



March 30, 2026

## Texas Senate Republican Primary Runoff

For Public Release: Survey findings

**To:** Interested Parties

**From:** GQR

The Republican Senate primary runoff election is a contest between Attorney General Ken Paxton, holding a narrow lead, 47% to 42%, over Senator John Cornyn<sup>1</sup>. It is important to note that Paxton’s voters are much more motivated to vote in the upcoming runoff than Cornyn’s. Eighty-five of Paxton’s voters say they are a 10 on a 0-to-10 scale, compared with 70% of Cornyn’s voters.

Perhaps the largest question looming over this race is whether President Trump will endorse. In the informed vote, we tested how a Trump endorsement of Cornyn might impact support in the race and found little initial impact. We conducted a split-sample test, in which Trump endorsed Cornyn in one scenario and made no endorsement in the other. Paxton remains ahead in both (with the Trump endorsement, Paxton leads 47% to Cornyn's 43%; without it, Paxton leads 48% to Cornyn’s 42%). If there is only negative communication about Paxton, Cornyn moves into the lead (Paxton 41% – Cornyn 48% – 11% undecided).

However, hearing Cornyn’s negatives after Paxton’s negatives shifts the race back in favor of Paxton, 47-41, with 12% undecided. The strongest attacks on Cornyn are his position and votes on gun control (38% very serious doubts – 22% serious doubts), his position on the border and previous support for amnesty (37% very serious doubts – 24% doubts), and previous positions he has taken on Trump and having voted for Biden’s nominees (34% serious doubts – 23% serious doubts).

**Figure 1. Vote progression**

%	Paxton	Cornyn	Undecided
Favorable percentage	56	47	n/a
Initial vote	47	42	11
Informed Vote (combined)	47	43	10
Informed vote (without Trump endorsement)	48	42	10
Informed vote (with Trump endorsement)	47	43	10
After Paxton negatives	41	48	11
After Cornyn negatives	47	41	12

<sup>1</sup> GQR conducted at 20-minute mixed mode survey among 600 likely 2026 Texas Republican primary runoff voters from March 19–March 23, 2026. Live phone interviews made up 48 percent of respondents, text-to-web made up the other 52 percent. Respondents were found through voter file sample. The data are subject to a margin of error of +/- 4.0 percentage points overall at the 95 percent confidence interval; the margin of error is higher among subgroups and online respondents. The data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample’s regional, age, and gender composition reflects that of the estimated likely 2026 Texas Republican run-off electorate.