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Immediate Super Tuesday Analysis

Super Tuesday for Democrats in 2020 was a stark reminder that the high-level institutional levers of the Democratic party are still alive and well. With little-to-no organizing presence across a diverse collection of states, Former Vice President Joe Biden produced a significant performance that has reshaped the nomination process. As polling rapidly shifted in the course of 72 hours, it became clear that a significant number of late-deciding voters had returned to Biden after months of trepidation. The media also helped shape what is becoming an increasingly polarized and partisan electorate.

For older voters across the racial and socioeconomic spectrum, Biden came to represent the institutional connective tissue that has held together a disparate collection of diverse coalitions for generations within the Democratic party. With younger voters of all types, urban white women with college education, and/or women of color were clear in their support of Senator Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren for months, more traditional Democratic voting blocs chose to rebuke a critique of potential institutional change in the form of a party stalwart of nearly fifty years. It is this push and pull that will continue to define this primary process in the coming months. For one evening at least, many Democrats expressed their desire for strengthening the tenuous institutional levers that have come to encompass the national Democratic coalition.

Recent [analysis](#) ("*Hate is on the Ballot*") by political scientist Rachel Bitcofer - the only person that predicted the 42 Congressional pickups in 2018 - also demonstrates this from a historical perspective and voter turnout data to better understand how the electorate has changed. While she claims that the 1860 presidential election is the most comparable to the one today, it's an important reminder that this election isn't about taking back the White House. It's about engaging in a national discussion about what country we want to become, at a time of rapid economic transition, environmental degradation, and high income inequality.

The following memo includes immediate results that we have culled through exit memos, media review, and builds off previous Maria's List research conducted by the RC team.

State-wide Turnout:

Texas and Virginia stand out as extreme outliers for increases in turnout from the 2016 Democratic primary. With only a 5% increase in overall population from 2016, Texas saw a 50.1% increase in their Democratic primary electorate. Similarly, Virginia, with only a 2% increase overall population since 2016, saw an increase of 41.4% in their Democratic primary electorate. Both states have benefited from intentional investments in Deep Democracy since 2016, activating demographics often ignored by traditional engagement tactics.

However, neither state saw notable shifts in the racial makeup of the electorate. This is to say at least according to exit polling, turnout was up across all ethnicities. It will require further analysis to determine if there were notable changes based on socioeconomic factors.

The only states to see a decrease in turn-out? Oklahoma and Tennessee, **which according to exit polls had a significantly less white demographic Democratic electorate in 2020 compared to 2016.** Those states saw a 7% and 5% drop in white representation, with increase in Latino representation in Oklahoma, and African American representation in Tennessee. Due to both being predominantly white states, turnout overall decreased.

(Note: currently 2020 exit polling is not available for Arkansas, Colorado, and Utah)

(Note: Colorado, Minnesota, Maine, and Utah were caucus states in 2016, making comparisons to their primary turnout this year not applicable at this level of analysis)

(See here for preliminary data collection document, to be updated: [Link](#))

*States not complete in counting have been estimated out to 100% based on current trends.

State	Total Democratic Turnout	Change from 2016
Texas*	2.2 Million	+ 50.1%
Virginia	1.3 Million	+41.4%
Vermont	157,715	+16.6%
California*	6.0 Million	+16%
North Carolina	1.3 Million	+15.6%
Alabama	442,977	+10.7%
Massachusetts*	1.3 Million	+9.6%
Arkansas	235,116	+6.3%
Oklahoma	291,314	-13.2%
Tennessee	291,434	-22.7%
Minnesota	736,939	N/A
Colorado	659,088	N/A
Maine	192,438	N/A
Utah*	172,269	N/A

Historic Levels of Late Deciders:

For states which exit polling data is available, it shows historic levels of voters who made up their minds the final three days of the campaign. Of the 11 states analyzed, an average of over 39% of the electorate made their choice in the final 72 hours. This is an average increase of nearly 22% from 2016.

The state leaders in this regard? Minnesota (55%), Massachusetts (51%), Oklahoma (50%), Virginia (49%), Maine (47%). For data available, this is a 27% increase in late deciders for Massachusetts, 28% for Oklahoma, and 33% for Virginia. **With the exception of Virginia at 61%, all of these late historic late breaking states are a predominantly white electorate according to exit polls, with all reaching 80% or more white representation.**

The smallest share of late deciders? California, which was by far Sanders' biggest delegate haul of the evening.

State	% of Late Deciders	% Increase from 2016
Minnesota	55%	N/A (2016 caucus)
Massachusetts	51%	+ 27%
Oklahoma	50%	+ 28%
Virginia	49%	+ 33%
Maine	47%	N/A (2016 caucus)
Alabama	40%	+ 19%
Vermont	38%	+ 28%
North Carolina	33%	+ 18%
Tennessee	28%	+ 13%
Texas	23%	+ 8%
California	19%	N/A (no 2016 exit)

Joe Biden Overwhelmingly Won Late-Deciders:

Joe Biden won at least 40% of all voters who made a decision in the final three days in every state except Vermont. According to early exit poll analysis by ABC News, he won 52% of all white voters who made a decision in the final three days, compared to just 21% who had chosen to support a candidate earlier. It was no different with Hispanic voters, in which Biden won 38% of late deciders in that demographic, compared to only 20% of Hispanics who chose a candidate prior.

In Texas, a quarter of Hispanics made a decision in the final three days: he won those voters with 34% overall, compared to only gaining 23% of Hispanics who chose earlier in the campaign. Gaps were not seen in African American voters who solidly supported Biden in both categories.

STATE	BIDEN			SANDERS		
	EARLY	LATE	DIFF.	EARLY	LATE	DIFF.
Minnesota	24%	53%	+29	45%	19%	-26
Tennessee	34	61	+27	28	15	-13
Maine	22	47	+25	47	17	-30
Vermont	13	35	+22	64	32	-32
Massachusetts	24	43	+19	40	18	-22
Texas	29	45	+16	33	16	-17
North Carolina	39	53	+14	26	22	-4
Oklahoma	31	41	+10	32	15	-17
Virginia	50	59	+9	29	17	-12
Alabama	63	64	+1	20	11	-9

Credit: FiveThirtyEight.com

Deep Democracy Snapshot – Jessica Cisneros:

With 100% of precincts reporting, incumbent Democrat Henry Cuellar defeated challenger Jessica Cisneros by just shy of 3,000 votes, 51.8% to 48.2% in TX-28. With such a small deficit, there is little doubt that the DCCC’s and Nancy Pelosi’s visible support for Cuellar was a deciding factor.

A precinct level analysis is to follow, but total turnout in the congressional primary totaled 74,684 voters, a 34% increase from the 2016 primary which saw a perfunctory challenge to Cuellar. This marked improvement in participation can be directly ascribed to the grassroots organizing of the Texas Organizing Project, which made Cisneros a priority this cycle.

The largest part of the district is based in Laredo, Cuellar’s hometown as well as Cisneros’. Cuellar won it, 15,853 votes to 12,900.

Cuellar lost the small part of Bexar included in the congressional district. Cisneros secured 8,682 votes to Cuellar’s 4,315.

Cuellar won in five counties, including Atascosa, Starr, Webb, Wilson and Zapata. Cisneros won in Bexar, Hidalgo and Wilson.

Deep Democracy Snapshot – Gina Ortiz Jones:

With 100% of precincts reporting, Gina Ortiz Jones overwhelmingly won her the Democratic primary in TX-23, winning nearly 67% of the total vote. With 43, 811 total votes, Ortiz-Jones nearly matched the total number of votes cast for all candidates in the March 2018 primary.

Total turnout in the congressional primary was 65,553, a 48% increase over the March 2018 primary. In a comparable presidential year, the increase was more modest but still impressive: 2020 saw a 34% increase compared to total turnout in 2016.