

## A Look Inside the Blue Wave of 2018 to See the Cross-Currents Defining the 2020 Election

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The 2018 election was a wave election, but it was a smaller wave than Democrats had been hoping for in the summer of 2018.<sup>1</sup> No matter the size of the wave, the reality heading into 2020 is that Democrats have regained political momentum in the wake of losing the Senate in 2014 and the White House in 2016. Outside of the battle for the Senate in 2020, President Trump and House Republicans face meaningful headwinds for their respective 2020 re-elections.

Overall, the 2018 election illuminated a country that is largely at odds with itself on the most important policy questions it faces at the federal level. The 2016 election exposed many of these fault lines, and the 2018 election realigned some of those fault lines but reinforced others.

Below is a post-election dive into several interrelated questions about the underlying numbers in the election, and what they mean for the political future. The questions include:

1. Why was there record turnout in this election, and what was different about the people who voted in this off-year cycle?
2. What were the issues that moved the needle most in the election?
3. How big was this year's Blue Wave?
4. What does this election mean for the 2020 presidential, Senate and House races?

We have a separate memo that delves into four key questions about the new Congress—what we expect the new Congress to prioritize, what we know about the new members, our projection for the new leaders, and what history tells us about major legislation moving through a divided Congress.

We are available to provide more in-depth analysis of specific policy areas for those who want to have discussions on particular policy sectors or areas.

### Election Turnout: Why Was There Record Turnout, and Who Voted?

#### *Who Voted?*

The 2018 election changed many of the “typical” data points for an off-year election. Historically, off-year election cycles have seen a drop in voter turnout, and an electorate that is older, less racially diverse (76 percent of voters in 2014 were white)<sup>2</sup> and has a consistent voting record. Overall, the usual turnout model for off-year elections favors Republicans,

#### ***A Bigger or Smaller Blue Wave:***

*While 114 million votes were cast nationwide, shifting just 100,000 votes to the most competitive House races could have allowed 16 Republicans to hold their seats, and keep the Republican majority. Conversely, if Democrats had received just 100,000 votes spread amongst their closest losses, they would have gained 14 more seats and had a “wave” that trended closer to historic norms.*

but that was not the case in 2018. This appears to be the highest percentage of voter turnout in an off-year election since 1966 (49 percent) and 1970, when Vietnam War protests and concerns about the Nixon Administration drove turnout among Democratic supporters.<sup>3</sup>

Approximately 110 million Americans voted in 2018, which appears to be about 47 percent of the voting-age population. By comparison, the 2010 Republican wave election occurred with only 41 percent of eligible Americans voting, and only about 37 percent of Americans bothered to vote in 2014. You have to go back to 1914 to find an election where a majority of eligible Americans voted.<sup>4</sup>

**What It Means:** This mid-term election was clearly a referendum on President Trump and not necessarily about Congress, motivating millions of critics and supporters of President Trump to make an effort to vote where they have not done so in the past. In addition, there is no doubt that voters now see President Trump as the head of the Republican Party and viewed vulnerable incumbents as closely tied to the President's agenda. In competitive Senate races, this turned out to be a slight positive, but in the House, if you were a moderate Republican in a purple district, you were most likely defeated by a Democrat. Now, both political parties will have to build a 2020 campaign that anticipates very high turnout rates—and anticipating a high turnout for the election will heavily shape the legislative agenda in the 116th Congress.

### ***White Women Are the Swing Voters***

Women were seen as one of three key demographics in this election (along with the youth vote and minority voters). White women were the biggest demographic group of voters nationwide—37 percent of all voters—and they split their votes evenly between Democratic and Republican candidates.<sup>5</sup> Conversely, white men were 35 percent of voters in 2018 and broke for Republican candidates by a 60 percent to 39 percent margin. African-American voters preferred Democratic candidates by about a 90 percent to 10 percent margin. Hispanic-American men were more bipartisan, but still preferred Democrats by close to a 2-1 margin, while Hispanic women preferred Democrats by almost a 3-1 margin.

### ***2018 Exposed Gaps Between Soccer Moms and Football Moms***

Republicans won a 51-48 majority of support from voters who did not attend college. As in recent elections, the more education a voter has, the more likely the voter is to prefer Democratic candidates. College graduates preferred Democrats 55 percent to 34 percent, and for voters with advanced degrees that swelled to a 65 percent to 34 percent margin. Of note, college-educated white women preferred Democrats by a 59 percent to 39 percent margin, but white women who did not go to college preferred Republicans by a similar margin of 56 percent to 42 percent.<sup>6</sup>

That educational advantage for Democrats did not correlate to income levels in this election. Democrats won the voter demographic for voters earning under \$100,000 a year, and Democratic support increased as income ranges went down.<sup>7</sup> Republicans won very small majorities from voters that make \$100,000-\$200,000 a year (51 percent supported Republicans) and the voters that earn over \$200,000 a year (52 percent).<sup>8</sup>

**What It Means:** There were two real demographics of swing voters in the 2016 and 2018 elections. First, are white men who lack a college degree. This used to be a staunch Democratic interest group, save for the Reagan Revolution, but it has now moved slightly into the Republican column. Look for Democratic presidential candidates to target a specific agenda aimed at this demographic to flip Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin from red to blue in 2020.

The second key demographic is the growing gap between white college-educated women who live in suburban and urban areas, and white women without college degrees, many of whom can be found in more rural or exurban areas. Overall, enough white women supported President Trump in 2016 to carry him to victory, but now there's a fault line. College-educated white women broke hard for Democrats in 2018. They did so to show their displeasure with healthcare, the President's behavior and the President's tone in daily work. Ironically, the high-functioning economy in cities and suburbs means white women could cast a vote on issues that were not driven by the economy. For now, there is a meaningful political divide between the political preferences of urban/suburban white women who were Democratic voters this year, and the rural and exurban white women who continue to prefer Republicans. President Trump and Congressional Republicans will need to rebuild relationships in this demographic over the next two years if they hope to retain the White House and to have a shot at retaking the House.

## ***The First-Time Voters and the Youth Vote Both Showed Up***

For months, political prognosticators had been predicting the uprising of youth voters following the Parkland shootings, the #MeToo movement on campuses, and the raw partisan brawling of President Trump. Initial voting data shows more engagement by young voters, and that they were material contributors to pushing many Democratic candidates over the finish line to victory: 16 percent of all voters were voting for the first time, many of them were younger voters, and they supported Democrats by a margin of 62 percent to just 36 percent for Republicans.<sup>9</sup>

Almost one-third of voters 18 to 29 years old voted in 2018, which is up at least 10 percent from 2014's off-year election.<sup>10</sup> Those young voters favored Democratic candidates by about a 2–1 margin, and the 35-point margin between party support by young voters was almost triple the margin from 2014. The most likely explanation for this is that the partisan breakdown of repeat youth voters was consistent from 2016 to 2018, but most new youth voters in 2018 were motivated to turn out specifically for Democratic candidates.

Democrats won the youth vote by massive margins in 2018, after narrowly winning the demographic in 2014, creating two questions for 2020: (1) will young voters turn out in similar numbers in the presidential election, and (2) are these voters becoming lifelong Democrats or are they capable of being swayed back towards Republican candidates, especially when President Trump runs for a second term?

**What It Means:** Congressional Democrats and 2020 presidential contenders will continue to cultivate young voters, both to turn them out and to transition them to lifelong party members. Expect the House to use its Higher Education Act to tackle the student loan crisis that is the top economic issue for many young voters. Additionally, expect presidential contenders and the Democratic House to highlight more “new economy” issues, liberalization of cannabis regulation, more healthcare options, and social issues that appeal to this voting demographic. President Trump is playing catch-up here, and will need to find a few specific policy initiatives to appeal to young voters. This might include cooperating with House Democrats on student loan issues for example. We would also expect President Trump to look to spend more time on college campuses in the next two years leading up to the election. This demographic is too big and too important for President Trump to abandon.

## **What Issues Mattered Most in the Election?**

The exit polls illuminate what motivated voters in the 2018 election and why voters delivered somewhat conflicting messages of a Democratic House and a Republican Senate. Fundraising numbers gave Congressional Democrats a huge advantage in retaking the House, but were a more mixed predictor of success in the Senate races.

### ***It's the Economy, Stupid!***

Where you stood on the economy basically correlated with your vote in this election. Voters who thought the economy was excellent or good strongly favored Republican candidates, while voters who thought the economy was not good or poor strongly favored Democratic candidates.<sup>11</sup> However, the economy is no longer the top priority for voters, trailing healthcare and immigration, two issues that have a substantial impact on the economy and the financial stability of American households and businesses.<sup>12</sup>

The perspective on the President's trade policies was even starker. If you thought those trade policies helped the local economy, 91 percent of those voters chose Republican candidates.<sup>13</sup> If you thought trade policy hurt your local economy, 89 percent of those voters chose Democratic candidates.<sup>14</sup> Voters who said the President's trade policies did not affect the local economy favored Democrats by a 53 percent to 45 percent margin.<sup>15</sup>

If the Trump tax cuts helped you, you voted Republican by a wide margin. If they hurt you, you voted Democratic by a wide margin.<sup>16</sup> If they had no impact on you, you favored Democratic candidates by a 2-1 margin.<sup>17</sup>

### ***The Tax Cuts Did Not Help the Party that Made Them Possible***

President Trump and Congressional Republicans thought the December 2017 passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act would be a political plus in the 2018 election. But Congressional Democrats spent most of the last year delivering a

consistent message that the tax cuts favored corporations and the top one percent of taxpayers over the middle class. By election day, that message carried the day with voters. Exit polls showed only 28 percent of voters thought the tax cut helped them personally, barely more than the 23 percent who thought the tax cut bill hurt their personal financial situation.<sup>18</sup> Forty-five percent of voters thought the tax cut had no impact on them.<sup>19</sup>

### ***Healthcare Favors Democrats***

Anger over the Affordable Care Act's passage led to the Tea Party wave in 2010 that brought Republicans back to the House Majority. The policy advantages on that issue have now flipped. Healthcare was the top policy priority of 2018 voters, and voters who thought the healthcare system needs major changes favored Democrats by a 55 percent to 43 percent margin.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Immigration Solutions Remain Polarized***

Immigration reforms have been a top priority in Washington for years but there has been a real challenge finding solutions that can garner bipartisan agreement. A look inside the exit poll numbers show why such immigration solutions are hard to find: 90 percent of voters who think the President's immigration policies are too tough chose Democratic candidates, while 86 percent of voters who thought the policies were not tough enough, and 85 percent of voters who thought they were just right, voted for Republicans.<sup>21</sup>

**What It Means:** Polling data from the elections show a few new realities. First, voters that might normally reward the party in control during good economic times failed to do so this year. Second, both households and employers are growing more concerned with rising healthcare costs. Polling data show voters demanding Congress and the Trump Administration address high premiums and other healthcare costs without repealing certain provision of the Affordable Care Act such as protecting pre-existing conditions. Many of the Republicans who won in 2010 because they promised to fix the healthcare system lost in 2018 because they did not fulfill that promise to repeal and replace Obamacare. For a party that provided not a single vote to pass Obamacare, voters now hold Republicans responsible for problems in the nation's healthcare system, and they punished them for it on election day. Third, absent a reversal in President Trump's positions on most immigration policies, we expect to see a lot of political posturing in Congress on immigration. The lack of agreement on immigration will move the Trump Administration to continue their cycle of executive branch actions that are immediately challenged in court by a variety of interest groups.

### ***Winning Is About More than Fundraising***

Grassroots fundraising this election cycle was a huge tip-off that Democratic enthusiasm and turnout was peaking. Yet fundraising totals did not make or break many key races nationwide because incumbent Republicans often raised just enough money to remain competitive with their Democratic challengers.

Make no mistake, Congressional Democrats and their supporters in the political world raised record amounts of money that allowed them to win races and be competitive in places they previously have not been able to win. This is truest in the House, where Democratic candidates collectively outraised Republican candidates by \$300 million.<sup>22</sup> In the third quarter of 2018, 92 Democratic challengers outraised their Republican incumbent challengers.<sup>23</sup> At least 60 House Democratic challengers raised over \$1 million in the third quarter for their House race—an extraordinary amount—and at least 51 House Democratic challengers outraised their Republican incumbent opponents by a 2-1 margin or greater in the third quarter of this year.<sup>24</sup> 71 House Democratic challengers outspent their Republican incumbent opponents in the third quarter. Much of that monetary advantage did not translate to victory, as House Democrats will end up flipping about half of the races where they outraised their opponent.

In the Senate, you see much less of a correlation between raising the most money and winning the race. In Texas, Beto O'Rourke toppled records in raising \$70 million (and counting) for his Senate race, only to come up short to Ted Cruz who raised "only" \$40 million. Governor Rick Scott spent about the same \$70 million (and counting), raised largely from his own personal contributions from his fortune, and may (or may not) have eked out the narrowest of victories over incumbent Senator Bill Nelson, who raised "just" \$28 million. Incumbent Senators Claire McCaskill (D-MO) (\$35M) outraised her opponent by a 3-1 margin, and Heidi Heitkamp (\$27M) outraised her opponent by a 5-1 margin,



but both incumbents lost. Meanwhile Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) raised \$19 million, outraised his competitor 5-1, and hung on for victory. In open seat races, Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) (\$13M) was outraised by her Democratic opponent Phil Bredesen (D-TN) (\$16M), but still won easily.

**What It Means:** Every successful challenger's campaign has just enough money to win, but very few incumbents are going to lose because they don't have enough money to defend their seat. With that said, House Democrats outraised the Republicans when they were out of power, and likely Speaker Nancy Pelosi is the single best Congressional fundraiser in history. She will be sure to use her majority to raise even more money in 2019-20, so Democrats can hold the House in the next election. Meanwhile, Congressional Republicans will spend 2019-20 trying to replicate the grassroots fundraising success that is driving Democratic fundraising to record heights. There will also be an interesting examination by both parties about the effectiveness of digital advertising.

Also, House Democrats are likely to make it a top priority in 2019 to pass some ethics and campaign reform legislation that limits the influence of money not controlled by the candidates and political parties. Given Senate Majority Leader McConnell's long-term position opposing campaign finance laws and regulations, any House-passed limits on political spending are likely dead on arrival in the Senate. House Democratic leadership may pass a broader bill, knowing it cannot become law, because it gives them the upper hand in the debate over political spending.

## How Big Was the Blue Wave This Year?

There was a Democratic wave, but it was smaller than Democrats had hoped for earlier in the year, and it was on the smaller side of prior wave elections at both the federal and state level.<sup>25</sup> Yes, Congressional Democrats seized control of the House, which was widely expected. This House election did result in Democrats flipping more seats than the last time they regained control of the House (31 seats in 2006), but their gains (currently projected at around 38 seats, which would make for a 17-seat majority), are smaller than the wave elections that cost Barack Obama 63 House seats, Bill Clinton 54 House seats, Gerald Ford 47 seats, and Lyndon Johnson 47 House seats.

Democrats lost ground in the Senate, but that was more a function of the record number of seats they had to defend. In fact, with Florida and Arizona's races still not final, Republicans only picked up Senate seats in red states, not in purple or blue states. The three 2018 states Republicans flipped in the Senate are all states President Trump won by at least 19 percent.

At the state level, the higher and the more diverse turnout nationally likely also materially contributed to Democrats flipping at least seven governor's races (Florida and Georgia are still not decided) and approximately 300 statehouse seats nationwide. Those results are good for Democrats, but somewhat short of historic. By comparison, the 2010 "Tea Party" wave election resulted in 21 statehouses nationwide flipping to Republican control and a Republican gain of 1,000 state-level legislative seats. Still, the reality is that, in the 2018 election, the Democratic Party took back a meaningful percentage of the state-level legislative seats and governor's mansions they lost in the eight years Barack Obama was president. Again, the 2018 results suggest Democrats have political momentum headed into the 2020 elections.

### ***Democrats Balance Out Control of Governorships***

Democrats won the governor's mansion in competitive states like Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, and Wisconsin (where they ousted their top incumbent target nationwide in Scott Walker, who was seeking a third term). With the races in Florida and Georgia not yet decided, Democrats have substantially cut into the lead Republicans enjoyed in controlling the nation's governors. Republicans will hold likely a slim 27-23 or 26-24 lead after Florida and Georgia are decided. With the exception of Vermont, where governors serve two- year terms, every one of the governors elected will be central figures in the key post-2020 Census redistricting process for Congressional and statewide seats.

### ***Democrats Pick Up Complete Control of More States***

The elections gave Democrats complete control (governor's mansion and both chambers of the legislature) in six more states (Colorado, Illinois, Maine, Nevada, New Mexico, and New York). Democratic gains at the statehouse level created

legislative supermajorities in Delaware (House), Illinois (House), Nevada (House), and both chambers in Oregon. Democrats also won enough seats to end Republican supermajorities in the Michigan state senate and both chambers of North Carolina's legislature.

After this election, it appears Republicans will have complete control of 23 state governments, and Democrats will have similar complete control of 13 state governments. The other 14 states are projected to have split control. Overall, Democratic success in the 2018 governors' races and picking up about 300 statehouse seats will now ripple into the redistricting process and net future legislative district maps that are more favorable to Democrats than today's maps in many states.

### ***Democrats Claw Back About One-Third of Statehouse Seats Lost Under President Obama***

Republicans entered the election holding about 1,000 more state legislative seats nationwide than Democrats.<sup>26</sup> Of the 99 state chambers in the country (Nebraska is a unicameral legislature controlled by Republicans), Republicans control 61 and Democrats control 37. This is a net gain of seven chambers in the 2018 election (Republicans only flipped control of the Alaska statehouse).

**What It Means:** Many of the governors who will decide the 2022 redistricting for Congressional seats have just been elected. Republicans will have fewer advantages in that process going forward. In Rust Belt states like Michigan and Illinois, where states may lose House seats in the 2020 Census, holding the governor's mansion could ensure Democratic candidates get a more favorable map for the 2022 redistricting process.

More Democratic legislators at the state level means the generation of more liberal and progressive policy ideas that could percolate up to Congress in the future. It also means the Democratic party has taken a big step in building back up its bench strength, as state legislators are usually highly coveted potential candidates for Congress in future election cycles.

## **What Does This Election Mean for the 2020 Presidential, Senate and House Races?**

### ***The House Is in Play in 2020, but Republicans Face Unique Challenges***

There are only three times in the last 150 years when Republicans were able to take control of the House when a Republican President was in office. They last did it in 1952, when President Eisenhower won his first term and swept Republicans to power with him. Before that you have to go back to Benjamin Harrison in 1888 and Chester Arthur in 1880. Those were all first-term Presidents with a change in control of the House coming on their coattails. You have to go back to Teddy Roosevelt in 1904 to find a Republican President's re-election adding more than 20 Republicans to the House. In short, for Republicans to regain the House in 2020, President Trump will again have to be a political unicorn with historic coattails for down-ballot races.

**What It Means:** Democrats have a small margin of control in the House, and they could jeopardize their majority by overplaying their oversight and impeachment efforts to check President Trump. Nevertheless, to regain control in 2020, Republicans will likely have to do something they have not done in more than 100 years.

### ***Republicans Slightly Favored to Retain Control of the Senate in 2020 Election***

There are 34 Senators up for re-election in 2020, concurrent with President Trump's re-election campaign. In 2020, Republicans will be defending 22 seats and Democrats will be defending just 12 seats. The Senate election map in 2020 is closely tied to the political fortunes of the presidential nominees for both parties. Of those 22 Republicans, 20 will be running in states President Trump carried in the 2016 election. Only Senator Cory Gardner (R-CO) and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) will be running in states where President Trump lost (Colorado) or split the electoral votes (Maine). Meanwhile, two Democratic incumbents—Gary Peters (D-MI) and Doug Jones (D-AL) are running in states President Trump won.

There are several battleground states at the presidential level in 2020 that will affect the fortunes of sitting incumbent Senators like Joni Ernst (R-IA), David Perdue (R-GA) and Thom Tillis (R-NC). The Republican Senator appointed to fill the remaining two years of Senator John McCain will be up in 2020, and will face a major challenge holding that seat. The marquee Senate race in 2020 is likely to be in Kentucky, where once again Democrats will mount a spirited challenge to knock off Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY). Even Texas will bear watching for Senator John Cornyn's (R-TX) re-election, given the results of this year's Senate race there.

It is reasonable to expect some retirements on both sides. For Republicans, that might include Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, Pat Roberts of Kansas, Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma, and Mike Enzi of Wyoming. For Democrats, there are no obvious retirement risks at the moment. After the 2018 election, an open Kansas Senate seat in particular would be a pitched battle if Senator Roberts retires.

1929 was the last time Republicans controlled 56 or more seats in the Senate. Depending on the pending outcome of Senate races in Arizona and Florida, and the success of President Trump's re-election campaign, a best-case election scenario makes it possible to approach or exceed that 56-seat ceiling. For Senate Democrats, they look at the 2020 map and hope their presidential nominee has broad enough coattails to help some Democratic candidates win close races.

**What It Means:** There are plenty of scenarios in 2020 where Democrats recapture the White House but don't take the Senate. In those instances, the new president faces tremendous challenges in getting cabinet and judicial branch appointments through the Senate. The larger any Republican majority gets in the 2020 election, the more it could rein in the policy preferences of a new Democratic president, or bolster the second-term success of President Trump.

### ***The Two Factors That Topple Incumbents Seeking a Second Term at the White House***

The 2020 presidential race is well underway. President Trump actually formed his 2020 re-election campaign in 2017, and numerous White House staff are expected to leave over the next few months to take formal roles with the campaign. The President has also already raised more than \$100 million for his 2020 re-election, an unprecedented amount so far ahead of his re-election. It is widely expected that Vice President Mike Pence will also continue to be on the 2020 ticket.

In the last 100 years, only three Presidents that chose to run for a second term were defeated: Herbert Hoover in 1932, Jimmy Carter in 1980, and George H.W. Bush in 1992. There are two commonalities in each of those three elections. First, there were short recessions in the Carter Administration and the Bush Administration, which created political headwinds for the incumbent's re-election. For Herbert Hoover, there was Black Friday and almost three years of the Great Depression leading up to his re-election. Second, each of these incumbents ran into transcendent political talents. Hoover's loss started the longest Presidency in American history as Franklin Roosevelt came to power. Jimmy Carter's loss came at the hands of the Reagan Revolution. George H.W. Bush's loss was the opening act of the Bill Clinton era of Democratic politics.

So how do these historical instances apply to the 2020 presidential race? On the economic front, it has been more than nine years since the United States suffered through a recession. That's more than double the usual interval between recessions in the American economy, and there are some signs that the current economic expansion may slow and slip into recession in 2019 or 2020. If that occurs, it will increase the chances of a Democratic challenger knocking off President Trump in the 2020 election. But to get there, Democrats also need to find that historic and transcendent political figure—another FDR, Reagan or Clinton.

### ***The Democratic Prospects for the White House***

On the Democratic side, the list of political and business officials looking at the race is close to record-breaking, a sign that many Democrats see an unprecedented opportunity to unseat a sitting president. Looming over the race are two heavyweights in former nominee Hillary Clinton (D-NY), who may be considering a third run for the White House, and former Vice President Joe Biden (D-DE), who is also seriously considering a run. Either of them would be the immediate front-runner in the primary, but both of them have substantial political baggage, and their entrance into the race won't clear the field of other ambitious contenders.

There is a long list of Senators looking to enter the presidential race. These include: Cory Booker (D-NJ), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA). There are also several House members looking at the race including Reps. John Delaney (D-MD), Seth Moulton (D-MA), Beto O'Rourke (D-TX), Tim Ryan (D-OH), and Eric Swalwell (D-CA).

Several governors and former governors are considering the race including Steve Bullock (D-MT), Andrew Cuomo (D-NY), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), Jay Inslee (D-WA), Terry McAuliffe (D-VA), and Deval Patrick (D-MA). Incoming California Governor Gavin Newsom (D-CA) will surely look at the race as well.

Former Obama Administration officials such as Attorney General Eric Holder and HUD Secretary Julian Castro may also be in the mix.

Finally, there are business figures like Howard Schultz of Starbucks, billionaire Tom Steyer, and former NYC Mayor Mike Bloomberg.

**What It Means:** Whether or not you can see it, the silent phase of the Democratic presidential primary is well underway. It will be a messy, long and complicated primary season in 2019-20. The race for campaign talent and fundraising commitments is in high gear, and we would expect to see many people move quickly to formally announce their campaigns, as there will be little reward for waiting to get in the race. In fact, in states like California (Kamala Harris, Gavin Newsom, and Tom Steyer), Massachusetts (Elizabeth Warren and Deval Patrick), New York (Hillary Clinton, Andrew Cuomo, Michael Bloomberg, and Kirsten Gillibrand), and Texas (Julian Castro and Beto O'Rourke), it will be a big disadvantage to be the second candidate in from your state.

The longer running shadow race for the Democratic nomination will seep into House and Senate politics. Time will tell if a transcendent and historic figure can emerge to challenge the built-in advantages that President Trump enjoys as an incumbent. There is some sense in the political world that President Trump has shown he cannot be defeated by traditional political tactics. Thus, the best Democratic challenge may end up being someone from the business world or a well-run state with a popular governor (FDR, Reagan and Clinton were all governors).

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1 We would define a wave election as anytime a party flips control of a chamber of Congress or makes more than a 25-seat gain in a chamber.

2 <https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2018-voter-demographics/>

3 <https://www.npr.org/2018/11/08/665197690/a-boatload-of-ballots-midterm-voter-turnout-hit-50-year-high>

4 <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/record-voter-turnout-in-2018-midterm-elections/>

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25 We would define a wave election as anytime a party flips control of a chamber of Congress or makes more than a 25-seat gain in a chamber.

26 <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2018-11-07/democrats-win-big-in-statehouses>