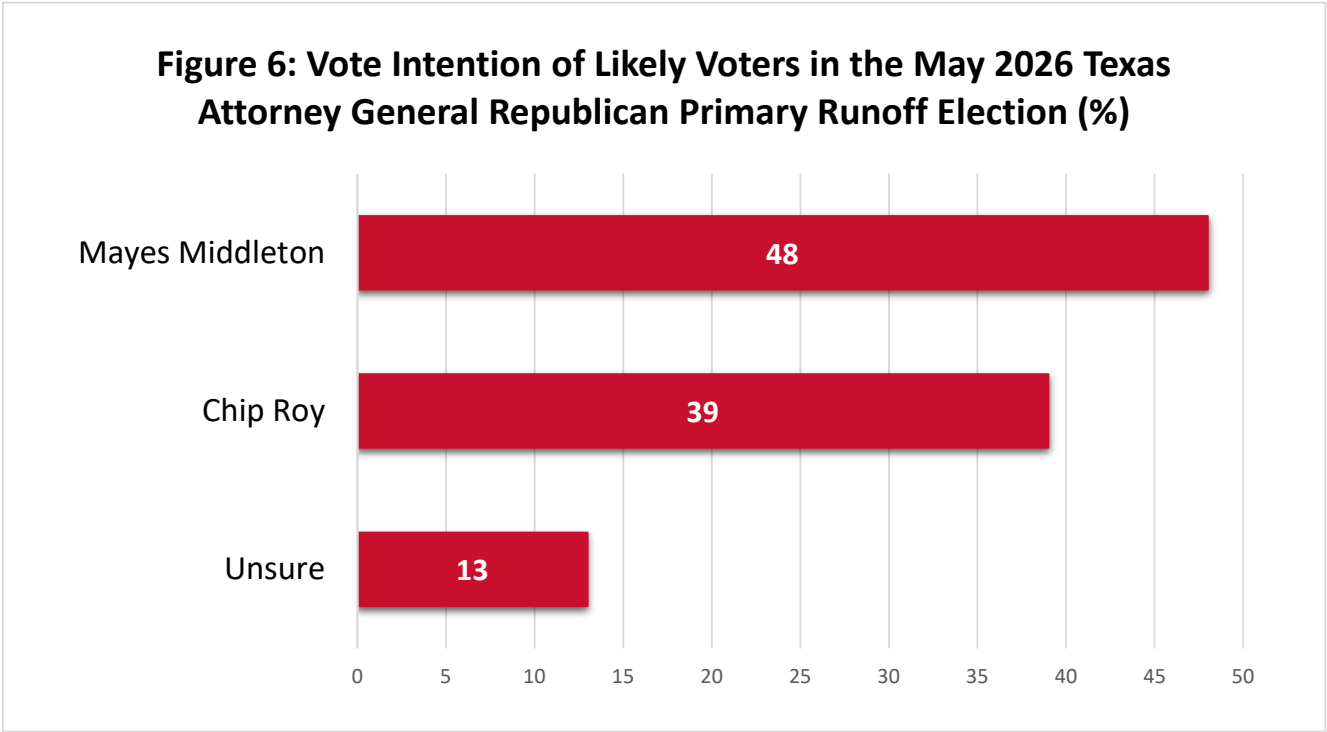


Figure 6 provides the vote intention of likely voters in the May 2026 Republican Texas Attorney General primary runoff election. Middleton (48%) leads Roy (39%) by nine percentage points, with 13% of likely voters still unsure about whom they would vote for in this contest.



Among the 13% of likely voters who remain unsure about their May vote, 13% and 21% have a favorable opinion of Middleton and Roy, respectively, while 23% and 29% have an unfavorable opinion of Middleton and Roy, respectively. More than three-fifths (64%) and one-half (50%) of these unsure voters do not know enough about Middleton and Roy to have an opinion of them, respectively.

Table 4 provides the vote intention for the Republican Texas Attorney General primary runoff election, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, education, partisan identification, vote in the March 3 Republican Texas Attorney General primary election, and vote intention in the May 26 Republican Texas U.S. Senate primary runoff election.

Table 4: Vote Intention in the Texas Attorney General May GOP Runoff Among Key Socio-Demographic Sub-Groups

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Mayes Middleton	Chip Roy	Unsure
Overall		48	39	13
Gender	Men	48	42	10
	Women	47	37	16
Ethnicity/Race	White	48	39	13
	Latino	44	37	19
	All Others	50	41	9
Age	18-34	32	55	13
	35-54	40	42	18
	55+	52	37	11
Education	4 Yr College Degree	44	43	13
	No 4 Yr College Degree	51	36	13
Partisan Identification	Republican	51	37	12
	Independent	40	43	17
March 3 Texas Attorney General Vote	Mayes Middleton	93	4	3
	Chip Roy	5	91	4
	Joan Huffman	39	40	21
	Aaron Reitz	62	22	16
	Don't Remember/Didn't Vote	28	30	42
May U.S. Senate Vote Intention	John Cornyn	43	45	12
	Ken Paxton	54	38	8
	Unsure	32	11	57

The most notable socio-demographic sub-group differences in vote intention in this contest revolve around education, age, and partisanship. While Middleton and Roy are effectively deadlocked among likely voters with a four-year college degree (44% to 43%), Middleton holds a significant lead over Roy among the one-half of Republican primary voters who do not possess a four-year college degree (51% to 36%). While Roy is the preferred candidate over Middleton among voters ages 18 to 34 (55% to 32%) and the two are effectively tied among voters ages 35 to 54 (42% to 40%), Middleton holds a substantial 15 percentage point lead over Roy among the two-thirds of likely voters who are 55 and older (52% to 37%). Finally, while Independent likely voters support Roy (43%) and Middleton (40%) in roughly equal proportions, Middleton enjoys a 14-percentage point lead in vote intention over Roy (51% to 37%) among those likely voters who identify as Republican.

Likely primary voters who intend to vote for John Cornyn in the May U.S. Senate primary runoff intend to vote for Middleton (43%) and Roy (45%) in relatively equal proportions. However, likely primary voters who intend to vote for Ken Paxton in the U.S. Senate primary runoff are significantly more likely to intend to vote for Middleton (54%) than for Roy (38%).

Table 4 also provides the vote intention of likely voters based on their reported vote in the March 3 first round of the Republican Texas Attorney General primary. Among May likely Republican primary voters

who voted for Middleton in March, 93% intend to vote for him in the May runoff, while 4% intend to vote for Roy and 3% are unsure for whom they will vote. Among May likely Republican primary voters who voted for Roy in March, 91% intend to vote for Roy in the May runoff, 5% intend to vote for Middleton and 4% are unsure for whom they will vote. Among May likely Republican primary voters who voted for Joan Huffman in March, 40% intend to vote for Roy and 39% for Middleton, with more than one in five (21%) still unsure for whom they will vote in May. Among May likely Republican primary voters who voted for Aaron Reitz in March, 62% intend to vote for Middleton and 22% for Roy, with 16% unsure for whom they will vote. Finally, among the one-fifth of likely runoff voters who either do not remember who they voted for in the March Attorney General primary election or did not vote in March, 30% intend to vote for Roy and 28% for Middleton, with 42% unsure for whom they will vote.

THE TEXAS RAILROAD COMMISSIONER REPUBLICAN PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION

In the March 3, 2026 Texas Railroad Commissioner Republican primary election, Railroad Commissioner Jim Wright won 32.1% of the vote, Bo French 31.7%, Jim Matlock 19.3%, Katherine Culbert 9.2%, and Hawk Dunlap 7.7%. Since no candidate surpassed the 50% threshold needed to avoid a runoff, Wright and French are facing off in a May 26, 2026 primary runoff election.

Figure 7 provides the proportion of these likely runoff voters with a favorable and unfavorable opinion of Jim Wright and Bo French, as well as the proportion of likely voters who didn't know enough about the Texas Railroad Commissioner candidates to have an opinion of them one way or another. Around one-half of likely May Republican runoff voters don't know enough about Wright (47%) and French (51%) to have an opinion of them, while 33% and 35% have a favorable opinion of Wright and French, respectively, and 20% and 14% have an unfavorable opinion of Wright and French, respectively. Overall, French's net-favorability rating (percentage favorable minus percentage unfavorable) among these likely primary voters is +21%, while Wright's is +13%.

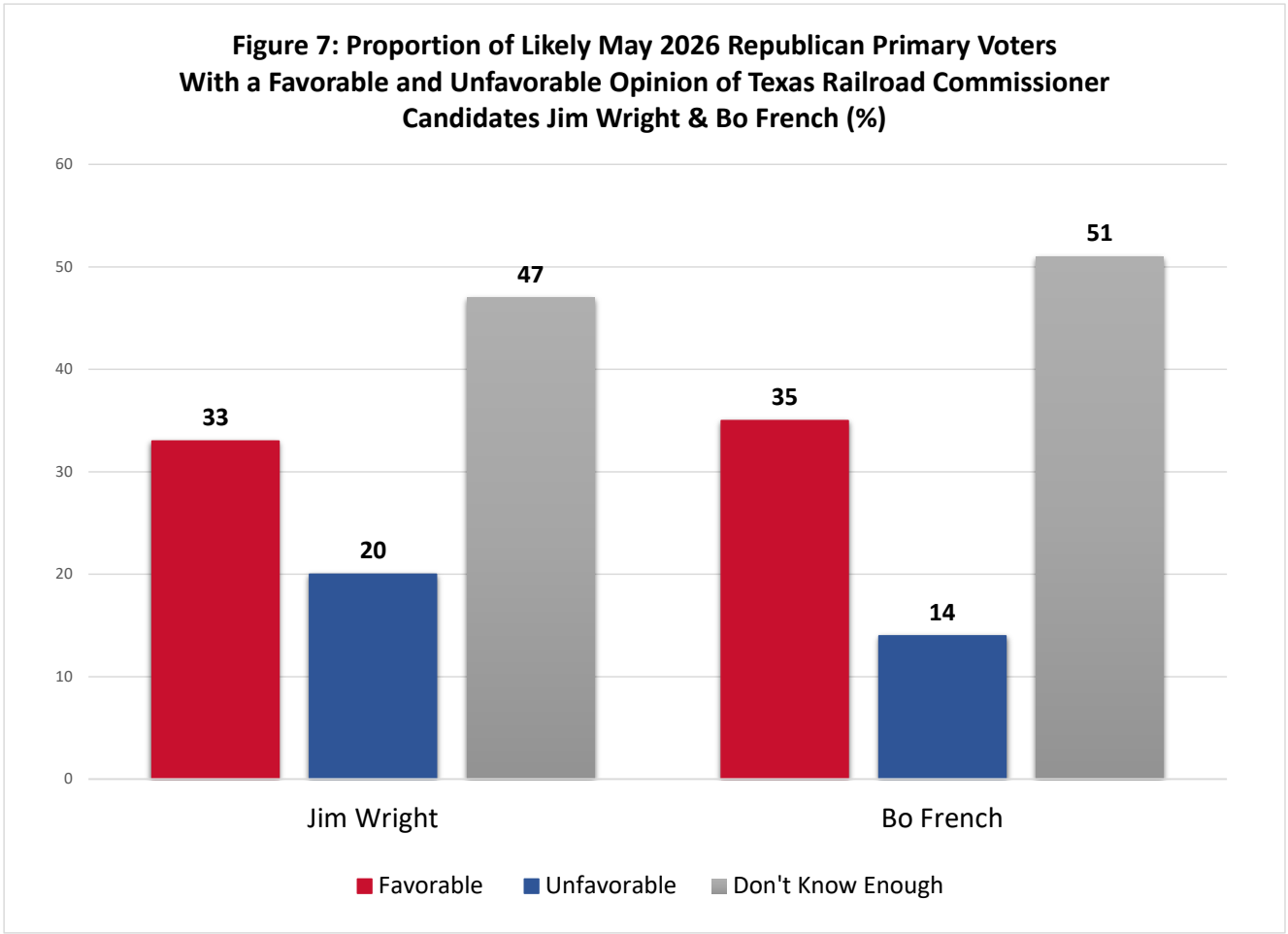
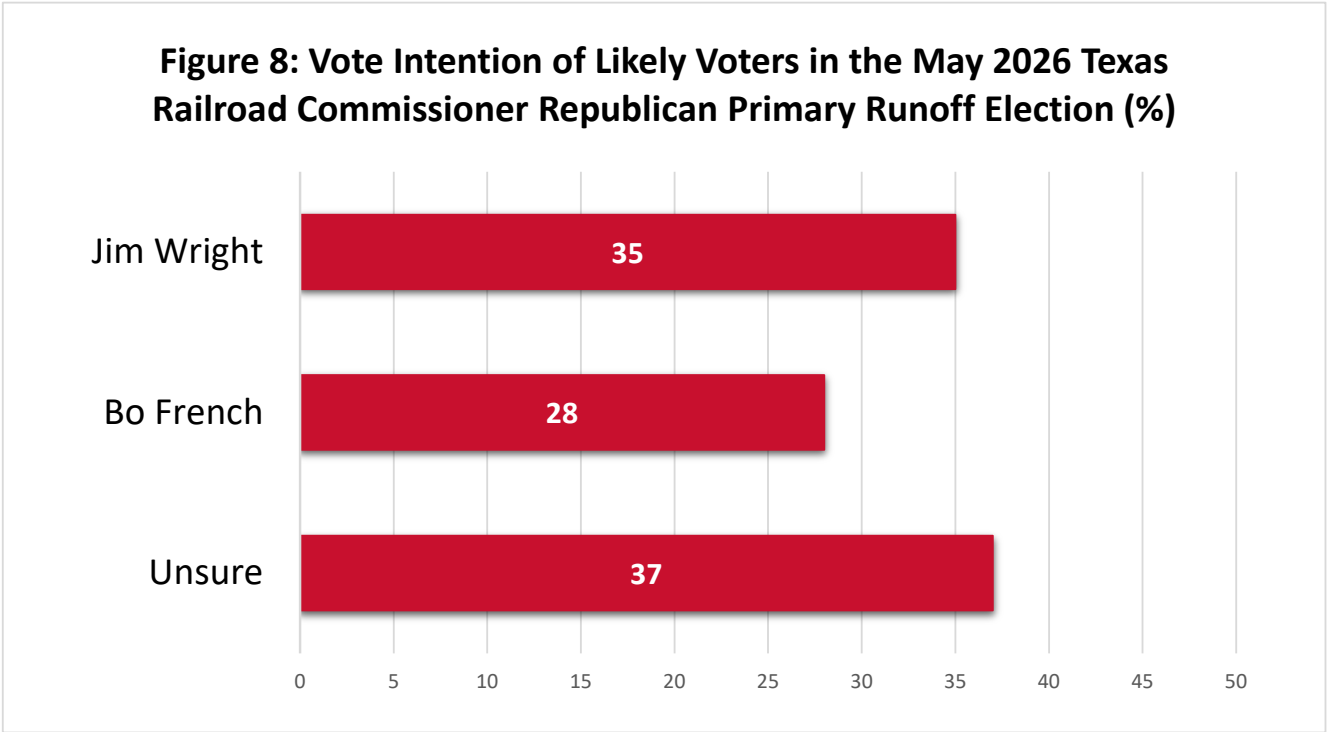


Figure 8 provides the vote intention of likely voters in the May 2026 Republican Railroad Commissioner primary runoff election. Wright (35%) leads French (28%) by seven percentage points, with close to two-fifths (37%) of likely voters still unsure about whom they would vote for in this contest.



Among the 37% of likely voters who remain unsure about their May 26 runoff Railroad Commissioner vote, 89% don't know enough about Wright to have an opinion of him, and 90% don't know enough about French to have an opinion of him. Among the remainder, 7% and 5% have favorable opinions of Wright and French, respectively, and 4% and 5% unfavorable opinions, respectively.

Table 5 provides the vote intention for the Republican Texas Railroad Commissioner primary runoff election, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, education, partisan identification, and vote intention in the May 26 Republican Texas U.S. Senate and Texas Attorney General primary runoff elections.

Table 5: Vote Intention in the Texas Railroad Commissioner May GOP Runoff Among Key Socio-Demographic Sub-Groups (%)

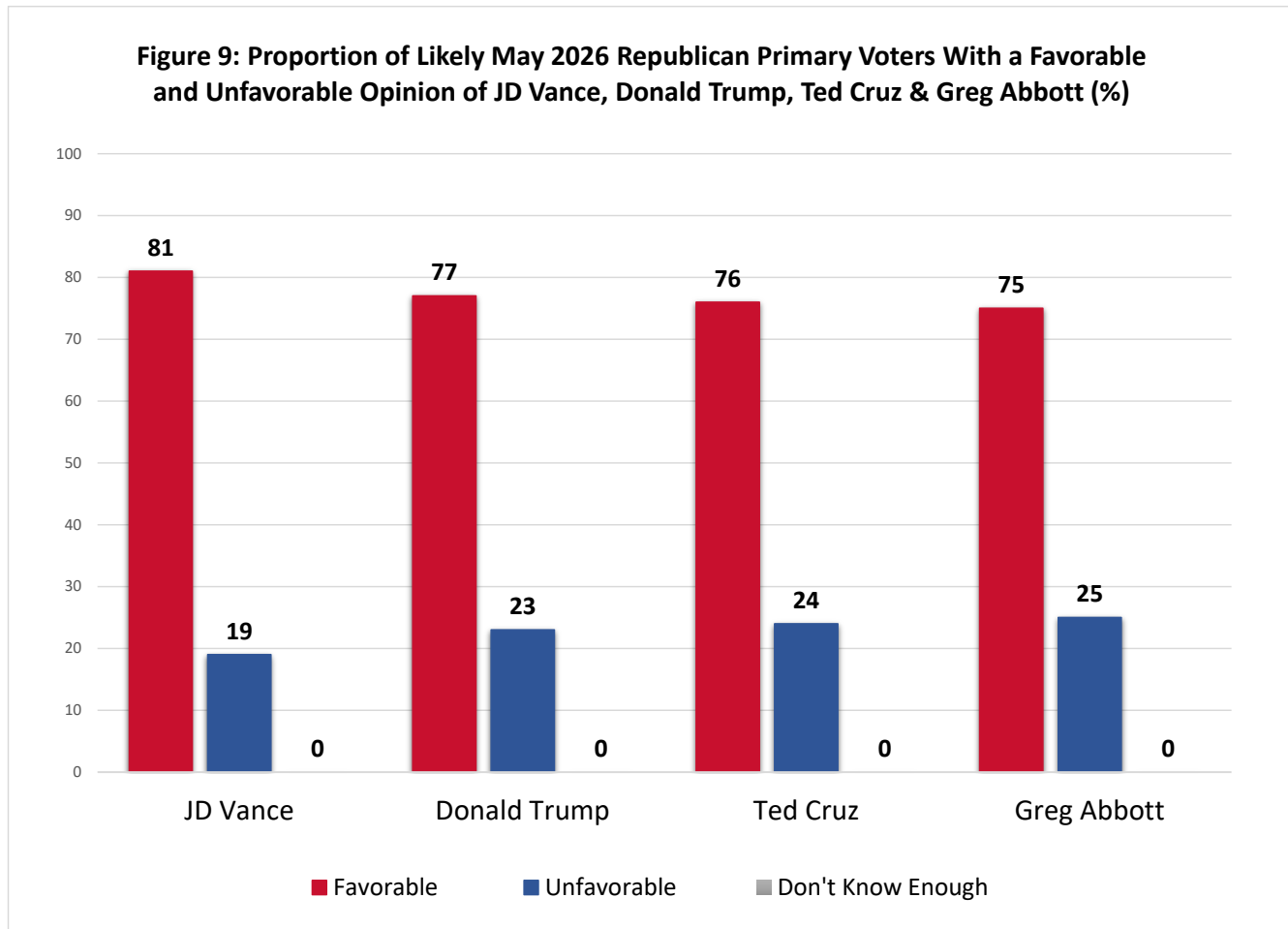
Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Jim Wright	Bo French	Unsure
Overall		35	28	37
Gender	Men	37	29	34
	Women	33	28	39
Ethnicity/Race	White	34	29	37
	Latino	43	23	34
	All Others	40	27	33
Age	18-34	43	35	22
	35-54	32	26	42
	55+	36	28	36
Education	4 Yr College Degree	37	25	38
	No 4 Yr College Degree	34	31	35
Partisan Identification	Republican	37	28	35
	Independent	33	27	40
May U.S. Senate Vote Intention	John Cornyn	46	18	36
	Ken Paxton	27	40	33
	Unsure	22	9	69
May Texas Attorney General Vote Intention	Mayes Middleton	35	35	30
	Chip Roy	39	26	35
	Unsure	26	9	65

The most noteworthy socio-demographic difference in vote intention for the two candidates revolves around education. While Wright's advantage over French among likely voters with a four-year college degree is 12 percentage points (37% to 25%), his advantage among those likely voters who do not have a four-year college degree is only 3 percentage points (34% to 31%).

Table 5 also highlights that likely primary voters who intend to vote for John Cornyn in the May U.S. Senate primary runoff are notably more likely to intend to vote for Wright (46%) than for French (18%), while likely primary voters who intend to vote for Ken Paxton in May are notably more likely to intend to vote for French (40%) than for Wright (27%). Similarly, while the two candidates are tied at 35% among likely voters who intend to vote for Mayes Middleton in the May Texas Attorney General primary runoff, Wright holds a 39% to 26% advantage over French among likely voters who intend to vote for Chip Roy to be the GOP's Texas Attorney General nominee in November of 2026.

FAVORABILITY OF TRUMP, VANCE, CRUZ & ABBOTT AMONG LIKELY MAY RUNOFF VOTERS

Figure 9 provides the proportion of these likely May 2026 Republican primary runoff voters who have a favorable and unfavorable opinion of President Donald Trump, Vice President JD Vance, Texas U.S. Senator Ted Cruz and Texas Governor Greg Abbott, as well as the proportion who do not know enough about them to have an opinion (a proportion that is less than one-half of 1% for all four elected officials, and thus represented by a 0% in the figure).



The four political leaders have comparable proportions of these likely May Republican primary voters who have a favorable opinion of them, with 81% having a favorable opinion of Vance, 77% of Trump, 76% of Cruz and 75% of Abbott, and only 19%, 23%, 24% and 25% having an unfavorable opinion of the four leaders, respectively. The net-favorability ratings of these four political leaders (percentage favorable minus percentage unfavorable) range from +62% (Vance) and +54% (Trump) to +52% (Cruz) and +50% (Abbott).

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

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