

## Research Findings

### Iowa Voters Likely to Attend Democratic Presidential Caucus in 2020

October 1, 2018

#### Survey Findings: Voter Attitudes and Preferences on 2020

**Former Vice President Joe Biden has a wide lead among Democratic Iowans who intend to participate in the 2020 Democratic caucus. Elizabeth Warren, Bernie Sanders, and Kamala Harris are the only other candidates that currently receive double digit support.**

- 37% of likely Iowa Democratic caucus goers say they would choose Biden if the caucus were today. 16% choose Elizabeth Warren, 12% for Bernie Sanders, and 10% prefer Kamala Harris. Cory Booker receives support from 8%, while no other candidate receives more than 2%.
- Biden, Warren and Sanders are broadly popular among Democratic caucus goers in Iowa, with positive ratings from 94%, 85% and 84% respectively. Three other potential candidates receive over 50% positive ratings: Booker (68%), Eric Holder (58%), and Harris (52%). The only potential candidate who receives over 15% negative opinion is Attorney Michael Avenatti (29% positive and 18% negative.)

**Democratic caucus goers are adamantly opposed to Donald Trump, with 96% holding an unfavorable view.**

- Not only are 96% of likely Democratic caucus goers unfavorable on the President, 94% say they are *strongly* unfavorable, one of the highest percentages ever seen in polling on the favorability of a public figure.

**Democratic caucus goers are seeking a healer who will work with and listen to others.**

- Regarding desired characteristics of a Democratic Presidential candidate, Iowa Democratic caucus goers give the highest preferences to: someone known for making good judgments and working with and listening to others, someone who can heal the racial, ethnic and partisan divide, someone who believes in science, evidence and investing in research and innovation, and someone who will re-establish American leadership in the fight against climate change.
- A second tier of desired characteristics, still strongly desired, include: someone who will stand up for the middle class and address the high cost of living, someone with a record of taking on big corporations and lobbyists on behalf of the people, and someone who will support the expanding of cleaner-burning renewable fuels, like ethanol.
- The only tested characteristic that was viewed as important by less than a majority of the likely caucus goers is someone who brings experience and values from outside of Washington DC, as voters now tilt more toward candidates that have served in elective office and know how to work with others to get things done.

**Iowa Democratic caucus have slight preferences for younger candidates than older ones, and members of Congress over Governors or Mayors.**

- By 48% to 32%, Iowa Democratic caucus goers state they prefer a younger candidate with fresh ideas who's not from Washington rather than an older candidate who has a lifetime of experience in Washington.
- By 41% to 31%, Iowa Democratic caucus goers prefer someone who is a Senator or member of Congress to someone who is a Mayor or Governor.

**There is a strong preference for candidates who will compromise to get things done.**

- When asked to choose between a candidate who will compromise to get things done or a candidate who sticks to their values and beliefs, 61% prefer the compromiser. Clearly, voters want both, but when forced to choose, they come down on the side of getting things done.

**Iowa Democratic caucus goers also prefer a candidate who will stand up for the values and issue of rural America, and will support expanding the availability of cleaner-burning renewable fuels, like ethanol.**

- Between 60% to 70% find these qualities very important or absolutely critical in seeking a Democratic Presidential nominee.

## Focus Group Findings

**Anger with with Trump dominates all focus groups conversation, and all considerations regarding the direction of the country and the 2020 contest are colored by profound distaste for the President.**

- Democratic voters are most concerned with: Trump's Supreme Court pick (and abortion and gay rights along with this), threats to healthcare, immigration policy, and the environment.
- Voters are concerned about the country moving backward on social issues, and changing from being a society that is about helping other people. Voters worry that Trump is giving people license to act with hate and disrespect.
- The Republican tax cut is seen as benefitting the wealthy and corporations and not the middle class.

**Voters believe that Trump is hurting Iowa, primarily because of tariffs, which are negatively impacting Iowa farmers.**

- Trump's endorsement of coal and oil over wind and ethanol is seen as negatively impacting Iowa.
- When voters are given a choice between between ethanol and oil, they clearly see the economic and environmental benefits of ethanol and would want more ethanol production over oil production.
- Ethanol is seen as an important part of the farm economy in Iowa.

**Thinking about 2020, voters want a) someone new and b) someone with experience.**

- Several note that, because of Trump, more people are becoming politically active and motivated to make a change.

**Voters agree that 2020 Democratic candidates should not write off rural Iowa voters.**

## Methodology

### Survey Methodology:

David Binder Research conducted 500 interviews by cell phone and landline from September 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 with registered voters in Iowa who stated they were likely to participate in the Democratic Presidential caucuses of 2020. All participants were recruited from official Iowa voter lists.

Results are subject to a margin of error of no greater than  $\pm 4.4\%$ .

### Focus Group Methodology:

Four focus groups with likely Democratic caucusers were conducted in Cedar Rapids on July 11, 2018 and Des Moines on July 12, 2018.