



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 15, 2020

Simultaneous Town Halls Tonight Give Voters a Choice of Whom to Watch

Following the cancellation of the second debate by the “non-partisan” Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD), the campaigns of both the president and his rival [scheduled simultaneous town halls](#) for Thursday night at 8 p.m. Eastern time.

President Donald Trump will travel to Miami to participate in a town hall hosted by NBC News and moderated by *Today* show anchor Savannah Guthrie, while his Democratic Party rival, Joe Biden, will travel to Philadelphia. That event will be hosted by ABC News and moderated by the network’s anchor and ardent anti-Trumper George Stephanopoulos.



Photo: Kameleon007 / iStock / Getty Images Plus

The president refused to agree to a change the CPD made for the second presidential debate, scheduled for Thursday night, in which the CPD wanted to make the debate a virtual one, enabling the moderator to cut out the mic of either candidate. He claimed that the virtual arrangement would be “a waste of time” and was done only to protect the Democratic Party candidate from another debacle at the hands of the president.

That claim was given substance when it was revealed that more than 175 physicians had informed the CPD that Trump was virus-free and no threat to Biden or others scheduled to participate in the second debate.

The president’s town hall will not be free of political bias, however, as Guthrie, an attorney with a degree from Georgetown University, has long served deep state interests first as co-anchor of MSNBC’s *The Daily Rundown* in 2010 and 2011 and then as NBC’s White House correspondent during the Obama administration between 2008 and 2011.

The topics each candidate are likely to address range from how the president is handling the COVID-19 virus and how Biden would have had handled it had he been president at the time of the outbreak, to the confirmation hearings taking place in Washington for Trump’s Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett.

There will be questions from the moderators and from small crowds of supporters who will have been subjected to various health screenings beforehand.

Trump is likely to be asked “gotcha” questions about his nominee, hoping to elicit a response from the president that might damage Barrett’s chances. As CNN’s Eric Bradner suggested, Trump will “probably be asked if he expects Barrett, if confirmed, to kill Obamacare.” Unless he pleads ignorance, it could make for “a sticky situation for the nominee who has said she did not discuss the issue with the President.”



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There no doubt will be questions about the current status of the stimulus bill being negotiated between Trump's Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and House Democrat Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Biden isn't likely to escape free of potential damage despite the friendly atmosphere he'll enjoy in Philadelphia courtesy of Stephanopoulos. He'll likely be asked softball questions about the "Hunter" issue that just exploded in recent days that put into question Biden's claims that he knew nothing of his son's involvement in the corrupt Ukrainian energy company and his son's using Biden's influence while he was vice president.

And, with any luck at all, Biden will again be asked about his intentions to pack the Supreme Court with additional liberal judges if he is elected president, a question he has equivocated on often in recent days.

Given the opportunity Trump will remind his viewers of Biden's waffling on the issue of the "green new deal" that was exposed during the first debate. At that moment Trump declared, "You just lost the Left!"

The president is likely to enjoy a vastly larger audience than Biden Thursday night for several reasons, including the distinct lack of enthusiasm for the Democratic Party's nominee. Trump, on the other hand, is a master at attracting crowds that Biden can only dream about.

In addition Trump's town hall, hosted by NBC, will be simulcast on two cable channels, MSNBC and CNBC, and live-streamed on the Internet as well.

The next presidential debate is scheduled for a week from Thursday at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee, where the president is certain to raise issues about Biden that Stephanopoulos avoided tonight. It's also the day that Barrett's confirmation vote is scheduled to be held in the Senate.



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