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Battleground survey finds independent voters cite handling of economy as top issue to guide Biden VP choice

Independents Rank Elizabeth Warren Most Effective
on Economy by More Than 3-to-1

NEW YORK, NY — A new survey of Independent voters in battleground states finds that unaffiliated voters want Joe Biden to prioritize the economy in choosing a Vice President nominee.

The survey of 538 Independent voters living in twelve battleground states, including Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina and Wisconsin, was fielded by Data for Progress and YouGov Blue. It included topics gauging voters' views on what kind of capabilities and experience they hope Joe Biden keeps in mind in selecting a nominee for Vice President.

"Battleground state Independents want Biden to prioritize picking a Vice President who is effective on the economy," says John Ray, Senior Political Analyst of YouGov, which conducted the poll for Data for Progress. "The vast majority of Independents rank effectiveness on the economy as very important for Biden to consider when making his choice. It is the number one issue they say is very important in his choice, followed by effectiveness on the pandemic."

The survey finds that Independents in battleground states rank Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) as the VP candidate who would most effectively handle the top issue of the economy. They rank Senator Warren as most effective on the economy by three to one over the next nearest choice. Independent voters rank Senator Warren as the VP candidate who would most effectively handle the coronavirus by two to one.

"Of all the potential choices, Senator Warren has earned the confidence of more Independents as effective on the economy and coronavirus" says Sean McElwee, co-founder and Executive Director of Data for Progress. "At a moment when the ability to manage this crisis is so important, Independents trust Senator Warren to be most effective in helping President Biden on the economy and coronavirus."

Senator Warren is also rated five to one as most effective on helping Americans who are being exploited by Wall Street (at 25 percent, with the next nearest candidate at 5 percent).

The poll found that more battleground state Independents, including Independents currently uncommitted to Biden or Trump, rate Senator Warren as the most effective President on day one if called to serve. Joe Biden has noted that readiness to serve as President on day one is critical to his choice for Vice President.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SURVEY INCLUDE:

▸ Independent voters (by a 57-20 margin) and uncommitted Independent voters (by a 65-12 margin) prefer Biden select a Vice President based on who would help him govern effectively rather than who would help him with turnout or persuasion.

▸ Independent voters and uncommitted Independents voters' top issue for Biden to keep in mind when making a Vice President selection is the economy, with 60 and 67 percent of these voters calling that issue "very important," followed by the coronavirus pandemic (55 and 62 percent "very important" respectively) and access to healthcare (53 and 57 percent "very important" respectively).

▸ Elizabeth Warren is overwhelmingly rated by Independents and uncommitted Independents as the most effective on the economy (22 percent and 14 percent) and coronavirus (13 percent and 10 percent)—their top two issues—at up to more than three times more than the next most preferred potential VP nominee.

▸ Warren is also rated five to one as most effective on helping Americans who are being exploited by Wall Street (at 25 percent, with the next nearest candidate at 5 percent).

▸ Elizabeth Warren is particularly popular on the economy and effectiveness among Independent and uncommitted voters who report they are considering voting for Biden but are not enthusiastic about doing so, with fully 34 percent of "dissatisfied Biden voters" selecting Warren as the strongest on the economy.

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