

# Selling Texans on electric vehicles may be uphill climb

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Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Ever more electric vehicles can be spotted these days on the urban roads of Texas. But switching the whole state from gas tanks to batteries is looking like a tough sell.

That is what 2,067 respondents to the Texas Trends Survey, conducted by the University of Houston Hobby School of Public Affairs and the

Texas Southern University Jordan-Leland School of Public Affairs, had to say about going electric—now and any time in the future. Specifically, the [survey](#) asked:

- Do you currently own or lease an electric vehicle?
- Would you consider buying or leasing an electric vehicle now or in the future?
- Why would you not consider buying or leasing a vehicle powered only by electricity?
- What do you think about three potential policies aimed at promoting [electric vehicles](#)?

"With a legacy as the nation's largest energy producer, from both traditional and [renewable sources](#), Texas has potential to lead America's exploration of alternatives such as electric vehicles. But is the EV movement gaining ground in the state? This survey gives us a glimpse of what Texans are thinking today," said Carroll Robinson, TSU associate professor of political science and co-principal investigator of the TSU National Transportation Security Center of Excellence–Petrochemical Transportation Security.

Among [survey respondents](#), only 11% said they were "very likely" to ever buy or lease a vehicle powered only by electricity in the future, 30% said they would "never" do so. Less than 10% were already driving an electric-powered car, truck or van.

"How you answer that question depends on your generation. In our survey, almost half the Gen Z'ers (ages 19–25) and a little more than a third of the Millennials (ages 26–41) replied they were likely, at least somewhat, to purchase an electric vehicle in the future. But three-quarters of Baby Boomers (ages 58–76) and the Silent Generation (ages 77–94) said they were not so likely," said Gail Buttorff, co-director of the Survey Research Institute at the UH Hobby School of Public Affairs.

## Why Not Electric?

The cost of electric vehicles was often cited (by 57% of survey respondents, overall) as the main reason for not entertaining the idea of buying or leasing an electric-powered vehicle. Scarcity of charging stations (53% of overall respondents) was the second most selected reason.

"Dividing along politics, a preference for gas vehicles was cited by almost twice as many Republicans (49%) as Democrats or Independents (28% in each case). Mileage range per charge was a concern of more Republicans and Independents (40% each) than Democrats (29%)," said Michael O. Adams, professor of political science and founding director of the Executive Master of Public Administration program at the Jordan-Leland School of Public Affairs.

## Driving Public Policy

When it comes to powering up interest in electric vehicles, the survey discussed three potential public-policy actions. Most popular among them was a potential federal tax rebate, which drew support from three-fifths of total respondents.

Almost three-quarters of respondents at least somewhat supported creating, by 2035, a Texas network of electric-vehicle charging stations that would be comparable to the country's current network of gas stations. Millennial (73%) and Gen Z (72%) generations were the most ardent supporters of growing the network.

Least liked among the three was a suggested requirement that all new vehicles sold be electric powered by 2035. That idea that drew 40% overall support.

## About the Survey

See the complete [Texas Trends Survey / Electric Vehicles](#) report for clarification on how the electric [vehicle](#) is not winning over the Lone Star State—at least not so far. Read also about how opinions vary across gender, race/ethnicity, generation and partisan divides.

The survey of 2,067 was conducted Oct. 4–21, 2021, by YouGov for the UH Hobby School of Public Affairs and the TSU Jordan-Leland School of Public Affairs and has a margin of error of  $\pm 2.2\%$  at the 95% confidence level.

**More information:** [Texas Trends Survey: Electric Vehicles  
uh.edu/hobby/txtrends/texas\\_tr ... electric\\_vehicle.pdf](https://uh.edu/hobby/txtrends/texas_tr...electric_vehicle.pdf)

Provided by University of Houston

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