



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on June 7, 2019

Democratic Presidential Candidates Fight for Nomination

Struggling to overcome her early “Pocahontas” gaffe, Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) has begun to move up in the polls, emphasizing specific policies to appeal to the left-wing base in the party, while former Representative Beto O’Rourke (D-Texas) is falling in the polls, as his campaign style he used against Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) is not resonating among the party’s progressives.



A new poll, the Reuters/Ipsos poll, found that former Vice President Joe Biden continues to lead the field of 24 Democrats, with 31-percent support. The poll was conducted online.

Trailing far behind, in second place, was Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), at 14 percent, with Warren in third place, at nine percent. Senator Kamala Harris (D-California), with six percent, edged out South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who had five percent.

O’Rourke, who at one time appeared to be an up-and-coming darling for the Democrats following his strong race for a U.S. Senate seat against Ted Cruz in 2018, now has a mere three-percent support, half of what he had been getting only a month earlier. “Beto’s having a tough time making the transition” to national politics, argued Mark Jones, who studies Texas politics at Houston’s Rice University.

In 2018, O’Rourke raised an astounding amount of money for a Senate race — in excess of \$70 million — in his contest against Cruz. But in that race, not only were all the activist Democrats in Texas united against Cruz, as the choice was either Cruz or O’Rourke, money poured into his campaign coffers from liberals all over the country, because his opponent was Cruz. Cruz ran a strong race for president in the 2016 primaries, eventually finishing second to the Republican nominee, Donald Trump. This made Cruz a high-profile target for Democrats, but now that Democrats have 23 other choices besides O’Rourke to pick from for a race against Trump, O’Rourke’s “glittering generalities” style of campaigning is not selling in the Democratic field.

The Democratic grass-roots want specifics, which explains Warren’s rise in the polls, who is emphasizing more specific policy positions. While Warren hopes to ultimately be the party nominee against Trump, she must first win the Democratic Party nomination. Right now, Joe Biden is leading the polls for that honor, but before she can concentrate on Biden in order to take on Trump, Warren must win a sort of intramural primary among the hard-core Left in the party against Sanders and Harris in order to emerge as the more progressive alternative to Biden.

For his part, Sanders wants to eventually inherit Warren’s left-wing backers, and is avoiding attacking her. In April, Sanders responded to a question at the CNN town hall by saying, “Elizabeth [Warren] and I end up agreeing on a whole lot of issues.”

That is no doubt true. Their differences appear to be more semantical than real. Sanders — who kept a Soviet flag in his office while serving as a mayor in Vermont and spent his honeymoon in Moscow during the height of the Cold War — proudly proclaims that he is a democratic socialist, and rejects the arguments for a free-enterprise system. Warren, on the other hand, calls herself a progressive, but also



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a capitalist who simply wants to enact laws to protect the public from corporations.

Warren wants to tax “the ultra-wealthy” and use that money to offer universal childcare, invest in the so-called green economy, enact Medicare for All, pay off all student loans, and offer “free” college tuition. Of course, there is no such thing as a free lunch. Someone always pays for it, and the “ultra-wealthy” simply don’t have enough money to pay for all of her grandiose schemes (which means the tab will, as with all socialist systems, be picked up by middle-class Americans). Spending more money sums up Warren’s positions — she recently visited West Virginia and announced that she wanted to spend \$100 billion to combat opioid addiction.

In addition, Warren has called for codifying the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision and passing a law to provide for the legality of indicting a sitting president.

Harris also wants to claim the left-wing mantle, and needs to overtake Warren so as to challenge Sanders, so she can take on Biden, and finally, run against Trump. Another intramural primary going on between Harris and Warren is the contest to be a viable “woman” candidate within the Democratic Party primary. Because of the progressive emphasis on identity politics, such things as race and sex have become very important with many on the Left. Harris, of course, being an African American as well as a woman, would seem to check two of the identity politics “boxes.”

But because Democrats are so hungry to oust Trump, they are torn between the far-left candidates they really want and a candidate *perceived* as more middle-of-the-road, such as Joe Biden.

Of course, Biden is really not a moderate, but a politician who spent much of his political career offering more moderate rhetoric while supporting liberal policies. Lest one forget, it was Biden who first announced the shift of the Obama administration from support for traditional marriage (one man and one woman) to support for same-sex marriage.

As the campaign continues, Biden’s past problems, such as the plagiarism scandal that ended his 1988 presidential bid (in which he copied, almost word-for-word, a campaign speech by a socialist British politician) and his gaffes (such as asserting that President Franklin Roosevelt used TV to talk about the 1929 stock market crash, when FDR was not president until four years later, and there were no home television sets at the time) will come into play, along with his liberal record.

But for now, however, Biden is still the front-runner in this field of Democrats.

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