

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **2018 Texas Lyceum Poll – Day One** *Poll Finds Impact of Opioid Addiction Widespread in Texas*

**ALSO**

### ***Texans Believe Benefits of Childhood Immunizations outweigh risks, but consequential minority disagrees***

The 2018 Texas Lyceum Poll also shows:

- While 46 percent of Texans say it's not the government's responsibility to provide healthcare coverage, only a small share would remove government from healthcare coverage entirely.
- When choosing what's important in a healthcare system, Texans choose affordability over quality and access. The numbers vary when party is factored in.
- Most Texans disapprove of how President Donald Trump and both parties in Congress are handling healthcare. Meanwhile, the Texas Legislature gets slightly better marks.
- A plurality of Texans (48 percent) believe adults are less healthy today than 20 years ago, while a majority (61 percent) believe children today are less healthy than 20 years ago.

**(AUSTIN - TX)** — More than one third of Texans (36 percent) say that they have known someone addicted to prescription painkillers according to the 12<sup>th</sup> annual [Texas Lyceum Poll](#) released today. While the most recent [Centers for Disease Control](#) findings indicate Texas is not among the top five states in the U.S. with the highest number of deaths due to drug overdose, the survey shows prescription painkiller addiction has touched the lives of a significant share of Texans, but the reach of the epidemic is not uniform. The poll found that Anglo Texans (49 percent) were more than twice as likely as Hispanic Texans (23 percent) or African-American Texans (24 percent) to know someone who has been addicted to prescription painkillers.

### **Benefits of vaccinations outweigh the risks**

When it comes to getting children vaccinated against diseases in the Lone Star State, a majority of Texans (76 percent) believe that the benefits outweigh the risks, but Texas still has one of the [highest rates of unvaccinated children in the U.S.](#) partly due to a 2013 state law allowing parents to opt out of getting their children immunized for medical reasons or conscientious and religious beliefs. While a clear majority (78 percent) agree that healthy children should be vaccinated against diseases like measles, mumps, rubella and other required immunization shots to attend public school, a sizable minority of Texans say that the risks of vaccines outweigh the benefits (13 percent) and that parents should be able to opt out of vaccinating their children (16 percent).

“We Texans want to be healthy, not just for personal reasons, but our health impacts our state’s economic development, global competitiveness and security,” said 2018 Texas Lyceum President Brad Morrison of Boerne. “Therefore, we directed our pollsters to take a deep dive centering on the issue of healthcare and healthcare reform in Texas. Our plan is to use the poll results as a springboard for discussion at our upcoming [Texas Lyceum 32<sup>ND</sup> Annual Public Conference](#) in San Antonio, Friday, August 17.”

**Most Texas disapprove of how President Donald Trump and both parties in Congress are handling healthcare. Meanwhile, the Texas Legislature gets slightly better marks.**

Most Texas adults (53 percent) disapprove of the way that Donald Trump is handling the issue of healthcare, with 30 percent approving. When it comes to the parties in Congress, 61 percent disapprove of the way Republicans are handling the issue of healthcare, while an almost equal share (58 percent) disapprove of the way that Democrats in Congress are handling the issue of health care. Meanwhile, the Texas Legislature receives slightly better ratings than their federal counterparts, with only 40 percent disapproving of its handling of healthcare.

### **Not much faith in federal government when it comes to healthcare, despite high approval ratings for Medicare and Medicaid**

Texans place limited faith in the federal government when it comes to healthcare, with only 6 percent saying that they trust the federal government *a great deal* “to do what’s best for Texans when it comes to healthcare.” Another 25 percent say they trust the federal government “a fair amount,” with the remaining 71 percent saying they either have little or no trust in the federal government’s ability to do what’s best for Texans when it comes to healthcare. Despite this lack of trust, federally run healthcare programs such as Medicare and Medicaid still receive high approval ratings (84 percent) from adult Texans in the same poll.

### **Are Americans less healthy today than 20 years ago? Texans say yes, and especially our children**

A plurality of Texans (48 percent) believe American adults are less healthy today than they were 20 years ago, with only a quarter saying that American adults are healthier and 22 percent saying that their overall health is about the same. However, when it comes to children, most Texans (61 percent) say that today, children are less healthy compared to 20 years ago, with only 17 percent saying that American children are healthier and 18 percent saying that their health is about the same.

### **Affordability wins over accessibility and quality**

When asked to consider what’s most important when it comes to the United States healthcare system between affordability, access and quality, most Texans think that each is *very important* (at least 84 percent for each). But when asked which among affordability, access and quality is *most* important, a plurality of Texans (46 percent) say that affordability is most important, with roughly equal shares saying access (25 percent) and quality

(22 percent). When it comes to party affiliation, affordability is still the plurality choice, but differences emerge as to the second highest rated goal, with Democrats choosing access and Republicans choosing quality.

### **Reducing the number of uninsured – mixed bag of results**

While the 2018 Texas Lyceum poll shows that Texans believe that reducing the size of the state's uninsured population is important, there is no clear directive on who should be responsible for achieving this goal - whether it be the federal government, state government or individuals.

Not surprisingly, big partisan divides show up in these results: a clear majority of Texas Democrats (79 percent) say that ensuring healthcare coverage is a government responsibility, while 72 percent of Texas Republicans say the opposite.

Among those who said that providing health care coverage is a government responsibility (54 percent), 46 percent prefer a national health insurance system provided by the government with 43 percent preferring the current mix of private health insurance and government programs.

The 2018 Texas Lyceum Poll is produced as a public service by the Texas Lyceum, the state's premier, non-partisan, nonprofit statewide leadership group and was fielded July 9 - 26.

### **About the annual Texas Lyceum Poll**

Daron Shaw, Ph.D., Professor at The University of Texas at Austin and Joshua Blank, Ph.D., Texas Lyceum Research Director, oversaw the poll, which was in the field from July 9 to 26. The poll surveyed 1,178 Texas adults and has an overall margin of error of +/- 2.86 percentage points. To advance the cause of providing truly non-partisan, public information, this year's Texas Lyceum Poll has been designed to break out the attitudes of registered voters and likely voters as subsets from the overall poll where appropriate. The poll enlists the latest in techniques, using live interviewers and contacting respondents both by landline (50%) and cell phones (50%) with the use of English and Spanish language instrumentation and interviewing, with an additional online supplement to augment the poll with respect to hard to reach populations.

Please view the poll summary and additional information on our [website](#), where we have provided all results for the past 12 years.

### **About the Texas Lyceum**

The Texas Lyceum, a non-profit, non-partisan group, is the premier statewide leadership organization focused on identifying the next generation of top Texas leaders. The Lyceum consists of 96 men and women from throughout the state who begin their six-year term while under the age of 46, and have demonstrated leadership in their community and profession, together with a deep commitment to Texas. For more information, please visit [www.texaslyceum.org](http://www.texaslyceum.org). Texas Lyceum is on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/texaslyceum> and on Twitter @TexasLyceum <http://twitter.com/texaslyceum>

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