



**FROM:** Andy Hemming – Campaign Manager, Texans for Senator John Cornyn  
**TO:** Friends and Allies  
**RE:** Post-Labor Day State of the Texas U.S. Senate Race

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With Labor Day now in the rearview mirror, the starting gun has officially sounded on the 2026 U.S. Senate primary in Texas. While many in the media were writing Senator Cornyn's political obituary in May and June, the current state of the race paints a far different picture.

- **Polling – The Ballot Is Now Moving In Senator Cornyn's Favor:** There have been four polls released publicly since mid-August: an Emerson Poll showing Senator Cornyn up by one point, Texas Southern University and Echelon Insights polls showing Senator Cornyn down five points and a poll by the Senate Leadership Fund showing Senator Cornyn down eight points. Taken together, these four public polls show Senator Cornyn down an average of four points, which marks a change from the Spring, where Senator Cornyn was routinely trailing by over 12 points. This gap was closed with positive messaging only with no mention of Attorney General Paxton's record and character issues.
- **Ken Paxton's Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Summer:** Senator Cornyn's rise in the polls was buttressed by Attorney General Paxton's summer from hell, which featured:
  - Attorney General Paxton's wife of over 30 years filing for divorce on "biblical grounds." While she never fully explained what constituted "biblical grounds" for divorce, it has been widely reported that Attorney General Paxton has been repeatedly unfaithful to his wife over the years.
  - Attorney General Paxton being the subject of an explosive article in *The Associated Press* that detailed his blatant participation in mortgage fraud by claiming multiple properties as his primary residence on bank loans. Paxton's behavior is objectively more serious than other cases that have been reported on for two reasons: he did it multiple times and he bought the properties with the express intent of using them for investment.
  - Several articles detailing Attorney General Paxton's flagrant mismanagement of the Office of the Texas Attorney General. This included an expose by the *Texas Tribune* detailing the tens of millions of dollars paid by Attorney General Paxton to outside lawyers instead of using in-house attorneys like Governor Abbott did when served as Attorney General, as well as a sordid soap opera involving lurid allegations of sexual harassment by top lawyers in Paxton's office. To top it off, an alleged sexual trafficker who was given a sweetheart deal by Attorney General Paxton was re-arrested for assault with a deadly weapon, unlawful restraint and burglary.
  - Attorney General Paxton getting caught on a European vacation when Texas Democrats fled the state to avoid voting on a redistricting proposal. Instead of cutting his trip short to work on bringing Democrats back to the state, he stayed an extra 6 days overseas.

With a summer like this, it is no surprise that the Echelon Insights poll mentioned above found that more Republicans had heard more negative things about Attorney General Paxton than those who had heard positive things, an extraordinary feat considering there was no negative advertising prior to that poll being released.

- **Senator Cornyn Is Campaigning Hard While Attorney General Paxton Is MIA:** Senator Cornyn has kept a robust slate of events and media appearances over the summer, holding events across the state of Texas while interviewing with myriad media outlets both state and national. By contrast, Attorney General Paxton appears to campaign exclusively on social media or via media hits from a hotel room somewhere in Europe.

**Conclusion:** Despite the conventional wisdom prophesizing Senator Cornyn's political demise several months ago, the race has significantly tightened with momentum on our campaign's side, with plenty of room for continued growth. Our campaign will continue to run an aggressive campaign to promote Senator Cornyn's record of conservative successes and to educate voters on why Attorney General Paxton is unfit for office.