



2020 General Election Survey – February 2019

From January 30th through February 1st, we conducted a national survey of 2020 general election likely voters to have an early baseline read of potential matchups in the Fall of 2020, including the potential independent candidacy of Howard Schultz.

Based on these results, Biden begins as the strongest Democratic challenger tested. His high exposure and favorability push him to a 7-point edge in a head to head matchup, and 4-point edge with Schultz in the race. Other Democrats are slightly behind Trump, though Trump remains between 41-44% in each matchup and the number of undecideds is in double-digits due to a relative lack of exposure.

If Schultz officially enters the race, he begins with 6-9% of the popular vote in the matchups tested. He currently draws more support from voters who would otherwise vote for the Democratic nominee rather than those who would support Donald Trump. With only about half of likely voters being familiar with him and about half saying that they find success in business a favorable trait for a candidate, Schultz still has room to grow, though his net favorability currently sits at -22 among those who are familiar with him.

TOPLINES

Head to Head Ballot Tests:

- Joe Biden 50%, Donald Trump 43%, undecided 7%
- Donald Trump 45%, Kamala Harris 44%, undecided 12%

Three-way Ballot Tests:

- Joe Biden 45%, Donald Trump 41%, Howard Schultz 6%, undecided 8%
- Donald Trump 42%, Kamala Harris 38%, Howard Schultz 7%, undecided 13%
- Donald Trump 42%, Elizabeth Warren 39%, Howard Schultz 8%, undecided 11%
- Donald Trump 42%, Beto O'Rourke 33%, Howard Schultz 9%, undecided 16%

Candidate Favorability:

- Trump: 42% favorable, 51% unfavorable, 7% no opinion
- Biden: 44% favorable, 37% unfavorable, 19% no opinion

Schultz Prospects:

48% of likely voters say they are familiar with Howard Schultz.

Of those who are familiar, 18% have a favorable opinion of him, 40% have an unfavorable opinion, and 42% have no opinion.

At his highest, Schultz is currently securing 5.8% of Republicans, 11.6% of Democrats, and 11% of Independents by party registration.

50% say they would find a candidate with success in business more favorable, 25% say less favorable, and 26% say neither more or less favorable.

When asked who should lead the country forward, 39% say the Republican Party, 37% say the Democratic party, and 19% want a third option.

Policy Issues:

46% support the building of a wall on the US-Mexico border, 48% oppose the wall, and 5% are unsure.

60% support implementing a higher tax rate on individuals making over 10 million dollars a year, 28% oppose raising those taxes, and 12% are not sure.

36% support replacing our current healthcare insurance system with Medicare for all, 42% oppose such a move, and 22% are unsure.

23% say that the ongoing trade conflict between the US and China is having a positive effect on their state, 43% say negative effect, and 11% are unsure.

On the issue of abortion, 50% say they are pro-choice, 39% pro-life, and 11% are undecided.

MODELING

The sample was used to create preliminary models to attempt to identify the extent and profile of the Schultz base should he continue to expand it through targeted campaigning. The preliminary models suggest that as Schultz's base of support grows, the lopsided nature of his base towards Democrats rather than Republicans becomes more balanced. Potential Schultz voters are, as a universe, generally more educated and have a higher income than likely voters at large. 57% of potential Schultz voters are women.

We've run simulations to extrapolate how Schultz support would grow and how that might effect a general election in 2020 if the electorate resembles 2016. Early projections are ultimately not well calibrated, but at this point in the race do provide some thoughts on how Schultz might fare –

- The current ceiling: When you account for all undecided voters and those considering voting for Schultz or a 3rd option in general, the modeling suggests that the best case scenario for Schultz at this stage would be to win 31% of Republicans, 31% of Democrats, and 39% of Independents. In our simulation, this performance produces 33.3% of the popular vote and 22 Electoral College electors.

- Supplanting the Democratic nominee: If the Democratic nominee chosen is a scandal-plagued or particularly weak candidate, Schultz could in theory supplant the candidate as the de facto Democrat in the race, similar to the dynamic in several recent Senate races (Florida 2010, Maine 2012, Alaska 2010). A winning scenario for Schultz with this story arc would involve a coalition along the lines of 45% of Democrats, 22% of Republicans, and 42% of Independents; at this point, our simulation estimates Schultz at 276 Electoral College electors, with a tipping point state of Georgia.
- Supplanting Trump/the Republican nominee: If Donald Trump's candidacy is wounded or terminated early, the inverse scenario is also imaginable. A winning right-of-center coalition might resemble 47% of Republicans, 20% of Democrats, and 50% of Independents. In this simulation, Schultz would have 274 Electoral College electors, with a tipping point state of Texas.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

From January 30th through February 1st, we conducted a national survey of 2020 general election likely voters. Likely voters were defined as registered voters who had voted in at least one of the previous four general elections (2012-2018). The survey was conducted via both landlines (N=900) and cell phones (N=390). The sample selected was balanced based on age, gender, and party, and the survey results were later re-balanced on these same variables. Margin of error varies by question, but is generally $\pm 2.9\%$ for topline results.

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