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Gallup Poll Shows Most Americans Would Not Vote for Socialist

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A Gallup Poll gauging Americans' preferences for unnamed presidential candidates released on February 11 indicated that a majority of those surveyed would not vote for a socialist candidate for president. When asked whether they would vote for their party's nominee who was a "generally well-qualified person for president who happened to be socialist," only 45 percent said "yes" and 53 percent said "no."



The survey, which was conducted from January 16-29, was entitled "Willingness to Vote for a Party's 'Well-Qualified' Candidate for President, Based on Candidate Characteristics." The question regarding a socialist candidate was the only one of several categories about which potential voters were questioned to receive a majority negative response. Other questions surveyed the participants' views about presidential candidates based on sex, age, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.

The last time Gallup asked survey participants if they would vote for a socialist for president, in June 2015, 47 percent answered affirmatively, so there was a decline of two percent.

Democrats are much more likely to say they would vote for a socialist. The Gallup poll found that 76 percent of Democrats said they would vote for a socialist, whereas just 17 percent of Republicans and 45 percent of independents answered the same.

Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), who finished first in the New Hampshire primary with a narrow 26-24 percent lead over Pete Buttigieg, has openly described himself as a "democratic socialist."

However, the Gallup survey did not distinguish a "democratic socialist" from any other variety of socialist.

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Differences in the poll's findings also were found based on whether a respondent identified himself as a Democrat, Republican, or Independent. As we saw, Democrats were more likely to accept a socialist candidate than Republicans — 76 percent to 17 percent, with independents in the middle with 45 percent. Such differences were found with other questions, as well. While more than 90 percent of all participants, regardless of party affiliation, would vote for a presidential candidate who is Black, Hispanic, Jewish, Catholic, or a woman, the percentages dropped off when other questions were asked.



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Eighty-eight percent of Republicans would vote for an evangelical Christian candidate, but only 77 percent of Democrats and independents would do so. Eighty-nine percent of Democrats would vote for a gay or lesbian nominee, but only 62 percent of Republicans would do so. Democrats apparently value youth while Republicans value maturity, since 75 percent of Democrats would vote for a presidential candidate who is under 40 while only 66 percent would vote for someone over 70. In contrast, 73 percent of Republicans would vote for a presidential candidate who is over 70 and only 63 percent for one who is under 40.

Interestingly, President Trump and four of the leading Democratic candidates — Bernie Sanders, Joe Biden, Elizabeth Warren, and Michael Bloomberg — are all over 70.

A new NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* survey taken during the last week of January also found that voters have a generally positive view of capitalism (52 percent positive) and a generally negative view of socialism (53 percent negative). However, found the pollsters, Democrats and younger voters are more likely to be in opposition to the majority.

Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at wmass@thenewamerican.com.

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