

# CENTER for OPINION RESEARCH (COR) at THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER

*Texas Opinion Survey*

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## BIDEN & BETO OUT AHEAD:

### INDEPENDENT VOTERS COULD MAKE TEXAS DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY COMPETITIVE

*Tyler, Texas* – Headed into this week’s Democratic presidential primary debates, former-Congressman Beto O’Rourke (27%) and former Vice President Joe Biden (24%) lead the field among 465 registered Texas Democrats. They are followed by Senators Bernie Sanders (15%), Elizabeth Warren (11%), and Kamala Harris (9%).

Independent Democratic-learners (especially women) are a key to O’Rourke’s success in our poll. When included, these voters expand his lead to 38 percent among primary voters (with Joe Biden receiving 19% support), though they are also the least likely to be enthusiastic about participating in the March primary (only 19% are “very” or “somewhat” enthusiastic about the race).

Our poll also asked respondents to identify their second choices in the Democratic primary.

SECOND CHOICE	FIRST CHOICE					
	Warren	Biden	Sanders	Buttigieg	O’Rourke	Harris
Warren		11%	18%	1%	14%	<b>25%</b>
Biden	5%		<b>29%</b>	12%	28%	<b>25%</b>
Sanders	15%	21%		4%	<b>36%</b>	19%
Buttigieg	8%	3%	2%		3%	6%
O’Rourke	14%	<b>23%</b>	<b>29%</b>	4%		14%
Harris	<b>27%</b>	15%	7%	<b>62%</b>	7%	

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## Texas Opinion Survey

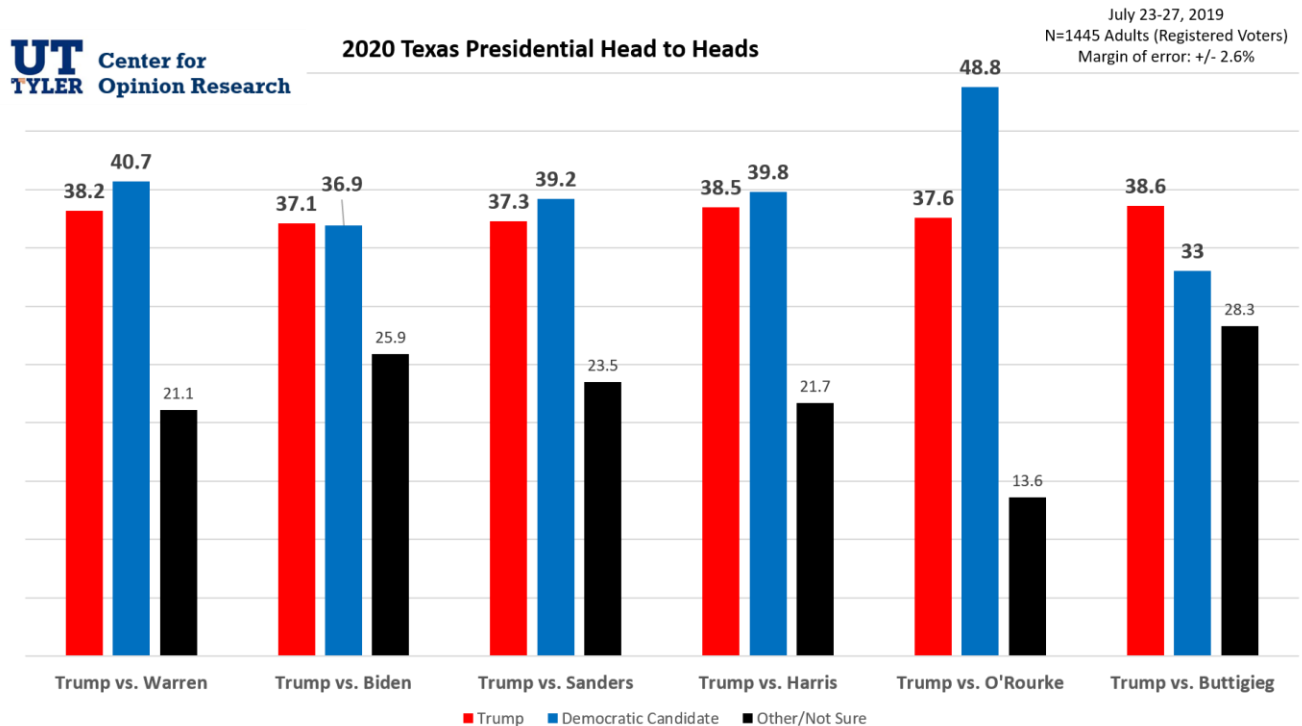
Tyler, TX 75799

Among the six candidates currently leading in national polls (Warren, Biden, Sanders, Buttigieg, O'Rourke, and Harris), second choice preferences are fairly split across the board.

Chiefly, Democratic voters want someone who can beat President Trump in the general election that connects with the primary electorate. When asked to rank in order of importance the characteristics they prefer in a Democratic nominee, voters were split in their top priority between "closest to my view on issues" (33%) and "electability" (32%).

President Donald Trump's job approval is down 2 points from our last survey in February. It now stands at 40 percent approval and 55 percent disapproval among all registered voters. These results are a part of an overall downward trend in job approval for the president since our pre-midterm election survey in October 2018 (45 percent approval and 44 percent disapproval). That said, when asked if the House of Representatives should or should not begin impeachment proceedings of President Trump, a plurality of respondents (45%) said, "No" (34% believe the House ought to begin impeachment proceedings).

In head to head contests, President Trump is trailing all Democrats except Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg, though a sizable percentage of respondents answered "neither/other" or "not sure" in each contest.



Senator John Cornyn, heading into the 2020 reelection cycle, is at 25 percent approval, with 27 percent disapproving and a sizable 48 percent answering, "Don't know." His junior colleague,

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Ted Cruz, has a 41 percent approval rating, with 44 percent disapproving of his job performance.

On issues, 54 percent of registered Texans support expanding “Medicare for all” (20% oppose it), particularly when private insurance plans are allowed (55% support). Nevertheless, expanding “Medicare for all” while eliminating private insurance plans is less popular (40% support eliminating private insurance, 33% oppose it). So, too, is the idea of decriminalizing unauthorized border crossings (33% either “somewhat” or “strongly” disapprove while 29% “somewhat” or “strongly” approve), an issue that caused a contentious exchange between Texans O’Rourke and former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julian Castro at June’s Democratic debate.

This poll was conducted over a four-day period (07/24/19 – 07/27/19).

### **Methodology**

The UT Tyler-Texas Opinion Survey was conducted using a Dynata panel of registered voters that opt-in to take surveys. This is known as Aristotle. The online panel generated a sample of 1445 registered Texas voters, 18 or older.

The data were weighted to be representative of Texas adults. The weighting balanced sample demographics to population parameters. The sample is balanced to match parameters for gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, and geographic region using an iterated process known as raking. These parameters were derived from 2016 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Tables, as well as voter registration information from the Texas Secretary of State’s Office. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the characteristics of the sample closely reflect the characteristics of registered voters in Texas.

In this poll, the sampling error for 1445 registered voters in Texas is +/- 2.6 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval.

Please visit <http://www.uttyler.edu/politicalscience/pollingcenter> for more information about our current and previous study.