



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on November 6, 2019

Biden Claims Latest Poll Shows Him the Best Candidate to Beat Trump in 2020

Following the release of poll results by the *New York Times* on Monday Democrat presidential candidate Joe Biden used the results to raise funds for his campaign: “[This poll] speaks for itself. If Joe Biden wins the primary, he can beat Trump in a general election. The other candidates can’t.”



Unfortunately those results from the *New York Times*, which teamed up with Siena College, were much more ambiguous than Biden claims, and those likely to go to the polls next year are no doubt going to give the president a second term regardless of whom the Democrats nominate to oppose him in the general election next year.

The poll of nearly 3,800 registered voters from October 13 to 26 focused on the six “battleground” or “swing” states that Trump won in 2016, to see how the electoral battle is currently being played out there: Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Florida, Arizona, and North Carolina. Trump’s win in each of those states was pivotal to his winning the election in the Electoral College in spite of losing the popular vote by two percent.

The pollsters distinguished between “registered” voters and “likely” voters, and when “registered” voters were asked how Trump would fare against Biden, Trump lost in five of those states, winning only North Carolina. The margins varied between two and five percentage points. But when “likely” voters were asked the same question, though Biden still won in five states, the margins were much closer: just one to two percent, well within the poll’s 2.5-percent margin of error.

When the pollsters asked “registered” voters how Trump would fare against Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren, Trump eked out wins against Sanders in three of those swing states, winning three against Warren, as well (with Warren winning just one and tying in the other two).

But when pollsters asked “likely” voters how the president would fare against Sanders or Warren, Trump buried both Democrat hopefuls in all but one state (Michigan, which Sanders won by three points).

Some have suggested that polling this far ahead of the general election in November 2020 means little, especially in highly polarized times like these. Not so, said the *Times*: “On average, over the last three [presidential election] cycles, head-to-head polls a year ahead of the election have been as close to the final result as those taken the day before [the election].”

The *Times* drew its own conclusions from its poll: “[It] offers little evidence that any Democrat, including Mr. Biden, has made substantial progress toward winning back the white working-class voters



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who defected to the president in 2016.... All the leading Democrat candidates trail in the precincts or counties that voted for Barack Obama and then flipped to Mr. Trump.” Added the *Times*:

As a result, Democrats appear to have made little progress in reclaiming their traditional advantage in the Northern battleground states, despite their sweep there in the 2018 midterms.

The *Times* held that Biden’s claim that the poll “speaks for itself” about beating “Trump in a general election” is very thin:

While Mr. Biden ranks as the strongest Democrat in the swing states polled, the findings are not necessarily great news for him, either. His appeal to Democrats hinges on the view that he’s a safe bet against the president, yet his lead against Mr. Trump is not nearly so comfortable that he could be considered a sure thing [next November].

It scarcely needs mentioning that this poll was taken while the House was ginning up its faux impeachment efforts, following nearly three years of incessant and continuing attacks on the president by the mainstream media. If the House does in fact move ahead and impeach the president, it could have the same effect on the electorate next November that it did when President Bill Clinton was impeached in 1998. In the midterms that year and the general election in 2000 Republicans lost seats in the House as Clinton’s public-approval ratings improved.

With this poll showing Trump currently in a virtual tie with any of his likely Democrat opponents, any boost from impeachment will likely secure him a second term next November.

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