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PRIMARY ELECTION
County & U.S. Senate



Hobby School of Public Affairs
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON





Harris County Democratic Primary Election 2024 County & U.S. Senate

February 2024

The Hobby School of Public Affairs at the University of Houston conducted a representative survey of Harris County registered voters who are likely to vote in the March 5, 2024 Democratic primary election to identify their candidate preferences and opinions. The survey was fielded between February 7 and February 15, 2024 by contacting registered voters via SMS messages through which the respondents were directed to an online survey platform with the option to complete the survey in English or in Spanish. The survey population of 1,400 has a margin of error of +/- 2.5% and is representative of those Harris County registered voters who are likely to vote in the March 2024 Democratic primary.

The data from this survey along with additional legislative district-specific data that were collected will be presented in a series of three reports. This report examines the vote intention of likely voters for the Harris County Democratic primaries for District Attorney, Sheriff, County Attorney, Tax Assessor-Collector, and Texas U.S. Senator (voters in Harris County will account for approximately one in six Texas Democratic primary voters this March). The second report will focus on the vote intention of likely voters in the Democratic primaries for Texas Congressional Districts 7 and 18, Texas State Senate District 15, and Texas State House Districts 139, 142 and 146. The final report will explore evaluations of local Democratic political figures by Harris County Democratic primary voters.

Executive Summary

In the Harris County Democratic primary election for District Attorney, 59% of likely voters intend to vote for Sean Teare and 21% for incumbent Kim Ogg, with 20% still undecided.

Teare enjoys a substantial lead over Ogg among women (58% vs. 21%), men (60% vs. 22%), whites (62% vs. 21%), Blacks (54% vs. 21%), Latinos (58% vs. 22%), those 45 and older (61% vs. 22%), those under 45 (53% vs. 20%), and those who identify as Democrats (63% vs. 19%).

68% of likely voters say they definitely would (44%) or might (24%) consider voting for Teare.

48% of likely voters say they definitely would (15%) or might (33%) consider voting for Ogg.

42% of likely voters say they never would vote for Ogg.

4% of likely voters say they never would vote for Teare.

28% of likely voters do not know enough about Teare to have an opinion about voting for him.

10% of likely voters do not know enough about Ogg to have an opinion about voting for her.

61% of likely voters have an unfavorable opinion of Ogg, while 29% of them have a favorable opinion of her, and 10% don't know enough about her to have an opinion.

In the Harris County Democratic primary election for Sheriff, 63% of likely voters intend to vote for incumbent Ed Gonzalez and 5% for one of the other three candidates, with 32% still undecided.

75% of likely voters have a favorable opinion of Gonzalez, while 8% of them hold an unfavorable opinion of him, and 17% don't know enough about Gonzalez to have an opinion.

In the Harris County Democratic primary election for County Attorney, 41% of likely voters intend to vote for incumbent Christian Menefee and 7% for Umeka "UA" Lewis, with 52% undecided.

47% and 3% of likely voters have a favorable and unfavorable opinion of Menefee, respectively, while 50% do not know enough about him to have an opinion.

In the Harris County Democratic primary election for Tax Assessor-Collector, 67% of likely voters remain undecided, while 12% intend to vote for Annette Ramirez, 7% for Danielle Keys Bess, 6% for Jerry Davis, 5% for Desiree Broadnax, and 3% for Claude Cummings III.

Harris County likely Democratic primary voters will account for approximately one out of every six votes cast in the 2024 Texas Democratic primary election.

66% of Harris County likely Democratic primary voters intend to vote for Colin Allred in the U.S. Senate primary election, followed by Roland Gutierrez (7%) and Mark Gonzalez (2%), with 22% undecided.

83% of Harris County likely Democratic primary voters either definitely (69%) or might (14%) consider voting for Colin Allred, while 15% do not know enough about him to have an opinion.

45% of Harris County likely Democratic primary voters either definitely (19%) or might (26%) consider voting for Roland Gutierrez, while 51% do not know enough about him to have an opinion.

More than seven in 10 Harris County likely Democratic primary voters do not know enough about Mark Gonzalez (71%) or Carl Sherman (76%) to have an opinion about voting for them.

Allred enjoys absolute majority support among all demographic sub-groups examined, ranging from vote intention lows of 51% among those ages 18 to 44 and 52% among Latino likely voters to highs of 77% among those 65 and older and 73% among white likely voters.

Gutierrez's vote intention across demographic sub-groups ranges from a low of 2% among Black likely voters to a high of 13% among Latino likely voters.

Survey Population Demographics

White likely voters account for 48% of this survey population of likely Harris County Democratic primary voters, Black likely voters 30%, Latino likely voters 18% and others 4% (2% Asian American, 2% something else). Women represent 57.7% of this population, men 41.7% and others 0.6%. Likely voters between the ages of 18 and 44 account for 27% of this population, those ages 45 to 64 for 39% and those 65 and older for 34%. Four-fifths (80%) of the population identifies as Democrat, with 17% identifying as Independent and 3% unsure of their partisan identification or identifying with either the Republican Party or with a minor party.

Harris County Democratic Primary Election for District Attorney

There are two candidates competing in the 2024 Harris County Democratic primary election for District Attorney: two-term incumbent Kim Ogg and challenger Sean Teare. Figure 1 displays the vote intention for Ogg and Teare among likely Democratic primary voters. Teare holds a 38 percentage point lead over Ogg, 59% to 21%, with 20% of likely voters undecided.

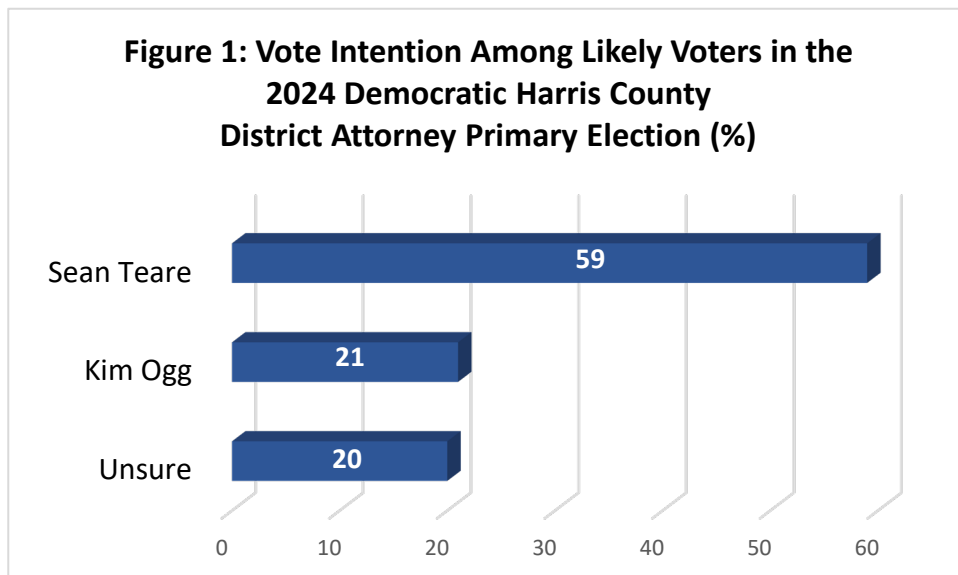
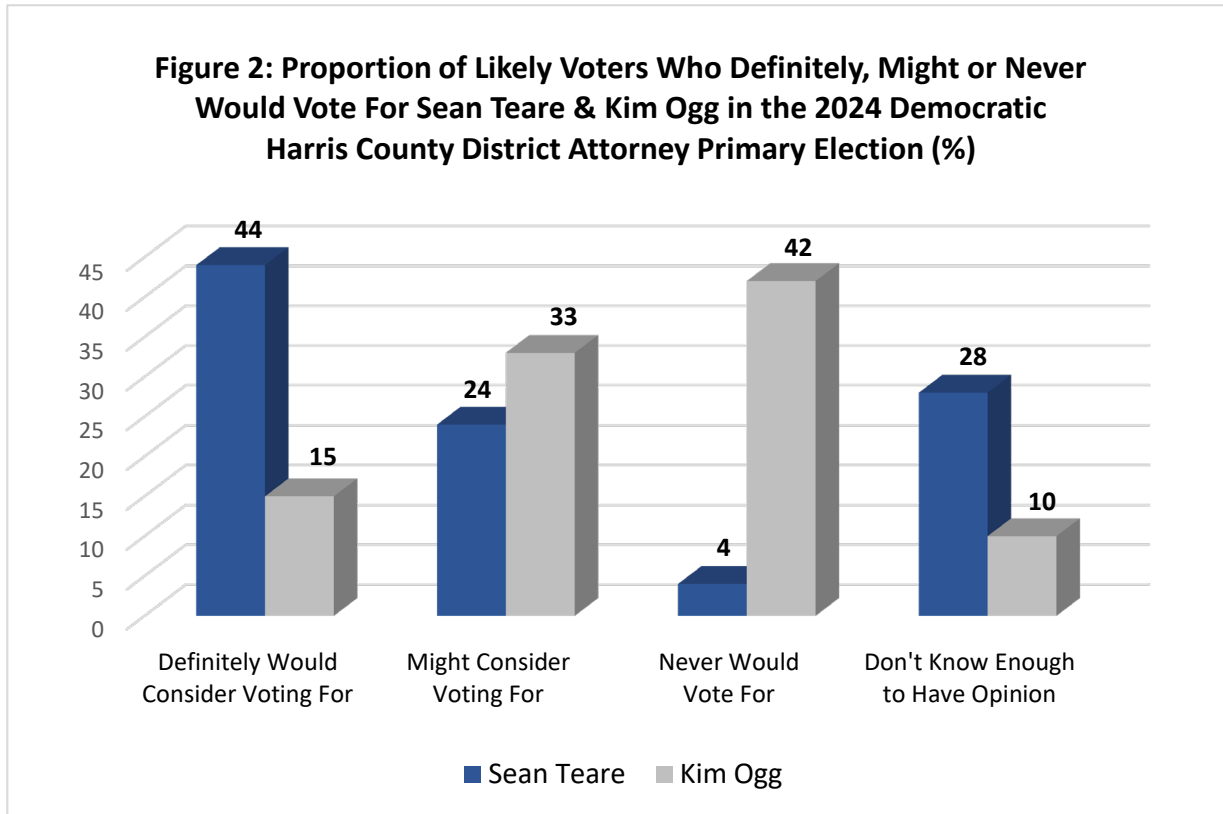


Figure 2 provides the response to a question which asked:

Independently of who else is running, please indicate for the Democratic Party's Harris County District Attorney Primary Election candidates listed below if they are someone you definitely would consider voting for in the primary, someone you might consider voting for in the primary, someone you never would vote for in the primary, or someone you don't know enough about to have an opinion either way.



Among these likely Democratic primary voters, 44% indicate that they definitely would consider voting for Teare, compared to only 15% who said they definitely would consider voting for Ogg. Nearly one in four (24%) say they might consider voting for Teare, while one-third (33%) say the same about Ogg. While only 4% of likely Democratic primary voters say they never would vote for Teare, 42% say they would never vote for Ogg. A little more than one-in-four (28%) likely Democratic primary voters say they don't know enough about Teare to have an opinion about voting for him, while one in ten (10%) don't know enough about Ogg to have an opinion about voting for her.

In a separate question, where likely Democratic primary voters were asked if they had a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of local Democratic political figures, 29% reported that they have a favorable opinion of Ogg (9% very and 20% somewhat) and 61% reported they have an unfavorable opinion of Ogg (36% very and 25% somewhat), while 10% did not know enough about Ogg to have an opinion about her one way or the other.

Figure 3 provides information that is similar to that in Figure 2, except restricted to the one-fifth (20%) of the likely voters who indicated they were still unsure about how they would vote in the Democratic Harris County District Attorney primary election. One in twenty of these unsure likely voters indicate they definitely would consider voting for Teare (5%) and Ogg (5%). Close to half (46%) report they might consider voting for Ogg, with a little more than a fourth (28%) saying the same about Teare. A little more than one in twenty (6%) report they would never vote for Teare while 16% report they would never vote for Ogg. A substantial majority of these unsure likely voters (61%) did not know enough about Teare to have an opinion about voting for him while one-third (33%) did not know enough about Ogg to have an opinion about voting for her.

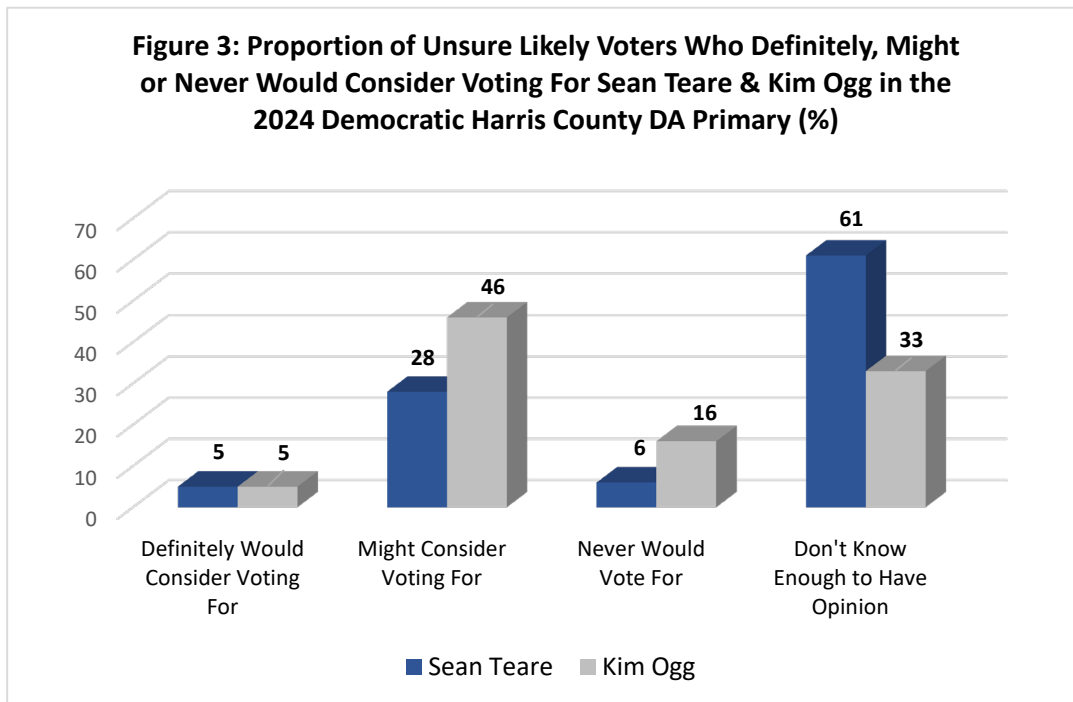


Table 1 provides the distribution of the vote intention in the 2024 Harris County District Attorney Democratic primary election broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, and partisan identification.

Table 1: Distribution of Democratic Primary Vote Intention for Harris County District Attorney Across Socio-Demographic Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Teare	Ogg	Unsure
Gender	Women	58	21	21
	Men	60	22	18
Ethnicity/Race	White	62	21	17
	Black	54	21	25
	Latino	58	22	20
Age	18-44	53	20	27
	45-64	58	24	18
	65+	65	19	16
Partisan ID	Democrat	63	19	18
	Independent	44	31	25

With three minor exceptions, there are not any noteworthy differences in the vote intention for Teare and Ogg across these four demographics.

The vote intention of women (58% vs. 21%) and of men (60% vs. 22%) for Teare and Ogg, respectively, is nearly identical. The same is true among white (62% vs. 21%) and Latino (58% vs. 22%) likely voters.

Black likely voters are however notably less likely to intend to vote for Teare than are white likely voters (54% vs. 62%), but are equally likely to intend to vote for Ogg (21% each). The former difference is largely accounted for by the larger proportion of Black than white likely voters who remain undecided in this contest (25% vs. 17%).

Likely voters 65 and older (65%) are notably more likely to intend to vote for Teare than are likely voters under the age of 45 (53%), but the two age cohorts are equally likely to intend to vote for Ogg (19% and 20%, respectively). Once again, the former difference is largely accounted for by the larger proportion of younger than older voters who remain undecided (27% vs. 16%).

Teare holds a 44 percentage point lead over Ogg among likely Democratic primary voters who identify as Democrat (63% vs. 19%), but only a 13 percentage point lead among those Democratic primary likely voters who identify as Independent (44% vs. 31%).

Harris County Democratic Primary Election for Sheriff

There are four candidates competing in the 2024 Democratic primary election for Harris County Sheriff: two-term incumbent Ed Gonzalez and challengers Joe Inocencio, Vergil Rochelle Ratliff, and Dana Wolfe. Figure 4 displays the vote intention in this primary contest, with 63% of likely Democratic primary voters intending to vote for Gonzalez, 2% for Wolfe, 2% for Ratliff and 1% for Inocencio. Almost one-third (32%) of likely Harris County voters remain unsure about whom they will vote for in the Democratic primary race for Sheriff.

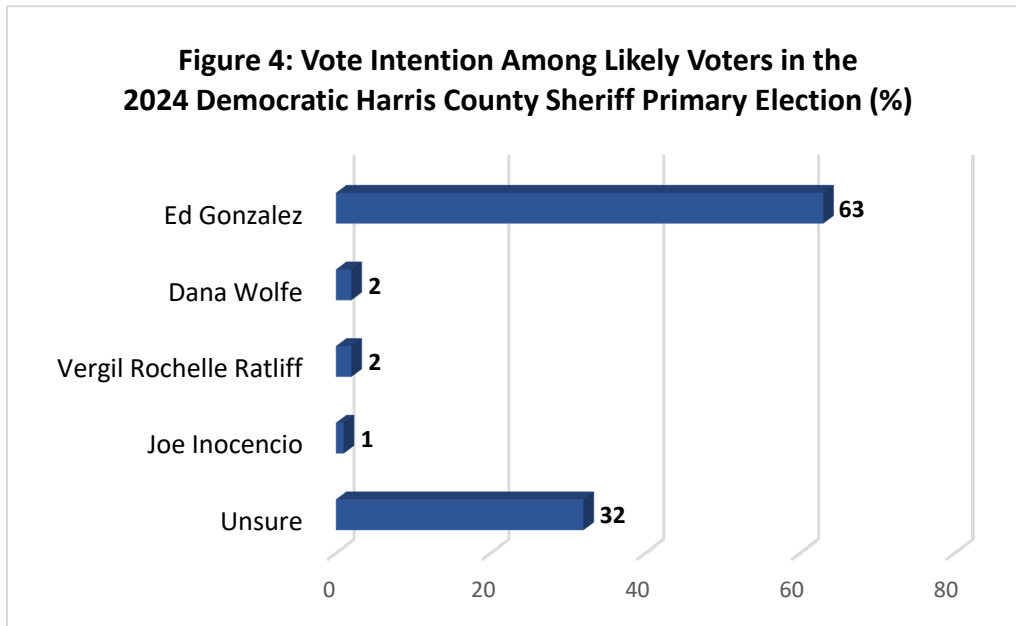


Table 2 provides the distribution of the vote intention (for Gonzalez, for the other three candidates combined, and for those still unsure) in the 2024 Harris County Sheriff Democratic primary election broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, and partisan identification. There are not any noteworthy differences in the vote intention for Gonzalez, or for the other three candidates combined among women and men, and only three minor differences related to ethnicity/race, age, and partisan identification.

Table 2: Distribution of Democratic Primary Vote Intention for Harris County Sheriff Across Socio-Demographic Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Gonzalez	Unsure	Others
Gender	Women	63	34	3
	Men	64	29	7
Ethnicity/Race	White	61	36	3
	Black	61	33	6
	Latino	74	22	4
Age	18-44	57	38	5
	45-64	65	30	5
	65+	66	30	4
Partisan ID	Democrat	65	31	4
	Independent	56	38	6

First, Latino (74%) likely voters are significantly more likely to intend to vote for Gonzalez than are white (61%) and Black (61%) likely voters. Due in large part to this greater support for Gonzalez, a significantly lower share of Latinos likely voters remain undecided in this race (22% compared to 36% and 33% of white and Black likely voters, respectively).

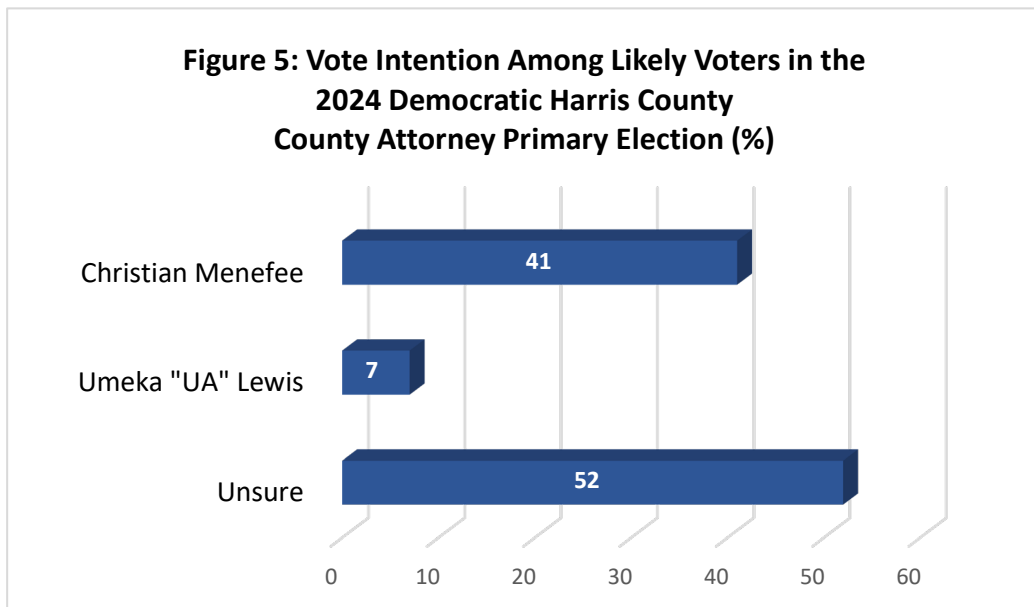
Second, likely voters between the ages of 18 and 44 are modestly less likely to intend to vote for Gonzalez (57%) and modestly more likely to be unsure (38%) about their vote choice than are likely voters between the ages of 45 and 64 (65% and 30%, respectively) and those 65 and older (66% and 30%, respectively).

Third, likely Democratic primary voters who identify as a Democrat are significantly more likely to intend to vote for Gonzalez (65%) than are likely Democratic primary voters who identify as an Independent (56%).

In a separate question where likely Democratic primary voters were asked if they had a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of local Democratic political figures, 75% reported that they have a favorable opinion of Gonzalez (35% very and 40% somewhat) and 8% reported that they have an unfavorable opinion (2% very and 6% somewhat), while 17% did not know enough about Gonzalez to have an opinion one way or the other.

Harris County Democratic Primary Election for County Attorney

There are two candidates competing in the 2024 Harris County Democratic primary election for County Attorney: one-term incumbent Christian Menefee and challenger Umeka "UA" Lewis. Figure 5 provides the vote intention in this primary race. Menefee holds a 34 percentage point lead over Lewis (41% vs. 7%), with just over half (52%) of likely voters still undecided in this race.



The large proportion of undecided voters is due in part to the relatively low proportion of likely voters who know enough about Menefee to have an opinion of him. In a separate evaluation question asking likely Democratic primary voters if they had a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of local Democratic political figures, half (50%) indicated that they did not know enough about Menefee to have an opinion of him, one way or the other. Among the half which did have an opinion of Menefee, the opinion was almost exclusively positive: 47% reported that they have a favorable opinion of Menefee (26% very and 21% somewhat) while only 3% reported having an unfavorable opinion (1% very and 2% somewhat).

Table 3 provides the distribution of the vote intention in the 2024 Harris County Democratic primary race for County Attorney broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, and partisan identification. Menefee’s vote intention does not differ significantly across gender, ethnic/racial, age or partisan sub-groups. However, Black likely voters (44%) are notably less likely than white (57%) and Latino (56%) likely voters to be undecided, which would appear to at least in part to be related to Lewis’s stronger appeal among Black (14%) than Latino (6%) and, especially white (2%), likely Democratic primary voters.

Table 3: Distribution of Democratic Primary Vote Intention for Harris County County Attorney Across Socio-Demographic Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Menefee	Lewis	Unsure
Gender	Women	39	7	54
	Men	45	5	50
Ethnicity/Race	White	41	2	57
	Black	42	14	44
	Latino	38	6	56
Age	18-44	43	8	49
	45-64	40	7	53
	65+	41	5	54
Partisan ID	Democrat	42	6	52
	Independent	42	7	51

Harris County Democratic Primary Election for Tax Assessor-Collector

There are five candidates competing in the 2024 Harris County Democratic primary election for Tax Assessor-Collector (the current two-term incumbent, Democrat Ann Harris Bennett, is not seeking re-election): Desiree Broadnax, Claude Cummings III, Jerry Davis, Danielle Keys Bess, and Annette Ramirez. Figure 6 provides the vote intention of likely Democratic primary voters in the Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector Democratic primary. Most notably, two out of three (67%) likely primary voters were unsure about how they would vote in this contest. Among the remaining one-third of voters, 12% intend to vote for Ramirez, 7% for Keys Bess, 6% for Davis, 5% for Broadnax, and 3% for Cummings.

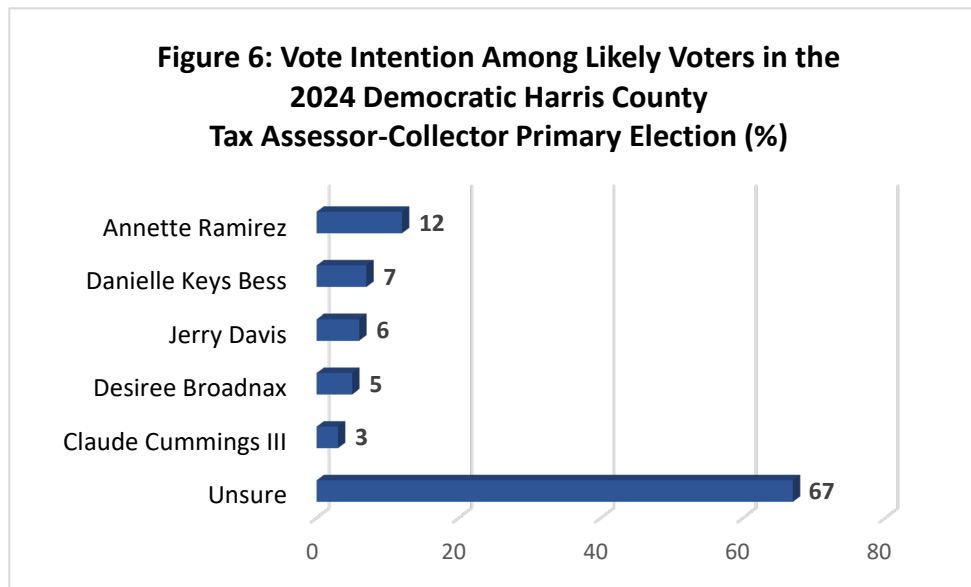


Table 4 provides the distribution of the vote intention (for Ramirez, for the four other candidates combined, and for those still unsure) in the 2024 Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector Democratic primary race broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, and partisan identification.

Table 4: Distribution of Democratic Primary Vote Intention for Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector Across Socio-Demographic Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Ramirez	Others	Unsure
Gender	Women	11	20	69
	Men	14	21	65
Ethnicity/Race	White	11	10	79
	Black	3	43	54
	Latino	30	11	59
Age	18-44	11	20	69
	45-64	9	21	70
	65+	16	21	63
Partisan ID	Democrat	13	21	66
	Independent	10	19	71

Overall, the only noteworthy socio-demographic differences in Table 4 are related to the ethnicity/race of the likely Democratic primary voters. Latino (30%) likely voters are significantly more likely than Black (3%) and white (11%) likely voters to intend to vote for Ramirez. And, Black likely voters (43%) are significantly more likely to intend to vote for one of the other four candidates than are white (10%) and Latino (11%) likely voters, with 14% of Black likely voters intending to vote for Keys Bess, 12% for Davis, 9% for Broadnax and 8% for Cummings. Finally, due in part to the lack of a candidate or a group of candidates with similar appeal among white likely voters, significantly more of them remain undecided in this contest (79%) than is the case for Black (54%) and Latino (59%) likely voters.

Texas U.S. Senate Democratic Primary Election in Harris County

In recent Texas Democratic primary elections, Harris County has accounted for between 15% and 16% of Democratic primary election voters statewide, a proportion which is likely to be similar, if not slightly higher, in March 2024. There are nine candidates competing in the Texas Democratic Party’s U.S. Senate primary election: Colin Allred, Meri Gomez, Mark Gonzalez, Roland Gutierrez, A. “Robert” Hassan, Steven Keough, Heli Rodriguez Prilliman, Carl Sherman, and Thierry Tchenko.

Figure 7 provides the vote intention among likely Harris County Democratic primary voters in the statewide Democratic U.S. Senate primary election. Two-thirds (66%) of these likely voters intend to vote for Allred, followed by, at a considerable distance, Gutierrez (7%), Gonzalez (2%), Keough (1%), Gomez (1%), Hassan (1%), Sherman (0%), Tchenko (0%), and Rodriguez Prilliman (0%). Slightly more than one in five (22%) likely voters remain undecided about their vote choice in this contest.

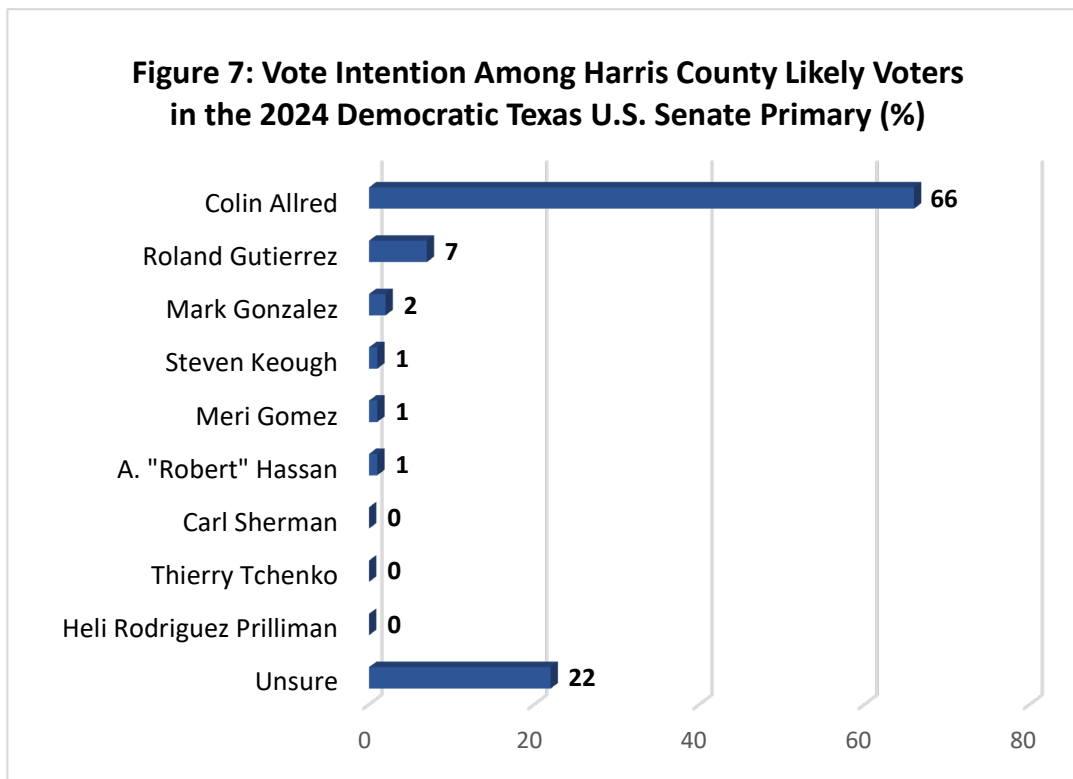
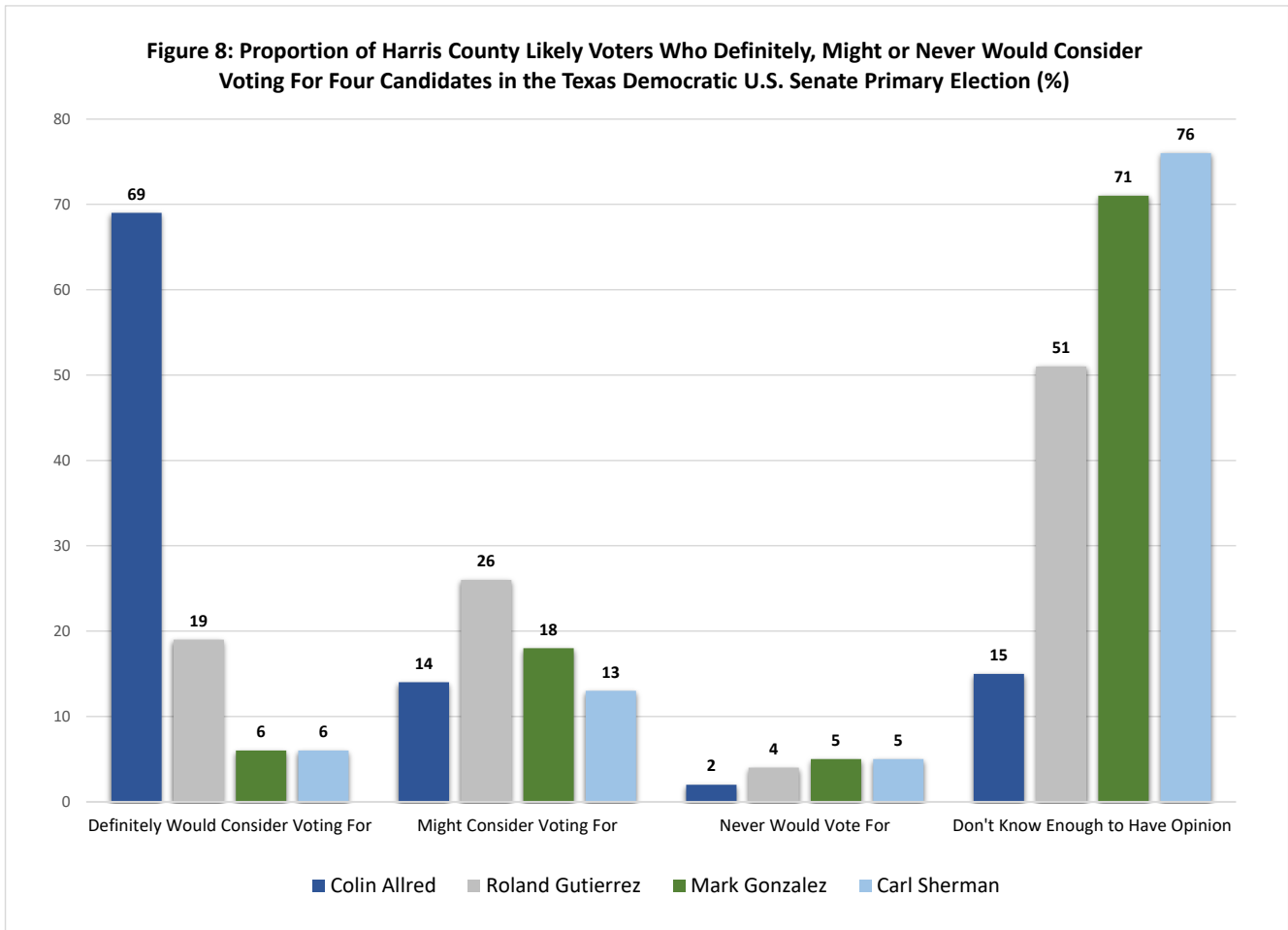


Figure 8 provides the response to the question below for the four candidates with significant prior experience in elected office (U.S. Congressman Colin Allred, Texas State Senator Roland Gutierrez, Texas State Representative Carl Sherman, and former Nueces County District Attorney Mark Gonzalez).

Independently of who else is running, please indicate for the Texas Democratic Party’s U.S. Senate Primary Election candidates listed below if they are someone you definitely would consider voting for in the primary, someone you might consider voting for in the primary, someone you never would vote for in the primary, or someone you don’t know enough about to have an opinion either way.



More than two-thirds (69%) of likely Harris County Democratic primary voters report they definitely would consider voting for Allred, compared to 19% for Gutierrez and 6% for both Gonzalez and Sherman. One in seven (14%) indicate they might consider voting for Allred, compared to 26% for Gutierrez, 18% for Gonzalez and 13% for Sherman. Overall, 83% of these likely voters indicate they either definitely or might consider voting for Allred in this year’s Democratic primary election.

While only 15% of these likely Democratic primary voters don’t know enough about Allred to have an opinion about voting for the Dallas Congressman, more than one-half (51%) don’t know enough about Gutierrez to have an opinion about voting for him, with the same true for 71% and 76% of likely voters vis-à-vis Gonzalez and Sherman, respectively. Only a minuscule proportion of likely Democratic primary

voters would never vote for these four candidates, ranging from a low of 2% for Allred to a high of 5% for both Gonzalez and Sherman.

Figure 9 provides information that is similar to that in Figure 8, except restricted to the one-fifth (22%) of the likely Harris County Democratic voters who indicated they were still unsure about how they would vote in the 2024 Texas Democratic U.S. Senate primary election. A substantial majority of these undecided voters do not know enough about Allred (57%), Gutierrez (69%), Gonzalez (70%) or Sherman (75%) to have an opinion about voting for them. Among those unsure likely voters with an opinion, 15%, 8%, 6% and 3% definitely would consider for voting for Allred, Gutierrez, Gonzalez and Sherman, respectively, while 24%, 19%, 19% and 18% might consider voting these four respective candidates. Only 4%, 4%, 5% and 4% of these unsure likely voters say they never would vote for Allred, Gutierrez, Gonzalez and Sherman, respectively.

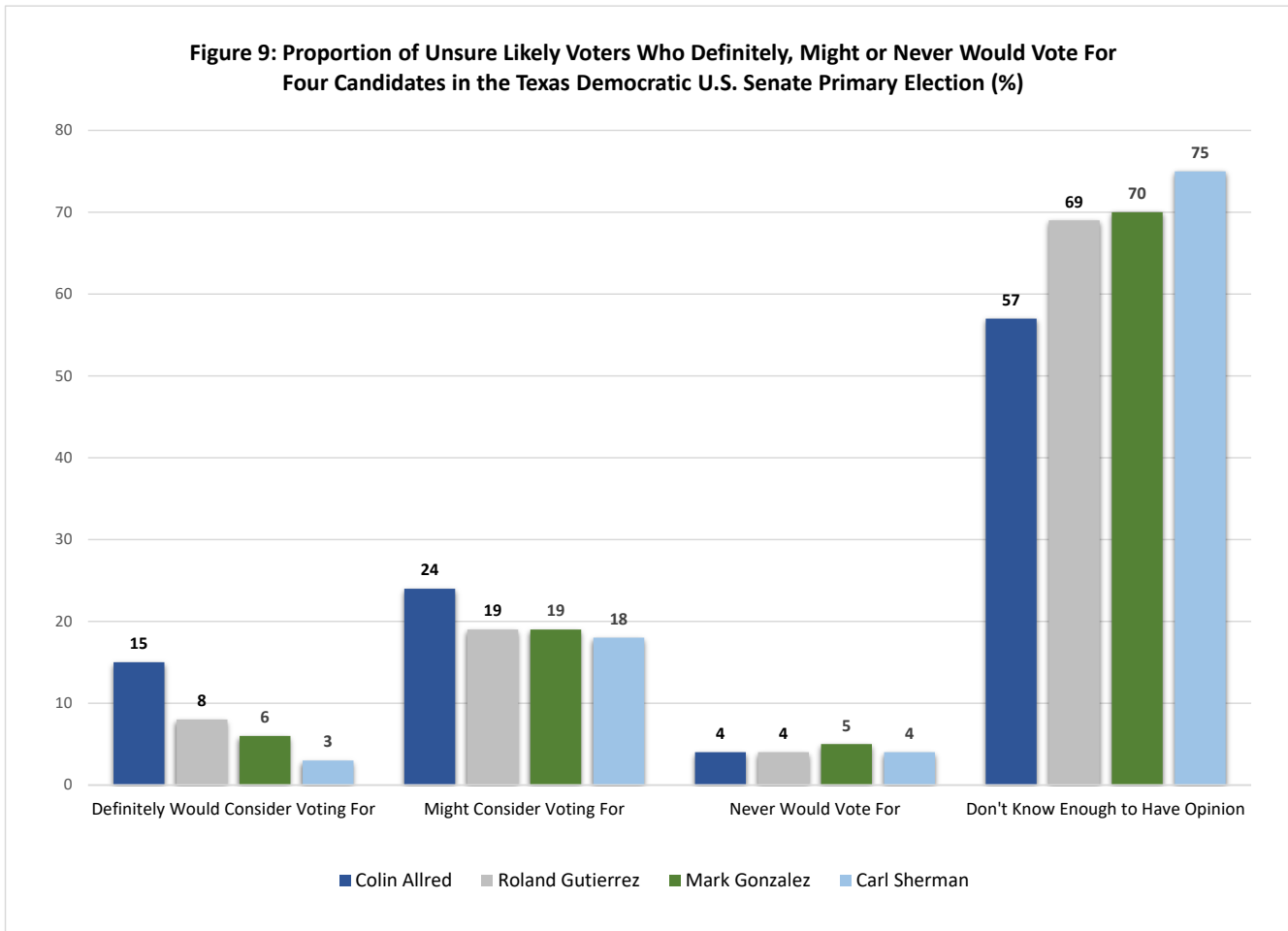


Table 5 provides the distribution of the vote intention (for Allred, for Gutierrez, for the other seven candidates combined, and for those still unsure) of Harris County likely voters in the 2024 Texas Democratic primary election for U.S. Senate. By and large, Allred’s lead does not differ notably within these four socio-demographic groups, with two principal exceptions.

Table 5: Distribution of Harris County Democratic Primary Vote Intention for U.S. Senate Across Socio-Demographic Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Allred	Gutierrez	Unsure	Others
Gender	Women	68	6	24	2
	Men	65	9	20	6
Ethnicity/Race	White	73	9	16	2
	Black	66	2	29	3
	Latino	52	13	29	8
Age	18-44	51	9	34	6
	45-64	68	6	22	4
	65+	77	7	13	3
Partisan ID	Democrat	69	8	20	3
	Independent	61	3	30	6

First, Allred’s vote intention is notably higher among white (73%) and Black (66%) likely Democratic primary voters than it is among Latino (52%) likely voters, a result produced by the higher-than-average support for Gutierrez (13%) and Gonzalez (6%) among Latino likely voters.

Second, Allred enjoys a notably higher vote intention among those ages 45 to 64 (68%) and 65 and older (77%) than among those younger likely voters between the ages of 18 and 44 (51%). Slightly more than one-third of these younger voters (34%) remain undecided in this contest, compared to only 13% of those 65 and older.

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