

# USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times National Poll

**TOPLINE RESULTS (UAS 175) – 2020 Democratic Primary and Taxes**  
**Release Date: Monday, April 15, 2019 – Field dates March 15 – April 15, 2019**

## SURVEY METHODS

This USC Dornsife / Los Angeles Times Poll is the result of a collaboration between researchers in the *Center for the Political Future* and the *Center for Economic and Social Research* in the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences at the University of Southern California, in partnership with the Los Angeles Times.

The sample of 5,165 adult residents of the United States in this early release of data from the UAS post-midterm poll participated from March 15-April 15, 2019. They are members of the Center for Economic and Social Research's Understanding America Study (UAS) probability-based internet panel. The survey will continue to be in the field until December 15. The sample for this release included 5,076 eligible voters and 2,196 who intended to vote in a 2020 Democratic presidential primary. The poll was conducted in respondents' choice of English or Spanish. The overall margin of sampling error<sup>†</sup> is +/- 2 percentage points for all U.S. eligible voters, and for 2020 Democratic primary voters. Margins of sampling error may be higher for certain subgroups, and are indicated in the associated banner cross tab release.

**Survey information:** Full question text and context language for included questions are included in this release. We rotated the order of response options, and in some cases, order of questions to reduce order effects. Respondents participated via computer, mobile device or tablet, at any time of day or night during the field period. The data associated with this release will be available to registered UAS users at <https://uasdata.usc.edu/survey/UAS+175>.

**Survey Weights and Participation Rate:** As 6,868 panel members were eligible to participate in this survey, the participation rate was 75%. We calculate weights in two stages: (1) base weights account for the probabilities of selection in our sampling procedures, and (2) post-stratification weights align survey distributions to CPS benchmarks. Weighting benchmarks were derived from the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

**† Survey Error:** Factors other than sampling error may affect results of any survey, including question wording, question order, sample type (e.g. opt-in panels vs. probability panels such as UAS), population coverage, and impact of current events. In addition, results of questions asked without an interviewer (e.g. in an internet panel) may differ somewhat from similar questions asked by an interviewer over the phone. Sampling error calculations are at the 98% confidence level.

This document provides an overview of survey-specific methods and information. For weighting details; panel sampling procedures; recruitment protocols, survey and recruitment response rates; panel attrition rates; panel management protocols; and microdata files (including nonresponse and paradata), please visit our website at [UASdata.usc.edu](https://uasdata.usc.edu).

**Panel Information:** The UAS is an ongoing national research panel that started in 2014. We recruit panel members in waves from Marketing Systems Group frames of all household addresses in the United States. To ensure full coverage of the U.S. population, we provide internet-connected tablets to individuals who were not already online. Our panel thus includes U.S. residents who have cell phones, landlines, or no phone at all. Panel members are compensated for their participation.

This document and the archive of results of prior Dornsife/LAT polls are available at [bit.ly/USCpolldata](http://bit.ly/USCpolldata).

For questions about the survey, contact CESR Survey Director Jill E. Darling ([jilldarl@usc.edu](mailto:jilldarl@usc.edu)) or CFPF Director Robert M. Shrum ([nsmall@usc.edu](mailto:nsmall@usc.edu)). Additional contact information is on the last page of this report.

The USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research is a proud member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research's Transparency Initiative.

USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times Polls are funded entirely by the USC Dornsife College of Arts, Letters and Sciences

Brackets indicate randomized text and matching answer values. Order of answer values were randomized. “-” indicates that the estimate is less than one percent. Unless otherwise indicated, tables are weighted column percentages.

*This survey has several unrelated sections. It asks about languages that you may speak, on people in the news, and taxes. To begin with...*

**cf\_001. Generally speaking, would you say that the country is...**

	U.S. Residents March 2017	U.S. Residents April 2019
Headed in the right direction	47	35
Off on the wrong track	53	65

**cf\_002. Overall, do you [approve] or [disapprove] of the job that Donald Trump is doing as president?**

	U.S. residents Sept 2017	U.S. Residents December 2017	U.S. Residents Sept 2018	U.S. Residents April 2019
Approve strongly	18	15	18	18
Approve somewhat	20	17	17	16
Neither approve nor disapprove	12	12	10	12
Disapprove somewhat	12	12	11	13
Disapprove strongly	37	42	41	39
Haven't heard enough to say	3	2	2	2
Total Approve	38	32	35	34
Total Disapprove	49	54	53	52

*We are also interested in learning about any impacts of the changes to U.S. tax law that took effect in 2018 and applied to all pay earned between January 2018 and December 2018.*

**ta\_001. Generally speaking, do you [support] or [oppose] the 2018 U.S. Tax bill that was passed by Congress and signed by President Trump?**

	U.S. Residents April 2019
Strongly oppose	19
Somewhat oppose	14
Somewhat support	16
Strongly support	11
Neither support nor oppose	13
Haven't heard enough to say	26
Total oppose	33
Total support	27

**ta\_002. Thinking back to 2018, that is, between January 2018 and December 2018: Were there changes in your employment or pay levels? e.g. You started or stopped working, changed jobs, worked more or fewer hours, retired, or some other change that affected how much you earned in 2018 compared to 2017?**

	U.S. Residents April 2019
Yes, there were such changes that affected my earnings in 2018 compared to 2017	27
No, there were no such changes that affected my earnings in 2018 compared to 2017	40
Not sure	10
Does not apply	23

Asked if ta\_002 = 1 or 2 (N=3475)

**ta\_003. Again, thinking back to 2018, ... Did you notice any changes in how much was in your paycheck each time, compared to 2017? Please only think of increases or decreases that were NOT caused by changes in employment or pay.**

	U.S. Residents April 2019
Yes, noticed paycheck increased for reasons other than changes to employment or pay	29
Yes, noticed paycheck decreased for reasons other than changes to employment or pay	8
No, paycheck stayed the same other than changes due to employment or pay	47
Does not apply— I don't get a regular or steady paycheck or did not in 2017	15

Asked if ta\_003 = 1 or 2 (N=1267)

**ta\_004. What do you think caused the change in your paycheck that was not due to changes in employment or pay?**

	U.S. Residents April 2019
Change in the tax law that took effect in 2018	77
Increased contributions to employer-sponsored retirement plans (e.g. 401k), flexible spending accounts, etc.	5
Increased contributions to Flexible Spending Account	1
Something else	17

**ta\_005. Did you adjust your W2 or other income tax withholding in 2018? If so, what was the reason?**

	U.S. Residents April 2019
Yes, adjusted mostly or entirely because of the new tax law	6
Yes, adjusted for some other reason	6
No, did not adjust	60
Does not apply	28

**ta\_006a. Did you (or your spouse) file a 2017 income tax return with the IRS?**

	U.S. Residents April 2019
Yes	81
No	9
I/we did not need to file a tax return in 2017	9

**ta\_006. Have you (or your spouse) filed a 2018 income tax return with the IRS?**

	U.S. Residents April 2019
Yes	58
No, but we I/we intend to file a return	29
I/we did not need to file a tax return this year	13

Asked if ta\_006 = 1 or 2 and ta\_006a = 1 (filed in 2017 and 2018. N = 4146)

**ta\_007. Thinking about your tax returns filed last year (for 2017) and this year (for 2018), and whether you received a refund or owed more in taxes. Please check which option applies to you:**

	U.S. Residents April 2019
I received a refund last year and I received (or I expect to receive) a bigger refund this year	16
I received a refund last year and I received (or I expect to receive) about the same refund this year	25
I received a refund last year and I received (or I expect to receive) a smaller refund this year	27
I received a refund last year and I owed (or I expect to owe) money this year	8
I owed money last year and I owed (or I expect to owe) more money this year	8
I owed money last year and I owed (or I expect to owe) the same money this year	6
I owed money last year and I owed (or I expect to owe) less money this year	5
I owed money last year and I received (or I expect to receive) money this year	4

*The last questions are about the upcoming primaries and caucuses in advance of the 2020 presidential election*

**cf\_003 Regardless of if or how you are registered to vote, at this time, are you more closely aligned with...**

	U.S. Residents April 2019	Eligible Voters April 2019
Democrats	39	39
Republicans	30	30
Independents (no political party)	12	12
Libertarians	2	2
Green party	1	1
Some other party	0	0
Not aligned with any political party	16	16

Asked if cf\_003 = 3 or 7 (N=1269)

**cf\_003a. Generally speaking, do you lean more toward affiliating with Democrats or with Republicans?**

	U.S. Residents April 2019	Eligible Voters April 2019
Lean toward affiliating with Democrats	19	19
Lean toward affiliating with Republicans	20	20
Do not lean toward either party	61	61

Asked of all eligible voters (N=4921)

**cf\_004. We know it is still a long way away, but the presidential election state party primaries and caucuses will be held next year, in 2020. If you decide to vote in your state's presidential primary or caucus, which party's primary or caucus are you most likely to vote in, if any?**

	Eligible voters April 2019
Democratic party	43
Republican party	36
Green party	1
Libertarian party	2
Some other party	4
I am certain I will not vote in any of my state's presidential primaries or caucuses	14

Open ended question - asked of random half sample of Dem Primary voters (N= 1131)

**cf\_005a. If your state's Democratic presidential primary or caucus were held today, for whom would you vote? Please write in the name of the candidate, and/or any other information that could help us identify who they are.**

Name	Dem Prim Voters April 2019
Cory Booker	3
Joe Biden	30
Pete Buttigieg	3
Julian Castro	1
John Delaney	0
Tulsi Gabbard	0
Kirsten Gillibrand	0
Kamala Harris	9
John Hickenlooper	1
Jay Inslee	0
Amy Klobuchar	2
Beto O'Rourke	7
Bernie Sanders	19
Elizabeth Warren	5
Marianne Williamson	0
Andrew Yang	2
Other candidates	2
Undecided/Not sure/Too soon/Multiple candidates named	8
Michelle Obama	1
Any Democrat	2

Ask of Dem Primary voters (N=2106). Randomized order of candidate list

**cf\_005b. Here is a list of candidates who are running, or who could run for the Democratic nomination in 2020. If your state's Democratic presidential primary or caucus were held today, for which of these candidates would you vote? This is not a complete list of all candidates who are running or could run). If you don't see your favorite candidate in the list below, please write them in.**

Name	Dem Prim Voters April 2019
Cory Booker (U.S. Senator, New Jersey)	2
Joe Biden (Former U.S. Vice President)	27
Pete Buttigieg (Mayor of South Bend, Indiana)	2
Julian Castro (Former U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development)	1
John Delaney, (Former U.S. Representative, Maryland)	0
Tulsi Gabbard, (U.S. Representative, Hawaii)	1
Kirsten Gillibrand (U.S. Senator, New York)	1
Kamala Harris (U.S. Senator, California)	7
John Hickenlooper (Former Governor, Colorado)	2
Jay Inslee (Governor, Washington state)	1
Amy Klobuchar (U.S. Senator, Minnesota)	1
Beto O'Rourke (Former U.S. Representative, Texas)	7
Bernie Sanders (U.S. Senator, Vermont)	16
Elizabeth Warren (U.S. Senator, Massachusetts)	4
Marianne Williamson (Spiritual teacher, author, lecturer, entrepreneur, and activist)	0
Andrew Yang (Entrepreneur and founder of Venture for America)	1
Other candidate (please write in)	1
Undecided	27

**cf\_006** When it comes to choosing a Democratic candidate for President, besides wanting someone who can win the election in November 2020, what else is important to you? Please write in one top priority in each of the three categories below.

**1. Top policy issue you would like your candidate to focus on**

Category	First response	Second response	Third Response
Social Security	1	0	0
Guns	4	0	0
Foreign Relations	1	0	0
Protecting Middle Class	1	0	0
Unification	1	0	0
Environment	9	0	0
Seniors	0	0	0
Wealth	3	0	0
Immigration	7	0	0
Social Issues	5	0	0
Cares for Americans	1	0	0
Education Reform	5	0	0
Econ/Fiscal Respons	14	1	0
Wages & Jobs	4	0	0
Trade	0	0	0
Health Care	24	1	0
Election Reform	0	0	0
Respect	0	0	0
Other	9	0	0
No Answer	9	96	99

**2. Top personal description, characteristic, personality type, origin, or belief that would most appeal to you**

Category	First response	Second response	Third Response
Intelligent	5	1	0
Female	1	0	0
Integrity	5	1	0
Christian	2	0	0
Moderate	1	0	0
Unlike Trump	1	0	0
Leader	1	0	0
Egalitarian	2	0	0
Serves the People	2	0	0
Caring	4	1	0
Experience	1	0	0
Honest	22	1	0
Authentic	1	0	0
Good Character	11	2	0
Can Work With Others	2	0	0
Presidential/Gravitas	5	0	0
Sane/Calm/Balanced/Wise	3	0	0
Other	19	1	0
No Answer	13	92	99

**Top background, experience, biography, or training that would most appeal to you**

Category	First response	Second response	Third Response
International	2	0	0
Military	3	0	0
Business	2	1	0
Public Service	1	0	0
Polit/Gov	33	1	0
Law	4	0	0
Leadership	2	0	0
Good Track Record	4	1	0
Works with Others	1	0	0
Humble Background	2	0	0
Understands Americans	2	0	0
Humanitarian/Activist	3	0	0
Knowledgeable	8	1	0
Not Trump/Anti-Trump/ABT	2	0	0
Other	12	1	0
No Answer	19	93	99

***This survey was conducted by the***  
**University of Southern California**  
**Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences**  
**in partnership with the Los Angeles Times**

**Center for Economic and Social Research**  
**Understanding America Study**  
Jill Darling, Survey Director  
contact: [jilldarl@usc.edu](mailto:jilldarl@usc.edu)

**Center for the Political Future**  
Robert M. Shrum, Director, Center for the Political Future  
contact: [Nsmall@usc.edu](mailto:Nsmall@usc.edu)

Mike Murphy, Co-Director, Center for the Political Future  
Contact: [Nsmall@usc.edu](mailto:Nsmall@usc.edu)

**Survey toplines and crosstabs available from**  
**USC Dornsife / LA Times Poll archives**  
[bit.ly/USCpolldata](https://bit.ly/USCpolldata)

Survey microdata will be available for download  
by registered users of the Understanding America Study, after a brief embargo.  
Register and access data files: <https://uasdata.usc.edu>