



## MEMORANDUM

To: Alliance for Youth Action  
From: Drew Linzer, Civiqs  
Date: August 7, 2020  
RE: Results of Battleground State Poll of Young Democrats & Leaning Independents

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### Major Findings

A Civiqs poll conducted for the Alliance for Youth Action finds that the coronavirus pandemic continues to be the most important issue in the upcoming 2020 presidential election among young Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents in ten key swing states. Since July, affordable healthcare has risen to become the second-most important issue, with ending systemic racism and discrimination third.

When thinking about how coronavirus has impacted their life, young progressives (between the ages of 18-39) continue to be the most worried about the health of their parents. Their second highest concern is losing their jobs or incomes, with concerns about their own health coming in third. More people are worried about economic factors now than in July.

Nearly two out of three (61%) young Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents in swing states see Medicare for All as the best way to make healthcare more affordable. Many are also interested in implementing a public option to the Affordable Care Act, and finding ways to reduce the costs of prescription drugs.

Opinions towards presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden among Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents remain largely unchanged since July. Only 23% hold a very favorable view of him, but 86% would vote for Biden if the election for president were held today.

### Coronavirus and Affordable Healthcare Gain in Importance

Over a quarter (28%) of young swing state progressives consider the coronavirus to be the most important issue of the 2020 election, a four-point increase since July (24%). Sixteen percent believe that affordable healthcare is the most important issue and 13% say it is ending systemic racism and discrimination. Half of those interviewed (50%) rank affordable

healthcare as one of their top three priorities in the upcoming election, making it the most shared issue overall. Just behind, 46% ranked the coronavirus as one of their top three issues, and 42% referenced ending systemic racism.

Ending systemic racism and discrimination has decreased slightly in importance for Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents since July. This shift has been driven by voters who identify first as Independents: a plurality (20%) chose ending systemic racism and discrimination as their most important issue in July, but only 11% mentioned it in this August survey. A plurality of both young Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents now agree the coronavirus is the most important issue in the upcoming November election.

When thinking about the coronavirus, a plurality of Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents are most concerned about their parents' health (30%); unchanged from July. However, economic concerns have risen in importance relative to health concerns. Worries about losing their job, or the inability to pay bills, rent, or a mortgage, were mentioned as the top concern by 35% in August, versus 30% in July.

Nearly two thirds of young swing state progressives (61%) think that Medicare for All is the most important way to address the costs of healthcare. Fully 81% chose it as one of their top three priorities, followed by reducing prescription drug costs (65%) and expanding access to mental healthcare (52%). Individuals with higher levels of formal education were less likely to prioritize Medicare for All—65% of those without a college degree selected it as most important, compared to 56% of college graduates and 47% of those with a postgraduate degree.

## The 2020 Presidential Election

Young Democrats in battleground states remain lukewarm towards presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden. Only two-thirds (61%) have a very or somewhat favorable view of Biden, 11% are neutral, and 29% have an unfavorable view of the candidate. If the election were held today, 86% would vote for Biden. However, one in ten (10%) young Democratic-leaning Independents currently plan to vote for Green Party candidate Howie Hawkins, and 8% remain undecided.

Nearly two-thirds (61%) of young swing-state progressives have been contacted by the Biden campaign in the past month. Notably, nearly half (48%) were contacted by the Trump campaign or the Republican Party, approximately the same as in July.

An increasing number of young swing-state progressives have seen digital ads from the Biden campaign—20%, compared to 16% in July. However, the Trump campaign continues to dominate digital advertising, reaching 28% of young Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents in the past month—including 43% of those aged 18-25, versus 25% of those aged 25-32 and only 21% of those aged 33-39.

## Facing COVID-19, Many Planning to Vote by Mail

Many young Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents who would normally be voting in person in November, are making plans to vote by mail. Nearly three-quarters (72%) are concerned about potential exposure to COVID-19 from in-person voting. While a third (36%) of young swing state progressive voters plan to vote in person, a plurality (46%) are planning to vote by mail this year. Of those, 30% normally vote in person, but are switching for the 2020 election. An additional (8%) want to vote by mail, but don't know how.

The greatest concern about voting by mail is accurate ballot counts (37%), followed by ballots getting lost in the mail (20%). Nearly half (43%) of Democratic-leaning Independents are most worried about their ballot being accurately counted, compared to 34% of Democrats. Overall, Democrats are more confident about voting by mail—34% have no concerns about it, compared to only 26% of Democratic-leaning Independents.

## National News Outlets Are Trusted on Social Media

As in July, national news outlets continue to be seen as the most trustworthy source for political information: 39% of young Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents trust them the most. Cable news and podcasts are tied at 15%. While cable news is the second choice for Democrats, Independents trust both podcasts and social media more. Progressives in the youngest age category (18-25) are far more likely to place trust in social media over cable news. Among older progressives, the pattern is reversed: more trust cable news and podcasts over social media sources.

When using social media, over half (58%) of Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents primarily trust national news outlets to provide accurate information about politics and elections, followed by Internet reporters (14%) and local news outlets (10%).

## Methodology

Civiqs interviewed 1,079 Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents aged 18-39 in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin from August 4-7, 2020. The survey was conducted online, among selected members of the Civiqs research panel. Sampled individuals were emailed by Civiqs and responded using a personalized link to the survey at [civiqs.com](https://civiqs.com). The survey results are weighted by age, race, gender, education, party identification, and state to be representative of the population of registered Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents aged 18-39 in the ten states. The survey has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.4\%$  at the 95% confidence level, accounting for the weighting design effect. More information about Civiqs can be found online at [civiqs.com/methodology](https://civiqs.com/methodology).