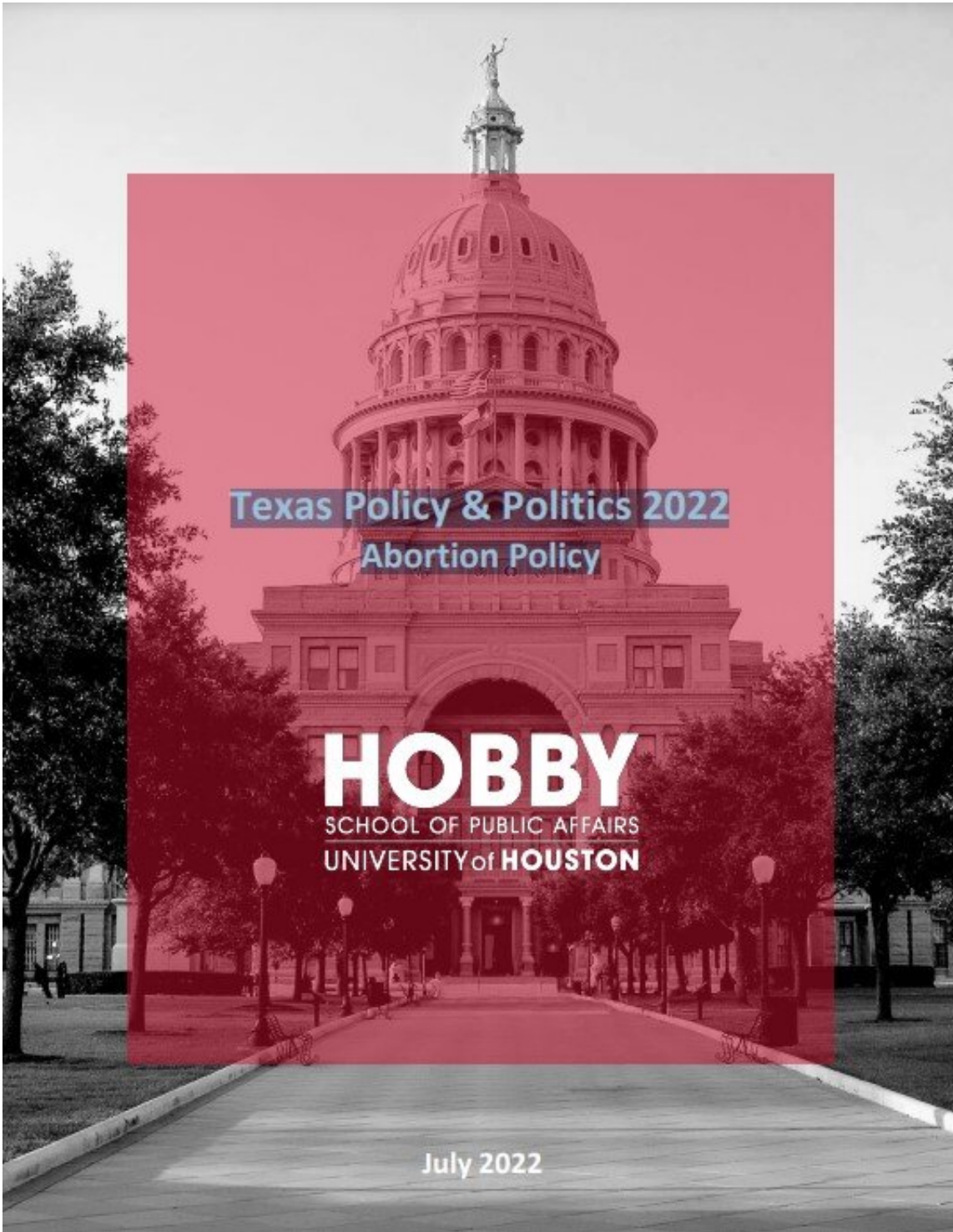


Texans still sharply divided on new abortion law, survey finds

July 20 2022, by Sally Strong



Credit: Hobby School of Public Affairs/University of Houston

As a signal of the intense abortion debate continuing to simmer in Texas, a new survey from the University of Houston Hobby School of Public Affairs found just four percentage points separating the issue's two extremes—50% of survey participants opposed the state's strict new abortion law and 46% supported it.

More than three-quarters (77%) of [respondents](#) in the Texas Policy & Politics 2022: Abortion Policy survey said the new Texas restrictions will go too far once in effect. Yet almost as many (72%) did not approve of the leniency of the prior standards established by Roe v. Wade (1973).

The same survey, however, did find common ground with overwhelming support among respondents for eight proposed policies designed to help pregnant women, babies and [young children](#).

"Most Texans recognize that lawmakers need to address access to resources and a range of programs for pregnant women, and their babies and children, especially in the wake of these new restrictions. Abortion will remain a divisive issue impacting [public policy](#), [health care](#), equality and the criminal justice system," said Renée Cross, executive director of the UH Hobby School of Public Affairs.

Texas' change in abortion law advanced after the U.S. Supreme Court's 6-3 Dobbs decision on June 24 overturned Roe v. Wade, leaving each state to establish its own policy. Texas was one of 13 states with previously enacted trigger laws written to automatically ban or severely restrict abortions once Roe v. Wade was abolished.

The Texas trigger law, State House Bill 1280, contains one of the country's most restrictive abortion regulations and will soon outlaw almost all abortions in the state—except when the woman's life is in danger or to prevent substantial impairment.

By the numbers

Among the 50% of survey respondents who opposed Texas' new abortion restrictions, 42% were strongly opposed. Among the 46% who approved of the restrictions, 26% were strong supporters.

"The divide followed partisan lines, 80% of respondents who identify as Democrats oppose the new restrictions, with 76% strongly opposing. And, 76% who identify as Republicans support the new restrictions, with 44% strongly supporting," said Mark P. Jones, senior research associate at the UH Hobby School.

Other options

More than half of all respondents—56%—said Texas women determined to have an abortion should be allowed to travel to seek legal procedures outside the state.

At 59%, a majority of respondents opposed legislation that would classify [abortion](#) as homicide, which opens a door to prosecutors bringing legal charges against a woman who ends her pregnancy. But three in ten (30%) respondents supported the idea.

On the morning-after pill (also known as Plan B), 76% of respondents supported its availability, while 16% opposed. While 60% opposed any felony law against taking a morning-after pill from another state, 29% supported imposing felony charges for doing so.

Help for pregnant women, babies, children

An overwhelming majority representing a broad cross-section of Texans voiced [support](#) for eight potential legislative proposals aimed at helping

pregnant women, babies and young children.

- 89% supported expanding and improving foster care
- 89% supported newborn-care classes
- 87% supported increasing adoption services
- 87% supported prenatal care
- 86% supported pregnancy counseling
- 80% supported increasing the [social safety net](#) for pregnant [women](#) and young children
- 74% supported expanding Medicaid coverage for [pregnant women](#)
- 74% supported free diapers, formula and baby food for low-income families

The Hobby School's Texas Policy & Politics 2022 survey was conducted between June 17 and July 7 among a representative sample of 1,169 Texas registered voters, with a confidence interval of +/- 2.9%.

More information: Texas Policy & Politics 2022: Abortion Policy. uh.edu/hobby/txpolicyandpolitics/abortion.pdf

Provided by University of Houston

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