

Comparing the candidates

Where the major contenders for governor line up on chief concerns facing the state



Bell

Chris Bell, *Democrat*



Friedman

Kinky Friedman, *Independent*



Perry

Gov. Rick Perry, *Republican*



Strayhorn

Carole Keeton Strayhorn, *Ind.*

SOURCE: *Dallas Morning News* research
Illustrations by
MICHAEL HOGUE/Staff Artist

Bottom line

Education	<p>Proposes a commission to find steady funding for schools and increase the quality of education without political interference</p> <p>Says schools are too focused on standardized testing and would not use results to rank schools and promote students to the next grade</p> <p>Opposes vouchers</p>	<p>Would legalize casino gambling to increase overall funding</p> <p>Wants to stop the practice of teaching to the test</p> <p>Would levy a 1 percent tax on oil and gas produced in Texas to fund raises for teachers, police officers and firefighters</p> <p>Opposes vouchers</p>	<p>Signed a law authorizing a \$2,000 pay raise for teachers</p> <p>Ordered 65 percent of school districts' spending go for classroom instruction, and has backed a rigorous college-prep curriculum for high school students</p> <p>Backs state's heavy reliance on TAKS</p> <p>Favors vouchers</p>	<p>Would legalize slot machines at racetracks to fund a \$4,000 across-the-board raise for teachers</p> <p>Favors administering the TAKS tests at the beginning of the school year as a diagnostic tool</p> <p>Opposes vouchers</p>	<p>The state has addressed the school-finance crisis for now, but overall spending and standardized testing remain major issues. Plus, a big fight over private-school vouchers is brewing.</p>
Taxes	<p>Wants to expand and perhaps raise the state's new business tax, saying the money could be used for pre-kindergarten classes, teacher pay raises and other education improvements</p>	<p>Favors casino gambling to raise billions for teacher raises and improved health care, especially for children</p>	<p>Championed the business tax/property tax swap</p> <p>Says a strong economy will ensure enough funds to balance the budget</p>	<p>Would repeal the business tax</p> <p>Proposes using an \$8 billion surplus, cost savings from performance reviews, video lottery terminals at racetracks and eliminating the governor's economic development funds to make up for it</p>	<p>Lawmakers approved a big cut in school property taxes, funded by a new broad-based business tax. But the plan doesn't balance; will economic growth make up the difference, or is a budget crunch coming?</p>
Roads	<p>Calls the Trans-Texas Corridor a boondoggle designed to benefit the governor's campaign donors</p> <p>Would try to depoliticize highway funding decisions in Austin</p> <p>Would consider a tax increase to raise more highway money</p>	<p>Calls the corridor "a land grab of the ugliest kind"</p> <p>Would convert current toll roads to free highways</p> <p>Would consider an increase in fuel taxes to raise highway funding</p>	<p>Created the corridor, a \$184 billion plan that would use private partnerships to create a massive network of highways</p> <p>Would rely on tolls, largely controlled by the private contractors</p> <p>Plan includes pipelines and railways</p>	<p>Also slams the corridor plan</p> <p>Proposes expanding Interstate 35, including by double-decking in some areas, without using tolls</p> <p>Favors improving the rail system, encouraging telecommuting and staggering work schedules</p>	<p>The state is growing rapidly, urban areas are sprawling farther from central cities, and state and federal highway investments aren't keeping pace.</p>
Environment & energy	<p>Would name environmental commissioners to enforce regulations and collect fines that go uncollected today</p> <p>Would repeal legislation favored by the governor preventing local prosecutors from targeting polluters</p> <p>Would mandate a 90 percent reduction in toxic mercury emissions from coal-burning power plants</p>	<p>Would encourage development of wind, solar and biofuel energy</p> <p>Would name Willie Nelson as energy czar because of his cutting-edge use of biodiesel on his tour bus</p>	<p>Has fast-tracked permits for new coal-fueled power plants</p> <p>Argues that air quality won't be harmed because of new technologies</p> <p>Has backed the production of energy from renewable sources, including wind, solar, biomass and hydroelectric generation</p>	<p>Opposes the expedited permits for coal-fired plants</p> <p>Would mandate that old plants be replaced with cleaner, new technology and that the state step up development of alternative energy</p>	<p>The state faces a big long-term energy need as the population grows. But air quality is already a concern.</p>
Immigration	<p>Supports federal guest-worker program</p> <p>Opposes a border wall or fence</p> <p>Wants increased penalties for employers who hire illegal workers</p> <p>Would study Arizona's use of the National Guard</p> <p>Doesn't want to overburden local law enforcement</p>	<p>Supports a federal guest-worker program with up to 400,000 workers per year</p> <p>Opposes a border wall or fence</p> <p>Undecided on enhanced penalties for employers</p> <p>Would put 10,000 armed National Guard troops on the border, declaring martial law if necessary</p>	<p>Supports a federal guest-worker program and would urge Mexico to create a birth-registry system</p> <p>Opposes a border wall or fence</p> <p>Opposes new sanctions for employers who hire illegal workers</p> <p>Created Operation Rio Grande to boost law-enforcement presence but opposes local law enforcement arresting illegal immigrants</p>	<p>Supports a federal guest-worker program</p> <p>Opposes a border wall or fence</p> <p>Would not change penalties for employers</p> <p>Would use the National Guard to help secure the border and would have discussions with local officials about their role in policing illegal immigrants</p>	<p>Texas is on the front lines in the immigration debate, but any governor has little control over what is largely a federal matter.</p>
Property appraisals	<p>Opposes caps on how much property appraisals can increase as an infringement on local governments' power</p>	<p>Supports capping increases at 5 percent for homeowners and 10 percent for businesses</p>	<p>Strongly advocates a stricter cap</p> <p>Has proposed reducing the current cap of 10 percent a year to 3 percent; appointed a task force to study the entire appraisal process</p>	<p>Would let local voters determine their own caps in an election</p>	<p>Rising property values are eroding some property-tax cuts, but local government officials fiercely oppose tighter limits on appraisals, noting that growth in values helps them fund government services.</p>
Insurance	<p>Would appoint an activist insurance commissioner and instruct the official to begin a top-to-bottom review of the insurance market to identify which companies are overcharging customers and order rate reductions</p>	<p>Would appoint a nonpartisan commission of insurance experts to review the industry, its loss history and profit margins, and report on whether premiums are justified</p>	<p>Says that the massive insurance reform law of 2003, which he signed, is working to reduce home insurance rates and has stabilized the market</p> <p>Says the insurance commissioners he appointed have been effective in bringing runaway premiums under control</p>	<p>Says she would appoint an insurance commissioner who would side with consumers</p>	<p>Texans pay the highest rates for homeowner coverage in the country, nearly twice the national average, but increases have slowed since the 2003 law was enacted.</p>
Gambling	<p>Would allow local authorities to vote on whether to have casinos in their areas</p> <p>Would allow slots at racetracks but opposes putting slots anywhere else</p> <p>Opposes any expansion of the lottery</p>	<p>Supports casino gambling, saying the revenue would pay for various needs</p> <p>Would closely monitor the lottery, but supports it</p> <p>Supports putting slots at racetracks, bars or wherever they would fit</p>	<p>Strongly opposes casino gambling</p> <p>Opposes slots at racetracks and any expansion of the Texas lottery</p>	<p>Would allow voters to decide whether to have casino gambling</p> <p>Supports placing slots at racetracks</p> <p>Would tie gaming revenue to education and property tax cuts, seeking a constitutional amendment to do so</p>	<p>Lawmakers have debated several proposals to create gaming, but proposals have stalled because of a backlash from conservative legislators.</p>
Origin of life	<p>Opposes teaching intelligent design with evolution</p>	<p>Opposes teaching intelligent design</p>	<p>Supports teaching intelligent design along with evolutionary theory in science classes</p>	<p>Opposes teaching intelligent design in science classes with evolution but says it could be taught in a religion studies course</p>	<p>Texas mandates the teaching of evolution in science classes, and some conservatives want to add intelligent design.</p>
Campaign rules	<p>Would limit campaign contributions and forbid donations to officeholders during special sessions of the Legislature (they are already banned in regular sessions)</p> <p>Would make it illegal for an officeholder or top aide to lobby any state agency, board or commission for one year after leaving state employment</p> <p>Would outlaw undisclosed "issue ads" within 60 days of an election</p>	<p>Supports public funding of political campaigns and banning any Texas elected official or state employee from becoming a lobbyist for two years after leaving their state job</p> <p>Abolish requirement that independent candidates collect signatures to get on the ballot and replace it with a system in which independents would compete in primaries for a place on the ballot</p> <p>Allow same-day registration and voting</p>	<p>Opposes limits on campaign contributions</p> <p>Instituted a policy in his office forbidding top aides from lobbying his office for at least a year and one legislative session following their departure</p>	<p>Would ban elected officials and top state employees from lobbying any agency of state government for four years after leaving their job</p> <p>Would prohibit officials and staffers from accepting gifts or trips from lobbyists; opposes limits on campaign contributions so long as the law permits wealthy candidates to put unlimited sums into their own campaigns.</p>	<p>With no limit on individual donations to candidates, small numbers of supporters fund campaigns; watchdog groups say that lets them buy access to influence officials on behalf of their business or issue agendas.</p>
Abortion	<p>Believes the Roe vs. Wade decision should stand</p> <p>Opposes efforts to allow pharmacists to refuse to dispense the "morning-after" pill</p>	<p>Believes the Roe vs. Wade decision should stand</p> <p>Opposes efforts to allow pharmacists to refuse to dispense the "morning-after" pill</p>	<p>Declines to weigh in on Roe vs. Wade</p> <p>Supports efforts to let pharmacists refuse to dispense the "morning-after" pill</p>	<p>Efforts to tighten abortion restrictions and protect pharmacists will probably surface again in the Legislature next year.</p>	

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