

UMass Lowell
Survey of North Carolina Democratic Primary Likely Voters

February 12-18, 2020

N=450 North Carolina Democratic Primary Likely Voters

The sample has an adjusted margin of error +/-6.5% for LVs

See <http://uml.edu/polls> for full questionnaire/topline results and detailed methodology disclosure.

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Do you have a question about this poll? If so, tweet @UML_CPO and we'll get back to you.

HIGHLIGHTS

Sanders is up 4 points with Bloomberg in second place, Biden in third

In a new poll of likely Democratic primary voters in North Carolina, Bernie Sanders has an apparent lead on his closest competitor, former New York Mayor and billionaire Michael Bloomberg, who has bombarded the Tar Heel State and other Super Tuesday states with nearly half a billion dollars in advertising. Sanders receives the support of 23% of North Carolina likely primary Democratic voters while Bloomberg comes in at 19%. Close behind, but outside the poll's margin of error is former Vice President Joe Biden at 16%, Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren at 13%, former South Bend, Indiana Mayor Pete Buttigieg at 10%, and Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar at 7%. Hawaii Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard and Businessman and activist Tom Steyer both register at 3% while 6% of likely North Carolina Democratic primary voters remain undecided.

North Carolinians get their chance to participate in this year's primary on Super Tuesday, March 3rd. The poll, part of series of Super Tuesday poll releases, was written and conducted by the University of Massachusetts Lowell Center for Public Opinion, a nationally recognized non-partisan polling center.

One of the central storylines going into Super Tuesday is if Biden would be able to hold early polling leads in southern states with African-American voters, who have been his stalwart base of support. Bloomberg's entry into the race appears to have damaged Biden's standing among



African-American voters, especially those over 45. Sanders now leads among Black voters, taking 30% of the vote, compared to Biden and Bloomberg who are both at 19%. Among those under 45, however, Sanders is winning 37% of the Black vote, compared to 13% for Biden. Elizabeth Warren actually does better at 16% among young black voters than Biden.

Predictably, the youth vote continues to propel Sanders in states where he leads. He is supported by 34% of voters under the age of 45 compared to only 18% of voters 45 and over. The pattern is the opposite for both Bloomberg, who has the support of 23% of likely voters aged 45 and over, but is only supported by 11% of those under 45.

How the Race Might Change/Vote Stability

With Super Tuesday less than two weeks away, our survey asked voters how certain their vote choice is or if there's a chance they might still change their mind and vote for another candidate. About one third of voters (34%) say they could still change their minds compared to 66% who are firm in their support of their chosen candidate.

Sanders supporters, as has been found in other states, are the most committed voters; 82% of those supporting Sanders say they will definitely vote for the Vermont Senator. This is 13 points higher than the vote certainty for Bloomberg (69% definitely vote for) and Biden (63% definitely vote for).

A Shift in Momentum

The poll also asked North Carolina Democratic primary likely voters who is likely to win the nomination. Here, we see that Sanders has emerged as a frontrunner, although only among a plurality of voters, not a majority; 35% expect Sanders to win the Democratic nomination, compared to 14% Bloomberg and 13% Biden. Interestingly, 27% say they are unsure reflecting uncertainty in the race and raising the specter of a contested convention if no candidate is able to capture a majority of delegates.

We also see that Bloomberg's advertising has vaulted the former New York Mayor up in the minds of North Carolina Democrats. He has a net favorability rating of +19 (52% favorable and 23% unfavorable). It remains to be seen if he can keep this positive edge in favorability given as he is just starting to face the blowback of vetting that the other candidates have seen. Sanders, the leader in this poll, is found favorable among 63% of North Carolina Democrats and unfavorable among 25% (net: +38). Similarly, Biden has a net favorability of +42 (64% favorable, 22% unfavorable) and Elizabeth Warren has a net favorability of +44 (62% favorable, 18% unfavorable). Buttigieg, the rising star coming out of Iowa and New Hampshire, has a net favorability of +37 (52% favorable, 15% unfavorable), but his no opinion/never heard of total is 33%. For Klobuchar, that number is 37%. It is hard to imagine either of them being able to



surge in a state like North Carolina when a third or more of likely voters have not formed enough of an opinion of them to say they feel positive/favorable towards them.