



Engagious

FPG Focus Pointe
Global

SWING VOTER PROJECT (SVP) REPORT FOR APRIL 2019



OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH:

Engagious conducted a focus group in Bowling Green, OH with 12 swing voters on April 9, 2019. Six voted for President Obama in 2012 and then President Trump in 2016, and six voted for Mitt Romney in 2012 and then Hillary Clinton in 2016. We explored questions and topics surrounding the President, Democrats seeking their party's nomination, and 2020 policy issues more broadly.

DISCLAIMER

The key findings in this report are based upon the opinions and feedback from 12 swing voters in one location. They are not a representative sample, nor should they be viewed as such.

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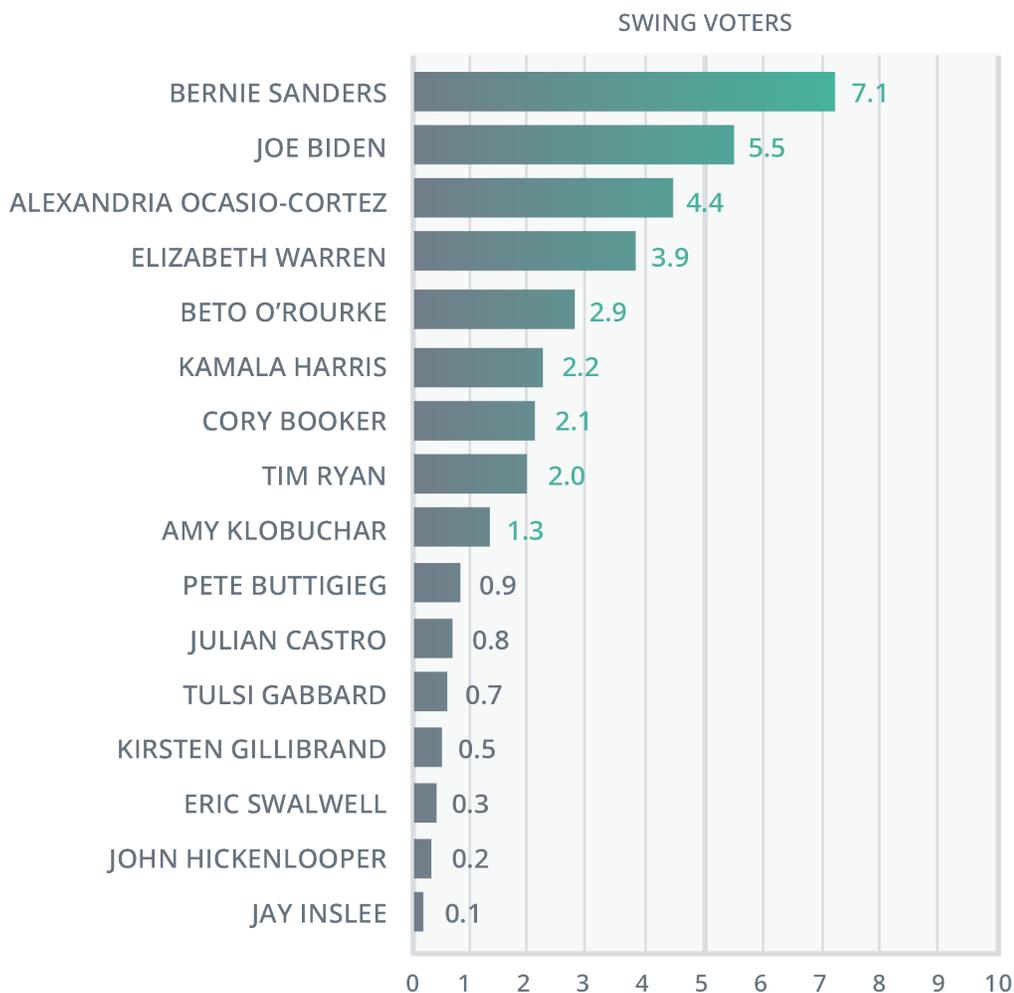
Example: "30% of female respondents disagreed with the medicare statement" (according to research conducted by Engagious)

1

SANDERS AND BIDEN ARE THE MOST RECOGNIZABLE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT; THE OTHER CANDIDATES HAVEN'T GAINED TRACTION. REP. ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ IS MORE RECOGNIZABLE AMONG SWING VOTERS THAN 13 OF THE 15 DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT WE ASKED THEM ABOUT.

Near the beginning of the session, we asked swing voters to tell us how confident they were that they could identify by photo the Democratic candidates seeking the nomination to challenge President Trump next year. Respondents indicated with their dials on a scale from zero to 10 their level of confidence. Zero means they were not at all confident they knew who the candidate is, and 10 means they were totally confident they knew who the candidate is.

The following chart shows the results, on average, in descending order:



**JOE BIDEN:**

Respondents said he was Obama's VP, he's a former U.S. Senator from Delaware, his son has died in the past few years, he talks with his hands, and he has gotten attention lately for his behavior around women.

**BERNIE SANDERS:**

Respondents said he is a socialist who is popular with young people (in part because he believes in free education), he lost the last election (Democrats pushed him out), and he doesn't have good ideas about how to pay for his public policy ideas.

**KAMALA HARRIS:**

Only two swing voters were familiar with her. They knew she was a prosecutor in California and now she serves in the U.S. Senate from that state.

**ELIZABETH WARREN:**

Some indicated they have seen her, knowing her as a "strong, outspoken woman." None were familiar with the public policy issue that made her famous.

2

SWING VOTERS AREN'T PARTICULARLY EXCITED ABOUT ANY OF THE LIKELY DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT BUT THAT WOULD CHANGE IF A CANDIDATE WITH THE LAST NAME OBAMA DECIDED TO RUN.

The only two likely candidates that generated any excitement were: Joe Biden (3 of the 12) and Bernie Sanders (1 of the 12). When asked if there was someone not currently running for the Democratic nomination that they wish would run, half of the group named President Obama. When the topic was discussed later, half the group also named Michelle Obama as someone they would like to see run.

Additionally, Howard Schultz did not register at all with the group. Every one of the swing voters registered zero (on a scale from 0 – 10) when asked how confident they were that they knew who he was after seeing his photo.

3

SWING VOTERS BELIEVE THAT, ON AVERAGE, OUR COUNTRY IS MOVING SLIGHTLY IN THE WRONG DIRECTION (4.5 OUT OF 10); REGARDING OHIO'S DIRECTION, SWING VOTERS WERE EVEN LESS OPTIMISTIC (3.2 OUT OF 10).

Respondents lamented the division in our country and the focus on what President Trump is saying or doing, rather than the focus being on the bigger picture, the country as a whole. Interestingly, while the Obama-Trump and Romney-Clinton voters disagree on the direction of our country (the former say it's the right direction, the latter the wrong direction), they agree on Ohio's direction: wrong. In Ohio, there is a sense that the state is trailing behind the rest of the country and not living up to its full potential. One cited the opioid crisis, and another said state money is not being spent wisely.

4

SWING VOTERS TOLD US THEIR PRIORITIES IF THEY COULD CHOOSE WHICH OF OUR COUNTRY'S PROBLEM THEY WOULD LIKE TO EARMARK THEIR TAXES TO ADDRESS.

We asked the group to allocate tax dollars to address a problem facing our country, knowing that other taxpayers would be earmarking their taxes for the same problem.

The issues swing voters in Bowling Green selected were: IMPROVING EDUCATION, HOMELESSNESS, HUNGER, THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC, OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, VETERANS, AND CLEAN ENERGY RESOURCES.



5

THE SWING VOTERS FELT JOE BIDEN HELPED HIS CASE WITH THE VIDEO HE RELEASED IN RESPONSE TO THE ALLEGATIONS HE MADE SOME WOMEN HE ENCOUNTERED FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE.

Six of the 12 swing voters had heard about Biden in the news over the past week. During the session, we showed Biden's online video response to recent allegations about inappropriate behavior around women, and asked respondents to provide feedback, both moment-to-moment in a dial test, and after the video. During the video, respondents indicated in real time they somewhat to strongly liked what Biden said, on a zero to 100 scale of dislike/like. Romney-Clinton voters liked what Biden said a bit more than the Obama-Trump voters.

After the video, on a zero to 10 scale of "he hurt his case a lot" to "he helped his case a lot," respondents' overall average was 6.8/10.

Those who believe Biden's video "helped a lot" told us he admitted he wasn't respecting others' personal space, and he recognizes that times have changed. Respondents in the group believe that with advances in technology, people want more personal space these days than in the past.

A respondent who believes Biden hurt his case said the former VP talked only about what he needs to start doing, and failed to address his past behavior.

Prior to the focus group, only three of the 12 respondents had seen any part of the video. After watching it during our session, only two of 12 believe Biden "is too old to be President."

6

THERE IS A SENSE AMONG SWING VOTERS THAT OUR COUNTRY HAS SHIFTED OFF COURSE. DEMOCRATS RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE A CONTRASTING VISION ABOUT WHAT OUR COUNTRY COULD BE "AGAIN." ONE SLOGAN THAT GAINED TRACTION IN THE GROUP WAS "MAKE AMERICA AMERICA AGAIN"—WHICH CAPTURES THE IDEA THAT WE NEED A RETURN TO NORMALCY.

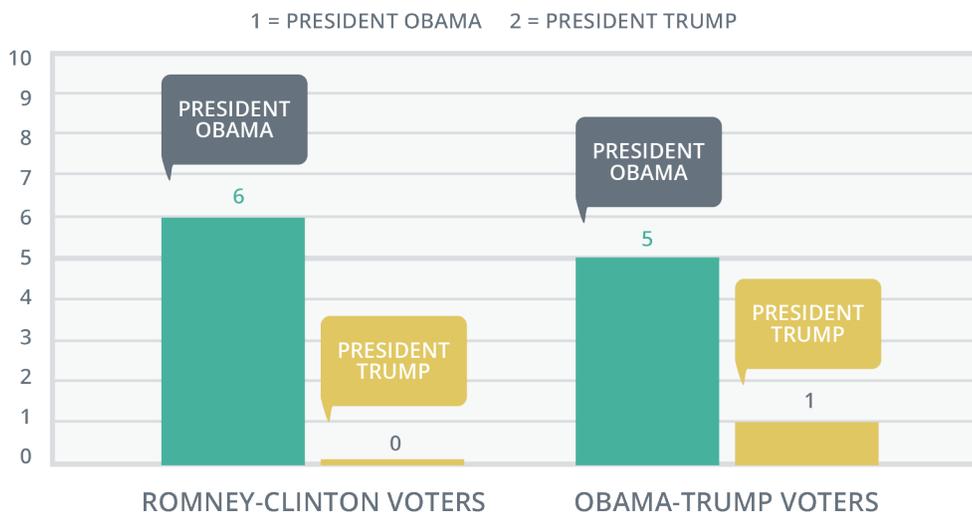
During the session, we asked swing voters to provide a contrasting slogan to President Trump's "Make America Great Again" that a Democrat running for President could run on in 2020. We asked them to fill in the blank: Make America ____ Again. The most popular response was "Make America America Again." Other responses included normal, inspired, equal, fair, whole, and passionate.

7

IF THE 2016 ELECTION WERE HELD AGAIN TOMORROW, SWING VOTERS OVERWHELMINGLY WOULD'VE VOTED FOR THE SAME CANDIDATE AGAIN – MOST DRIVEN BY A VOTE AGAINST THE OPPOSING CANDIDATE RATHER THAN A VOTE IN SUPPORT OF THE CANDIDATE THEY VOTED FOR.

During the session, we asked:

Consider the following **hypothetical** scenario in the 2020 election: Imagine the U.S. Constitution didn't prevent Presidents from serving a third term, and former President Obama became the Democratic nominee. He would be challenging President Trump's bid for re-election. In that scenario, for which candidate would you vote?



Among Obama-Trump voters, we heard that President Obama is a more diplomatic person who presents himself as an intellectual. Also, we heard that our country “needs a sense of calmness” that we had under President Obama that is lacking under President Trump.

Only one Obama-Trump voter said she would switch her vote from Trump to Clinton. All other swing voters in the group said they would vote for the same candidate they did in 2016.

When the group was asked if an election was held tomorrow and they were given the options of voting for President Trump or President Obama (for a third term), five of the six Obama-Trump voters would flip and vote for President Obama. Six of the six Romney-Clinton voters said they would vote for President Obama as well.

8

IF SWING VOTERS WERE IN PRESIDENT TRUMP'S POSITION, THEY WOULD NOT BE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED IF ANY OF THE YOUNG PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES GOT NOMINATED AS HIS DEMOCRATIC OPPONENT IN 2020. THEY BELIEVE AMONG THE FOUR CANDIDATES, PRESIDENT TRUMP SHOULD BE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT BETO O'ROURKE. BUT EVEN O'ROURKE WAS NOT VIEWED AS MUCH OF A THREAT.

We showed respondents about two minutes of a campaign ad or speech from four young Democratic candidates for President. When asked how concerned they would be about having each person as an opponent if they were in President Trump's position, on a scale from zero to 10 (not at all concerned to very concerned), swing voters, on average, believe President Trump should be most concerned about Beto O'Rourke (5.7/10), followed by Julian Castro (3.8/10), Pete Buttigieg (3.8/10), and Tulsi Gabbard (2.1/10).

We asked respondents for their quick impression of each of the candidates.

Tulsi Gabbard, who appeared in a campaign launch ad, was described as "weak," "negative," "mono-tone," as well as generally uninspiring and uncharismatic.

Pete Buttigieg, who also appeared in a campaign launch ad, was described as "positive," "engaging," "inexperienced," and having a "low-budget" video presentation.

Beto O'Rourke, who sat beside his wife in a campaign launch statement, was described as "awkward," "sounds angry," "overdramatic," someone trying to "offer too much," tells you "what you want to hear," "unrealistic," and "boring." Also, one thought his wife looked "creepy" sitting silently at his side in the video, which they viewed as "low-budget."

Julian Castro, who spoke at a campaign rally, was "factual" and "liked education," but was seen as "self-absorbed," "boring," a "one-trick pony," and someone who was "over-acting."



9

SWING VOTERS WERE FAIRLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN LIGHT OF THE FOUR YOUNG PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES RUNNING. EVEN SO, HALF BELIEVE THAT TO DEFEAT PRESIDENT TRUMP IN 2020, THE PARTY SHOULD NOMINATE SOMEONE ELSE.

After watching a campaign video from each of the four young presidential candidates, we asked swing voters to rate on a scale from zero to 10 how they feel about the Democratic Party's future, from very dim to very bright. The average score was 7.1/10.

However, when asked which Democrat is the one person most likely to beat President Trump, they told us they would nominate some other candidate (6), Julian Castro (3), Beto O'Rourke (2), and Pete Buttigieg (1). No one would nominate Tulsi Gabbard. Julian Castro garnered the most support with this question because respondents liked his focus on education and how he pursued the support of the people for one of his policy ideas as the mayor of San Antonio.

10

SWING VOTERS STRONGLY SUPPORT CONGRESSIONAL DEMOCRATS' REQUEST TO RECEIVE THE ENTIRE UNREDACTED, 400-PAGE MUELLER REPORT ALTHOUGH INTEREST IN THE REPORT ITSELF IS LOW.

The swing voter group was strongly in favor of getting the full Mueller Report in front of the Democrats citing transparency and the potential for further investigations as main reasons. But the group admitted that the issues surrounding the report do not matter much to them personally, nor have they paid close attention to the findings, nor do they intend to read whatever version of the Report that is released to the public.

Additionally, only 4 of the 12 respondents knew that, "According to U.S. Attorney General William Barr, there was no coordination between the Trump campaign and the Russians in the 2016 election."

Also, 6 of the 12 didn't know or falsely believed that, "According to U.S. Attorney General William Barr, Rober Mueller's report completely and totally exonerates President Trump from any possible wrong doing." Some swing voters believe that Democrats want to read the report and use it against Trump. Some just want to move on.



11

SWING VOTERS WERE MODESTLY SUPPORTIVE OF CONGRESSIONAL DEMOCRATS SEEKING THE LAST SIX YEARS OF PRESIDENT TRUMP'S TAX RETURNS.

Some questioned how Democrats having that information would help them personally. As a matter of principle, fewer than half of swing voters thought it was important for Democrats running for President to release their tax returns.

12

OVERALL, SWING VOTERS SLIGHTLY OPPOSE THE IDEA OF IMPEACHING PRESIDENT TRUMP AND REMOVING HIM FROM OFFICE, RATING IT AT 4.8/10 ON A ZERO TO 10 SCALE, WITH ZERO MEANING STRONGLY OPPOSE AND 10 MEANING STRONGLY SUPPORT. MOST BELIEVE IT WOULD NOT BE A WISE POLITICAL MOVE FOR THE DEMOCRATS HEADING INTO 2020.

Obama-Trump voters oppose impeachment (2.0/10), while Romney-Clinton voters support it (7.7/10). Among swing voters who oppose impeachment, we heard it is a long and complicated process and it is unlikely that it would be done before the 2020 election. In their view, it would be best to defeat President Trump at the ballot box. Those who oppose President Trump told us that if he were impeached, Vice-President Pence would become President and he would be more difficult to defeat in 2020, so we should keep President Trump in office with the hopes of defeating him in 2020. Ten of 12 swing voters agreed it would not be a wise political move for Democrats to impeach President Trump.

SWING VOTERS



13

EVEN IF THE ECONOMY IS STRONG IN NOVEMBER 2020, PRESIDENT TRUMP IS VULNERABLE TO THE IDEA THAT THINGS IN AMERICA DON'T FEEL NORMAL AND SWING VOTERS FEEL A CHANGE IS NEEDED TO RETURN TO NORMAL.

During the focus group, we asked swing voters to tell us how much they agreed or disagreed with the following two statements, on a zero to 10 scale. Zero means they totally disagreed, and 10 means they totally agreed.

For the top statement, respondents told us new information could come out that would contribute to how they view President Trump. For example, one respondent remarked that if we find out President Trump was part of a conspiracy to unfairly win the presidential election, that matters. We also heard that it's not only how the economy is doing in November 2020, but which direction it's moving at that time (i.e., we could have a good, but weakening economy). Importantly, Obama-Trump voters are much more likely to agree with the first statement (7.2/10) than Romney-Clinton voters (4.0/10).

Swing voters, on average, scored the second statement higher, but some Obama-Trump voters did not agree with it. Among those who scored this statement low, one said Trump's replacement could be worse, and we don't know who the next President would be. For them, the media play a big role, with a lot of what our leaders are doing not being represented properly. For example, one said Presidents Obama and Trump have taken similar approaches on immigration, but the public believes President Trump is much worse on the issue because that's how the media portrays him. The split on this statement was massive, with Romney-Clinton voters at 9.5/10, and Obama-Trump voters at 3.8.



14

THIS SWING VOTER GROUP ISN'T FEELING THE "BOOMING" ECONOMY.

These swing voters believe that for them and their families, on average, the economy has gotten slightly worse since Donald Trump became president, rating it a 4.6 out of 10 on a scale from 0 ("Gotten much worse") to 10 ("Gotten much better"). For America overall, their perception isn't much better, believing the economy has only gotten slightly better (5.1 out of 10) since Donald Trump became President.

Despite the high stock market and low unemployment, not one person in the focus group would describe our economy as "booming." With their negativity surrounding the economy, three respondents told us they would prefer that America have an economic system of socialism over capitalism in the future. None of the respondents said that he/she had seen a noticeable increase in wages since Trump took office, and only one knew a long-term unemployed person who found work since Trump became President.

15

SWING VOTERS HAVE ONLY A SLIGHTLY POSITIVE VIEW, ON AVERAGE, OF LARGE AMERICAN CORPORATIONS. WHEN ASKED TO RATE THEM ON A ZERO TO 10 SCALE OF "VERY BAD FOR AMERICA" TO "VERY GOOD FOR AMERICA," THEY SCORED IT 5.3 OUT OF 10.

Swing voters said that large American corporations received tax breaks and were supposed to use that money to invest in people, but it didn't work out that way. They don't want to see workers taken advantage of—and some would like to see more of the wealth dispersed among the employees who are helping to build the business.



16

TWO-THIRDS OF OUR BOWLING GREEN SWING VOTERS BELIEVE THAT IN AMERICA TODAY, PEOPLE WITH A NET WORTH OF MORE THAN \$1 MILLION SHOULD PAY MORE IN TAXES THAN THEY DO NOW. THE REST BELIEVE THEY SHOULD PAY THE SAME IN TAXES AS THEY DO NOW.

There was a general sense in the room that the rich have the money and they can afford to pay more. In addition, some were troubled by the disparity in how income is taxed, with a larger share of the wealthy's income coming from capital gains, which are taxed at a lower rate than earned income.

17

MOST SWING VOTERS HAVE NOT BEEN PAYING ATTENTION TO PRESIDENT TRUMP'S EFFORTS TO REPLACE NAFTA.

Only one of 12 respondents knew that President Trump's administration negotiated a replacement trade deal for NAFTA—and a majority didn't know whether Congress should approve it, even if it contains changes including stronger labor rules and stronger intellectual property protections than NAFTA.

18

FIVE SWING VOTERS WERE FAMILIAR WITH PRESIDENT TRUMP'S EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE A NEW TRADE DEAL WITH CHINA, BUT THEY WERE NOT CONFIDENT THAT THE TRADE AGREEMENT THE ADMINISTRATION IS NEGOTIATING WOULD BRING REAL BENEFITS TO U.S. WORKERS.

On a zero to 10 scale, from not at all confident to very confident, they scored it at 2.9/10. In a trade deal with China, they are hoping for better wages for American workers.

19

A SLIGHT MAJORITY OF SWING VOTERS DISAGREES WITH THE IDEA THAT PAID FAMILY LEAVE SHOULD BE PAID FOR AND RUN BY THE GOVERNMENT, WITH FIVE SUPPORTING THE IDEA AND SEVEN OPPOSING IT.

In the focus group, one respondent said it should be the corporation's responsibility to provide family leave, not the government's. But there was a general sense in the group that corporations are "abusing" their workers—and paid family leave would help them.



20

SWING VOTERS' PERCEPTION IS THAT UNEXPECTED OUT-OF-POCKET HEALTHCARE BILLS IS A PROBLEM FOR OTHERS AND GENERALLY GETTING WORSE. WHILE ONLY ONE SWING VOTER BELIEVES POLITICIANS ARE ADDRESSING THIS CONCERN; SIX DISAGREE, AND FIVE DON'T KNOW.

We asked how problematic this is for them personally vs. Americans generally, on a zero to 10 scale from not at all problematic to very problematic. Interestingly, they believe this is much more of a problem for Americans generally (8.3/10) than for them personally (4.8./10).

21

MOST SWING VOTERS ARE GOOD WITH THEIR CURRENT HEALTH COVERAGE, BUT, IF NEED BE, ARE WILLING TO PAY HIGHER PREMIUMS FOR MORE COVERAGE.

A slight majority of swing voters (7 out of 12) say they are "Completely Satisfied" with their health insurance. Additionally, when given the choice between paying more in insurance premiums for more coverage or paying less in insurance premiums for less coverage, nine of 12 swing voters would choose to pay higher insurance premiums for more coverage.



22

SWING VOTERS DO NOT SEE THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AS THE “PARTY OF HEALTHCARE” BUT THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE TRANSPARENCY IN THE SYSTEM.

This swing voter group believes there is a lack of cost transparency in our healthcare system and would like that to change. Not knowing how much hospital visit out-of-pocket costs worries swing voters the most (6); followed by not knowing the cost for filling a new drug prescription (3); and not knowing the cost for a specialist doctor visit (3). None of our swing voters were most concerned about not knowing the cost a family doctor visit.

For the type of scenario that would worry our swing voters the most, they indicated that they would highly value having price information before receiving treatment, scoring it 8.8 out of 10 (on a 0 to 10 scale of value).

23

SWING VOTERS, ON AVERAGE, SLIGHTLY OPPOSE THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION’S MOVE OF ASKING A FEDERAL COURT TO INVALIDATE THE ENTIRE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT, ALSO KNOWN AS OBAMACARE.

Obama-Trump voters were much more supportive of the Administration’s position (6.7/10) than Romney-Clinton voters, who generally opposed it (3.0/10).

24

SWING VOTERS ARE RELATIVELY UNFAMILIAR WITH RECENT DEMOCRATIC INITIATIVES LIKE GREEN NEW DEAL AND MEDICARE FOR ALL.

Swing voters haven't heard much about the "Green New Deal," scoring it an average of 3.5 out of 10 on a scale from 0 ("Heard no news at all) to 10 ("Heard a large amount of news"). From what they know, they view the concept very unfavorably, scoring it a 2.4 out of 10.

Swing voters, on average, haven't heard much about the "Medicare for All" concept, scoring it 4 out of 10 on a scale from 0 ("Heard no news at all) to 10 ("Heard a large amount of news").

25

SWING VOTERS, ON AVERAGE, STRONGLY AGREE THAT, COMPARED TO WHEN THEY WERE YOUNGER, THE WEATHER IN RECENT YEARS SEEMS WEIRD (7.9 OUT OF 10) AND CERTAIN MONTHS SEEM WARMER NOW (8.1 OUT OF 10). THEY WANT PRESIDENT TRUMP TO TAKE THE PROBLEM OF CLIMATE CHANGE MORE SERIOUSLY.

They have noticed a change in the seasons (e.g., winter starting later and ending later), less snow, more fires, and "crazy" wind gusts. With the changes they have seen, they strongly agree that "President Trump should ensure the U.S. is better prepared for more-frequent extreme weather events" (7.3/10), and "President Trump should be taking the problem of climate change more seriously" (8.0/10). One way they believe he can do this is by rejoining the Paris Agreement. Most swing voters believe that we should take the proactive approach because in their view, not taking the necessary steps to prepare for more extreme weather and to prevent dramatic climate changes would cost more than taking the necessary steps.





26

SWING VOTERS, ON AVERAGE, STRONGLY DISAGREE WITH THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS TO ROLL BACK CLIMATE CHANGE REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTED UNDER THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION, SCORING IT 2.4 OUT OF 10. THEY DO NOT BELIEVE THOSE EFFORTS HAVE BEEN GOOD FOR THEM PERSONALLY.

27

SWING VOTERS AGREE FAIRLY STRONGLY, ON AVERAGE, THAT "PRESIDENT TRUMP SHOULD CALL FOR RAMPING-UP PRIVATE-SECTOR INNOVATION IN AMERICAN CLEAN ENERGY TO HELP REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS" 7.5 OUT OF 10.

28

WHEN ASKED IF THEY WOULD SUPPORT A PROPOSAL ON THE BALLOT NEXT YEAR, HYPOTHETICALLY, TO ADD A MONTHLY FEE TO CONSUMERS' ELECTRIC BILL TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE, WHICH WOULD COST THEIR HOUSEHOLD \$10 EVERY MONTH, SWING VOTERS WERE SPLIT—SIX WOULD SUPPORT IT AND SIX WOULD OPPOSE IT.

29

SWING VOTERS, ON AVERAGE, EXPRESSED MODEST SUPPORT FOR A POLICY TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GASES BY TAXING CARBON-BASED FUELS SUCH AS COAL, OIL, AND NATURAL GAS, SCORING IT 5.7 OUT OF 10 ON A SCALE OF 0 (STRONGLY OPPOSE) TO 10 (STRONGLY SUPPORT).