



Date: January 24, 2019

To: Interested parties

From: Stanley Greenberg, Democracy Corps & Greenberg Research

First national poll shows electorate even more polarized, politicized, and determined to vote

Unsurprisingly, our first survey of 2019, conducted during the government shutdown, shows those saying the country is on the wrong track up sharply since the November election. This is a stunning start to the new year. Since Trump took office, voters were only more pessimistic in October 2017 when the Republicans made their last heave to repeal ‘Obamacare.’¹ All politicians and parties have taken a hit, but with hints of a very different electoral moment.

The net favorability of Republicans in Congress is down to net negative 14 points, the Democrats in Congress are down to net negative 4 points, Donald Trump to net negative 10 points, and Majority Leader McConnell, the most unpopular of all, is down 8 points to net negative 21 points.² The one exception is Speaker Pelosi who has improved her position by 8 points to a net favorability of negative 10.

The despair with politicians and their handling of the shutdown, however, is not producing despair with politics. Exactly the opposite. This first national poll looking at the 2020 General Election finds an electorate that is even more polarized, politicized, and determined to vote at levels we have never seen before in our polling. Just months after the midterm, voters look set to finish the job. Voters on both sides of the political spectrum are putting their heads down and pushing ahead to join what all hope is the last battle.

President Trump has the support of 40 percent of the country no matter what. In our poll, 42 percent approve of his performance in the midst of the shutdown, and that has been in his default number in nearly all of our polls from the beginning of his presidency. The Republicans base of the Tea Party, Evangelicals and conservative Catholics know that the President is their last hope in the war against PC-thinking and a multicultural, immigrant America. If a wall with Mexico is what he wants, then get out of the way, they say.

They are determined to vote to defend their President in 2020: an amazing 81 percent of those voting for Donald Trump in 2020 put their level of interest at the highest point on the one-to-ten

¹ This survey phone survey took place January 12-17 among 1,000 registered voters nationally. Margin of error for the full sample is +/-3.2 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Of the 1,000 respondents, 67 percent were interviewed via cell phone in order to accurately sample the American electorate.

² Net favorability – total warm, favorable views minus total cool, unfavorable views.

ladder scale, 6 points more than for those voting for the Democrat in 2020.

But the bigger bloc of voters is determined to resist Donald Trump's Republican Party, and they seem set on disrupting electoral politics in their own way, accelerating the trends that were so evident in the 2018 blue wave. That disruption is clear even now in these powerful developments:

- ***The Democratic margin is growing.*** Democrats prevailed by 8.6 points nationally in 2018, and in this first poll of 2019, the Democratic candidate for President is ahead by 10 points, 51 to 41 percent, with 5 percent volunteering third party candidates. (Just 3 percent are undecided in a generic presidential ballot against Trump.) That leaves the Trump vote 5 points short of 2016, which would push him back dramatically back behind the Electoral College blue wall. He is losing independents by 11 points and is losing a quarter of moderate Republicans.
- ***Voters are nationalized politically.*** Fully 92 percent of those who voted for Democrats in 2018 are voting for a Democratic presidential candidate, and 90 percent of those who voted Republican in 2018 are voting for Donald Trump in 2020. All voters of both camps have fully polarized and translating their preferences nationally.
- ***The re-alignment continues.*** The Democratic candidate is winning Hispanics 62 to 32 percent, millennials 64 to 26 percent, millennial women by a daunting 79 to 16 percent, unmarried women 71 to 22 percent, and even white unmarried women by a two-to-one margin (62 to 30 percent). Every one of those numbers in the Rising American Electorate pushes the 2018 blue wave a step further.
- ***White working class women are sending a message.*** They currently give the Democrat a 3-point lead over Donald Trump, 49 to 46 percent.
- ***Historic level of engagement already.*** The most stunning development is the historic level of voter engagement in the first month of the election of the cycle. The percentage who say they are following the election at the highest possible level is already higher than in the last months of 2018 midterms that produced historic levels of off-year turnout. The high level of engagement recorded here for registered voters exceeds what we received for likely voters in 2016. So, by our standard definition of likely voters in a presidential election, we show virtually all registered voters as likely voters. This suggests an historic level of turnout in 2020.

Based on the results of this first survey of 2019, the battle of 2018 will carry forward with an even more engaged, more re-aligned and politicized country, to produce an election like nothing we have seen before.