



Questions for Candidates for Texas Comptroller Conservative Coalition of Harris County

Our questionnaire is for candidates to indicate their reasons and opinions concerning issues surrounding their races. This questionnaire will be posted onto the Conservative Coalition of Harris County website for public voter viewing.

| Candidate Name | Position for which Candidate is Running |
|----------------|---|
| Kelly Hancock | Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts |

Please give your answer to each of the following questions and please include your rationale with each answer. Please be concise and clear.

1. Please describe the qualifications and experience that make you the best candidate in your political race.

Answer:

I'm best qualified to continue serving as Texas Comptroller because I'm the only candidate who has actually done the job, combined with deep legislative and business experience.

By the time of the primary election, I will have served nine months as Acting Texas Comptroller, overseeing the state's finances as the Chief Financial Officer of Texas. In that role, I am responsible for safeguarding taxpayer dollars, collecting and forecasting revenue, managing statewide financial systems, and ensuring transparency and accountability across state government.

Before becoming Comptroller, I served for decades as a school board member, State Representative, and State Senator, including ten years on the Senate Finance Committee and leadership of the Business & Commerce Committee. That experience gave me a full understanding of how budgets are written, how taxpayer money should be protected, and how government can either help or hinder economic growth.

As Comptroller, I have kept the border secure, partnered with Texas sheriffs to help them work more closely with ICE, ended DEI in state contracting, implemented the largest day-one education freedom launch in the country, modernized outdated financial systems, launched a local debt and bond dashboard, and more.

Beyond elected office, I have operated a business I started from scratch. I understand better than anyone what business owners need and how government often gets in the way of business.

I am the best qualified candidate for Texas Comptroller because I bring both deep legislative experience and hands-on executive leadership in the role today.

Governor Greg Abbott asked me to step into this role and has endorsed my campaign because he trusted my experience and ability to deliver results. I bring proven leadership, fiscal discipline, and a record of conservative governance to this race.

2. Please explain what you believe are the most significant issues in this race, why you are running for this position and what differentiates you from the other candidate(s).

Answer:

The central issue in this race is the choice between results and rhetoric.

As Acting Comptroller, I've delivered results by stewarding taxpayer dollars and defending core Texas values. In the first months of my term, we have taken decisive action to secure the border, eliminate DEI from state contracting, expand parental rights in education, cut red tape through Texas DOGE, and increase transparency around state and local spending.

I am asking voters to judge this race based on performance. I am the only candidate currently doing the job, and I am running on a real record of results – not empty rhetoric or campaign promises.

Beyond experience, one of the most significant issues in this race is the ability to successfully continue and execute major reforms already underway – most notably, border security. President Trump secured the border essentially overnight. During Joe Biden's open border disaster, Texas stepped into the gap with Operation Lone Star, which I supported from day one. I joined President Trump and Governor Abbott at the border when the first section of the wall went up, and I agree with President Trump that Operation Lone Star did "an amazing job in securing the border." Now, I'm working with Governor Abbott so Texas is reimbursed for the billions we spent securing the border.

Another major reform we have already begun is ending DEI in state government contracting. We suspended the race- and sex-based Historically Underutilized Business program and relaunched it as VetHUB, focusing support on service-disabled veteran-owned businesses. While that was an important step, there is still more work to do to root out DEI across state government.

This effort is part of a broader push to cut waste and improve efficiency. I am one of five Texans serving on the Texas DOGE Advisory Panel, and I also helped pass the legislation that established Texas DOGE in law. We will deliver a strong set of recommendations for the Legislature to enact in statute, along with executive actions that my office and other agencies can implement immediately.

Also, Texas is implementing the largest day-one school choice program in the nation, giving tens of thousands of parents the right to choose the best education for their children, not simply rely on their ZIP code. I've supported school choice for decades and am the only candidate who successfully passed school choice into law. Now, I am responsible for implementing it. This next year must go well so Texas can expand education freedom in the future.

Ultimately, this race comes down to whether Texas continues with experienced, results-driven leadership in one of the most important offices in state government.

3. What will be your top 3 priorities during your upcoming term?

Answer:

1. Keep Texas Safe, Secure the Border, and Defend the Rule of Law

Texas must never again be forced to do Washington's job. I will continue working with President Trump and Governor Abbott to keep the border secure, strengthen coordination between Texas law enforcement and ICE, and recover full federal reimbursement for the more than \$11 billion Texas spent protecting the nation during the Biden border crisis.

I will also ensure taxpayer dollars are never used to support organizations tied to terrorist groups, foreign adversaries, or the Chinese Communist Party, protect women's sports in taxpayer-funded programs, and investigate any misuse of public funds that violates Texas law, including illegal abortion subsidies.

2. Cut Waste, Eliminate DEI, and Rein In Local Debt

Texans deserve transparency and accountability at every level of government. I will continue expanding the Local Government Bond, Tax, and Project Database so taxpayers can see exactly how their money is being spent and borrowed. I will push for stronger audit authority to investigate waste, fraud, and abuse at both the state and local level, and work to rein in runaway local spending and debt—now totaling over half a trillion dollars statewide.

We have already taken decisive action by ending DEI in state contracting, including suspending the HUB program and refocusing support on service-disabled veterans. But more work remains to root out DEI across state government. Through my service on the Texas DOGE Advisory Panel, I will deliver recommendations to the Legislature and pursue immediate executive actions to cut red tape, modernize government, and ensure Texas operates at the speed of business.

3. Protect Parental Rights and Expand Education Freedom

My top priority is to fully and successfully implement Texas Education Freedom Accounts, ensuring families can access these funds through a secure, transparent, and user-friendly system. Education decisions should be made by parents, not bureaucrats. As Comptroller, I will ensure strong accountability while protecting parental freedom, including for homeschool families. Looking ahead, I will work with the Legislature to expand and strengthen education freedom so more families can benefit in future sessions.

4. What changes can be made to the Texas Comptroller office to improve tax collections, reduce waste in agency appropriations, enhance state investments, and increase payment efficiencies to vendors and employees?

Answer:

The Texas Comptroller's Office can improve tax collections, reduce waste, enhance state investments, and increase payment efficiency by continuing the accountability and modernization reforms already underway, starting with eliminating wasteful practices and restoring merit-based standards.

First, we have taken decisive action to eliminate DEI in state contracting by suspending the race- and sex-based Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) program and restoring best-value, performance-based contracting. This ensures taxpayer dollars are spent efficiently, increases competition, and lowers costs – while preserving targeted support for service-disabled veteran-owned businesses.

Second, stronger data transparency and audit tools are essential to reducing waste in agency appropriations. Modern systems allow real-time tracking of expenditures, earlier detection of irregularities, and more effective audits of waste, fraud, and abuse. This protects taxpayers and ensures agencies are held accountable for how appropriated funds are used.

Third, I have begun modernizing decades-old financial and tax systems that were designed for a much smaller and slower government. By moving to secure, cloud-based platforms and improving data integration across agencies, the Comptroller's Office can improve tax compliance and forecasting, reduce errors, and ensure revenues are collected accurately and on time. These upgrades also allow vendors and employees to be paid faster and more reliably, reducing backlogs and administrative costs.

Finally, I am serving on the Texas DOGE Advisory Panel, which has already met with leaders from both the public and private sectors to identify unnecessary regulations, outdated processes, and inefficiencies across state government. The recommendations from this effort will be delivered to the Legislature and paired with executive actions to streamline operations, cut red tape, and ensure Texas government operates at the speed of business, not bureaucracy.

5. Should our Texas state government create an efficiency team (DOGE) that will use computer technology such as AI to expose fraud and waste within government agencies?

Answer:

As mentioned, I am one of five Texans serving on the Texas DOGE Advisory Panel, which is actively reviewing how state government can better use technology, data, and modern tools, including AI where appropriate, to identify fraud, waste, abuse, and inefficiency. The panel includes members from both the public and private sectors, and we are open to all responsible options that improve accountability while protecting taxpayers.

One example of this approach is eliminating DEI, including suspending the Historically Underutilized Business program. Ending HUB does not just restore merit-based contracting, it also allows the state to eliminate hundreds of DEI-related administrative positions across agencies, reducing overhead, duplication, and compliance costs. That is real waste reduction that saves taxpayer dollars immediately.

Texas has a strong fiscal foundation because we have consistently lived within our means. Nearly ten years ago in the Texas Senate, I led the charge on what was then the tightest state spending cap in the nation, which has played a major role in keeping the Texas budget balanced and preventing runaway state spending. That discipline must continue.

I have also seen firsthand how cutting unnecessary regulations saves money and improves outcomes. As Chair of the Senate Business & Commerce Committee for five years, and especially during COVID, we reduced red tape to keep businesses operating and Texans working.

Texas DOGE builds on that same conservative principle: use modern tools, smart oversight, and limited government to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely. Leveraging technology to expose waste and fraud is not about growing government—it's about making government leaner, more transparent, and more accountable to the people it serves.

Unfortunately, fraud will always be an issue, and it must be addressed aggressively. Currently, I am working with the Attorney General and the Texas Rangers to audit fraud at the City of Elgin and Texas Southern University. These are current examples, but my office audits state agencies and universities on a regular basis.

That said, I believe the Comptroller should have stronger audit authority. If I am retained as Comptroller, passing legislation to expand audit authority to local governments— (cities, counties, and ISDs) will be a top priority. Texas has a serious local debt problem, totaling over half a trillion dollars, and we must rein in spending while ensuring taxpayer dollars are being used lawfully and responsibly.

BY RETURNING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE, THE CANDIDATE ASSUMES FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. THE ANSWERS ON THE FOREGOING REFLECT THE CANDIDATE'S BEST EFFORTS TO ANSWER THIS QUESTIONNAIRE HONESTLY AND DIRECTLY.

PLEASE SAVE YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO YOUR LOCAL MACHINE IN THE EVENT THAT THERE ARE ANY TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WHEN YOU ATTEMPT TO EMAIL IT BACK.

Once this questionnaire has been completed, please email it to:

alex@cchc-pac.org