

## Texas US Senate 2026

## THE ISSUES

KEN  
PAXTON

REPUBLICAN

JAMES  
TALARICO

DEMOCRAT

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| <b>ABORTION</b><br>Ban or legal?                                                            | <b>Ban.</b> <a href="#">Will</a> “defend the unborn.” <a href="#">Sued</a> out-of-state healthcare <a href="#">providers</a> who send abortion medication to Texas residents. <a href="#">Affirmed</a> Texas’ abortion trigger law in <a href="#">2022</a> after Roe v. Wade was overturned. <a href="#">Sued</a> to prevent the use of public funds to assist Texas patients seeking abortions outside the state.                                 | <b>Legal.</b> <a href="#">Supports</a> putting Roe v. Wade into law. <a href="#">Says</a> Texas’ abortion ban is “dangerous,” that women are “dying needlessly.” <a href="#">Introduced</a> an amendment “prohibiting the legislature from restricting an individual’s access to abortion and related health care.” <a href="#">Would</a> “protect access to contraception and IVF.”                                                       |
| <b>CLIMATE CHANGE</b><br>Should climate change be a top priority?                           | <b>No.</b> <a href="#">Sued</a> <a href="#">asset</a> managers to “protect the coal industry.” <a href="#">Applauded</a> major <a href="#">banks</a> for leaving “an anti-oil and gas activist organization.” <a href="#">Urged</a> U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Climate <a href="#">Agreement</a> in 2017.                                                                                                                                      | <b>Yes.</b> <a href="#">Introduced</a> a 2021 bill to “ <a href="#">fight</a> climate change,” regulating greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency standards. <a href="#">Would</a> <a href="#">strengthen</a> climate-caused-disaster preparedness and create jobs in “geothermal and hydrogen-fueled energy.”                                                                                                                      |
| <b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b><br>How to ensure effectiveness and fairness in law enforcement?     | <a href="#">Sued</a> Dallas officials for not fully funding law enforcement. <a href="#">Adopted</a> a <a href="#">rule</a> “to rein in rogue district attorneys.” <a href="#">Called</a> for “accountability and transparency” from law enforcement after George Floyd’s death in 2020. <a href="#">Dropped</a> a series of human trafficking and child sexual assault cases because in some cases they were unable to find the victims.          | <a href="#">Would</a> invest “in police training, oversight, and accountability” and equip them with resources to “prosecute criminals.” <a href="#">Introduced</a> a 2021 bill that bans reality TV shows from <a href="#">partnering</a> with state law enforcement.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>ECONOMY</b><br>Cut or increase government investment in, and regulation of, the economy? | <b>Cut.</b> <a href="#">Sued</a> to <a href="#">block</a> a Harris County guaranteed income pilot program for households in poverty, calling it an “ <a href="#">illegal</a> and illegitimate government overreach.” <a href="#">Would</a> <a href="#">cut</a> “fraud and the wasteful spending that’s driving inflation.” Has <a href="#">opposed</a> the Consumer Financial Protection <a href="#">Bureau</a> ; says its funding model is legal. | <b>Increase.</b> <a href="#">Voted</a> to <a href="#">expand</a> funds and eligibility for loans in rural communities. <a href="#">Would</a> “ <a href="#">increase</a> funding” to expand “high-speed internet access.” <a href="#">Would</a> <a href="#">create</a> “a clear regulatory structure” for cryptocurrency. “ <a href="#">Before</a> we make progress on the cost of living crisis, we have to tackle the corruption crisis.” |
| <b>EDUCATION</b><br>Use public funding for private and/or for-profit schools?               | <b>Yes.</b> <a href="#">Said</a> in a legal opinion that public funds “can be directed to public and private schools, including sectarian schools.” <a href="#">Called</a> Texas’ universal school choice law “a major victory.”                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>No.</b> <a href="#">Opposes</a> “taking tax dollars out of our public schools to subsidize private education.” Is “passionately <a href="#">against</a> ” private school vouchers. Wants to <a href="#">allow</a> Texas voters to directly decide the vouchers question. “It’s the only thing that would put this issue to bed.”                                                                                                        |
| <b>ENVIRONMENT</b><br>Loosen or tighten environmental regulation?                           | <b>Mixed.</b> <a href="#">Sued</a> the Biden administration, opposing offshore drilling restrictions. <a href="#">Sued</a> the federal government to oppose a rule that limited coal mining near waterways. <a href="#">Secured</a> a \$60 million judgment from companies “illegally dumping pollutants in Texas waterways and lands.”                                                                                                            | <b>Tighten.</b> <a href="#">Would</a> “protect the air we breathe and the water we drink” by “strengthening the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act.” “ <a href="#">Access</a> to clean drinking water is a basic human right.”                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

| ISSUES                                                                          | PAXTON (R)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | TALARICO (D)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| <b>GUN LAWS</b><br>Loosen or tighten gun laws?                                  | <b>Loosen.</b> “The Second Amendment is a <a href="#">cornerstone</a> of...freedom.” <a href="#">Sued</a> the city of <a href="#">Dallas</a> “for banning lawful license holders from carrying handguns” in entertainment venues. <a href="#">Sued</a> Biden administration for pistol brace sale restrictions. <a href="#">Sued</a> the ATF for <a href="#">regulating</a> private firearm sales.                  | <b>Tighten.</b> <a href="#">Would</a> “protect the Second Amendment while protecting...from gun violence.” <a href="#">Supports</a> “universal background checks for gun sales” and prosecution of illegal firearm traffickers. Voted <a href="#">against</a> allowing 21+ Texans to <a href="#">carry</a> handguns without a license, training, or background check.             |
| <b>HEALTHCARE</b><br>Increase or decrease government support for healthcare?    | <b>Decrease.</b> In 2018 <a href="#">led</a> a team of states seeking to end the Affordable Care Act. In 2020 <a href="#">asked</a> the U.S. Supreme Court to declare the ACA unlawful. In 2021, <a href="#">called</a> the ACA “a massive government takeover of health care” that was “sold on a lie to the American people.”                                                                                     | <b>Increase.</b> <a href="#">Supports</a> “an affordable not-for-profit health care option for every American.” <a href="#">Sponsored</a> a 2021 bill to <a href="#">cap</a> the cost of insulin at \$25 for a 30-day supply. <a href="#">Sponsored</a> a 2023 <a href="#">bill</a> to establish wholesale prescription drug <a href="#">importation</a> from Canadian suppliers. |
| <b>IMMIGRATION</b><br>How to handle immigration?                                | <a href="#">Supports</a> “securing the border and deporting illegal aliens.” <a href="#">Sued</a> Houston officials for limiting local police cooperation with ICE. <a href="#">Opposed</a> the “parole in place” policy, meant to <a href="#">grant</a> undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens a path to citizenship. In 2018, led a challenge to the <a href="#">DACA</a> DREAMers program for undocumented youth. | <a href="#">Would</a> “create a path to citizenship for the immigrants who have been here the longest and...spouses and DREAMers.” <a href="#">Supports</a> “the deportation of criminals, gang members, and human traffickers.” “Our southern border <a href="#">should</a> be like our front porch. There should be a giant welcome mat out front and a lock on the door.”      |
| <b>IRAN WAR</b><br>Support the war in Iran?                                     | <b>Yes.</b> “ <a href="#">I am</a> very glad that [Trump] did it. Iran is a great threat to our country.” <a href="#">Says</a> Iran should never “obtain a nuclear weapon.” <a href="#">Proposed</a> rules to <a href="#">enforce</a> a Texas law banning land purchases by foreign adversaries such as Iran, rules that <a href="#">would</a> “strengthen the reporting of suspicious activity.”                   | <b>No.</b> “We <a href="#">can support</a> the democracy movement in Iran, we can prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, all without bombing innocent school children or sending our American troops off to die.” “The <a href="#">president</a> ...should come before Congress” and make the case for the war.                                                              |
| <b>LABOR</b><br>Make it easier or harder for unions to organize workers?        | <b>Harder.</b> <a href="#">Said</a> that employees should be required to regularly re-consent to paying union fees. <a href="#">Sued</a> city of Austin in 2016 for allowing city employees to do union work during working hours. In 2017 <a href="#">opposed</a> automatic union dues collection.                                                                                                                 | <b>Easier.</b> <a href="#">Supports</a> “workers’ right to unionize.” <a href="#">Supports</a> the <a href="#">PRO Act</a> to expand and protect employees’ organizing and collective bargaining rights. <a href="#">Introduced</a> a bill to repeal restrictions on labor unions.                                                                                                |
| <b>LGBTQ RIGHTS</b><br>Limit or expand LGBTQ rights?                            | <b>Limit.</b> <a href="#">Said</a> mental health providers can’t provide gender-transitioning care to minors. <a href="#">Said</a> that state district courts don’t have the authority to change the sex on government IDs. In 2015 after Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage, <a href="#">said</a> county clerks can refuse to issue such licenses.                                                          | <b>Expand.</b> <a href="#">Supports</a> <a href="#">protecting</a> “the legality of gay marriage,” defending LGBTQ+ people from “government overreach,” and protecting <a href="#">healthcare</a> for transgender children. Voted <a href="#">against</a> limiting the use of <a href="#">restrooms</a> in certain Texas public buildings based on sex at birth.                  |
| <b>MINIMUM WAGE</b><br>Raise the federal minimum from \$7.25 per hour?          | <b>Likely no.</b> In 2022 <a href="#">opposed</a> raising the minimum <a href="#">wage</a> to \$15 for all federal contractors. <a href="#">Opposed</a> a labor rule expanding minimum-wage protections for tipped workers.                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Yes.</b> <a href="#">Supports</a> raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour. <a href="#">Would</a> “implement tax credits and subsidies to help small- and medium-sized businesses adapt to a minimum wage raise.”                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>TAXES</b><br>Raise or lower taxes on corporations and wealthier individuals? | <b>Likely lower.</b> <a href="#">Says</a> Big Beautiful Bill’s extension of the 2017 Trump tax cuts, which included the largest one-time cut on the corporate tax rate, will “unleash economic growth.”                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Raise.</b> <a href="#">Would close</a> “billionaire tax loopholes” by banning “tax write-offs for luxury items,” and cracking down on “offshore accounts.” <a href="#">Supports</a> “raising the corporate tax rate.”                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>VOTING RULES</b><br>Make voting harder or easier?                            | <b>Harder.</b> <a href="#">Supports</a> the SAVE America <a href="#">Act</a> , requiring that anyone registering to vote in a federal election provide proof of U.S. citizenship. In 2020 <a href="#">opposed</a> expanding mail-in voting. <a href="#">Supports</a> voter ID for Texas mail-in ballots.                                                                                                            | <b>Easier.</b> <a href="#">Supports</a> removing “unnecessary barriers to registering to vote and casting a ballot.” <a href="#">Opposes</a> the 2026 Supreme Court decision that “gutted the Voting Rights Act — a cornerstone of the Civil Rights Movement.”                                                                                                                    |

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