

2020 Election Talking Points

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Reminders

As representatives of Democrats Abroad, we:

- **ALWAYS avoid appearances of partiality in the primaries.** [More here.](#)
- **ALWAYS see out ways to reinforce that we're here for voters, members and volunteers. They should visit democratsabroad.org to get involved!**
- **Do NOT discuss non-US issues or country-specific US foreign policies.**
 - Ex: As a supporter of democracy, do you support the protests and

demands for democracy in Balkistan?

- “Democrats Abroad doesn’t dive into local politics and debate, but I think we all hope that this gets resolved peacefully.”
- Ex: What do you think about President Trump’s threat of military intervention in Balkistan [or his actions taken without considering the consequences on a global level]? Will the 2020 election change anything?
 - “The biggest concern we have when it comes to the president’s *global* foreign policy strategy is that there isn’t one. This is a president who threatens our allies and adversaries alike, based on what he saw on Twitter that morning. As Americans abroad, we know that successful diplomacy doesn’t happen without careful preparation, and the president still hasn’t proven that he’s capable of doing that.”
 - “*Around the world*, Trump continues to make chaotic and reckless decisions that put the American people at a disadvantage, put U.S. troops in harm’s way, hurt our allies and partners and endangered our national security. Every current and potential partner will have even more reason to doubt America’s credibility and resolve going forward. “
- Do NOT speak badly about the Democratic Party, including discussions of “party divisions,” parts of the party (DNC, ASDC, etc), party leaders, candidates..
- For talking about the GPP, see the [GPP Press Kit](#)
- For talking about who we are: [our general talking points](#)
- For tough Qs: “Common Debate Qs,” “While I have you” and “Difficult 2020 Questions” in this document.

About the Debates

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COMMON DEBATE QS

Note: Our rule of 3s (like posting an article on social that highlights >2 candidates' approach to a specific issue) does not apply to talking about the debates! We know it's a difficult request, but do not name names when giving your assessment of the debate or the primary race.

1. What have you/Democrats Abroad been up to, regarding the debates?

Focus: We are engaged and excited. This is going to be the most important election year in a lifetime.

"Here in XX, Democrats Abroad has arranged watch parties so that Americans and our friends can tune in to the debate -- both live and in the days following the debate, to account for our time zones. Globally, we've hosted over 100 events for the first two rounds of debates alone, and that's continued to grow ever since."

2. Who won the debate?

Focus: Do not name specific candidates.

"I can't really say who won, especially with so many people on stage, but it was really exciting to finally see them all in action and I'm looking forward to [night two / seeing the next debates]."

3. Who will win the nomination?

Focus: Again, leave it up to the voters.

See #3, or:

"Name recognition is critical, which is why these debates are so important and why Democrats Abroad is reaching out to all candidates, so that Americans abroad can hear from them and get to know who best aligns with their values."

But **NOT:** “Name recognition is critical, so there’s a lot of talk of Sanders, Biden and Warren...”

4. Is it wise for Democrats to be moving forward on impeachment in an election?

Focus: 1) This isn’t about convenient vs inconvenient -- it’s about what’s right. 2) Democratic leaders, and the American people, are capable of walking and chewing gum at the same time.

Democrats Abroad fully supports Speaker Pelosi and the House Democrats on impeachment, and we’re proud to see them doing what’s right.

Option A: It’s the job of Congress to hold the Executive branch accountable. The rampant corruption in the White House must be stopped, and people must be held accountable. This should not be about Democrats vs Republicans. It’s about doing what’s right for the country, no matter how inconvenient.

Option B: That does not mean that everything else that Democrats are doing must be put on hold. In fact, we can’t afford to do that. There is too much to be done, from passing progressive legislation in the House to ensuring that we have the best, most qualified presidential candidate to help us win in 2020. I have faith that the American people are smart enough to understand that. Democrats have many things to do. Impeachment is just one of them.

5. [Question about Joe and Hunter Biden]

Focus: Pivot. Discussing this gives attention to what Trump wants us to talk about, instead of what we should be talking about.

“This is another example of Trump trying - and failing - to deflect from reality. The reality is that the president asked a foreign power to find dirt on an opponent. The very act of asking for this is arguably illegal. That’s why the whistleblower bravely chose to step forward. That’s what led to Democrats ramping up full-blown, full-speed impeachment investigations.

See “While I have you” below for talking points related to impeachment.

6. What's the sentiment among Americans abroad where you are?

Focus: Voters will decide!

"I'd say it's really anyone's guess at this point. It's still really, really early, and voters are getting to know these candidates. The candidate that clinches the nomination will be the one with the right policies and the one who inspires Americans in the US and around the globe to turn out. To volunteer. To help us with phone banking from anywhere in the world. And to vote."

7. What about the candidates that didn't make the debate?

Focus: Just the facts.

"Obviously we want everyone to have a fair shot at this, but setting this benchmark for campaigns encourages and rewards them for the work that the DNC believes they absolutely must do in order to beat Donald Trump, and the first debate benchmarks were fairly generous -- low polling threshold of 1% in three polls or hitting grassroots fundraising goals, to demonstrate candidate support."

NOT: *"I hope X, who missed this debate, will qualify next time."*

8. What will you watch for?/ What was the top moment for you?/ Will we see another moment like [Harris/Biden from June debate]

Focus: Keep it vague and/or focus on the issue, regarding where Dems vs Republicans stand, not one candidate over the other.

"There's no doubt that headlines tomorrow will be looking for the big moment to highlight! We've been looking forward to 2020 since the day Trump was inaugurated. I'm getting to know the candidates more and hearing where they agree and disagree."

Or, for example:

"The media partner decides the questions, but I hope they'll be asking about voting rights. It's so critical that Americans at home and around the world have fair access to the ballots, and that we address the voter disenfranchisement that the Trump

administration has welcomed and encouraged.”

9. What did you think about [particular debate question]?

Focus: Focus on the question/general issue, not the responses.

“It’s an important issue to Americans abroad, so I do wish we had had the chance to hear all candidates’ answers, but I’ll be keeping an eye on what candidates have to say about this one in future debates”

10. What do you think of the first night vs the second night process in the previous debates?

Focus: Just the facts.

“This was something that the DNC and their media partner decided on. [see About the June/July/Sept Debate sections for explanation on how this worked]. This methodology was designed to avoid a situation where, in a purely random drawing, too many of the top-polling candidates would be placed together.”

11. What did you think of [particular candidate’s moment]?

Focus: Focus on the debate question, or restate your role.

See #7, or:

“My job as a leader within Democrats Abroad is to support my fellow Americans and help them vote, rather than help guide their choices of candidates. So I’m not going to comment on how the specific candidates did, but I hope everyone gets a chance to watch the debate if they haven’t already.”

12. There’s lots of talk about [positive or negative sentiment about a candidate]. Thoughts?

Focus: Speak generally or focus on the issue/question, instead of the answer.

See #7, #8, and/or:

“If and how any of this impacts voter preference, that’s up to them. But no matter which candidate is their favorite, I hope they’ll be deciding based on the candidates themselves, whether the voters feel they’re represented by that candidate, and

where they stand on the issues.”

12. What are the debates for?

Focus: Just the facts.

The debates are a chance for us to see these candidates go head to head, to get to know them, understand where their priorities are, and what their future policies might look like. It's one of the most important ways for us to get to know these candidates before we vote in the primary elections, to decide who will face off against Donald Trump.

13. What's the primary process all about?

Focus: Just the facts.

It's a bit complicated, but essentially, the primary election will decide which Democratic candidate receives the party's nomination for president in 2020. This is done at a state level. Each state holds their own primary election -- including Democrats Abroad, the official “state” party for overseas voters.

States will hold their primaries in the first half of next year, with Democrats Abroad's primary taking place March 3-10, and the party nominee will then officially be selected at the Democratic National Convention in July.

14. So Americans abroad can vote in the primary?

Focus: Keep it simple.

Yes! Democrats Abroad can cast their vote for our global presidential primary, no matter where they live outside the US. I hope all the Americans watching will go to democratsabroad.org to join, so that they receive all of the latest info about getting to know the candidates on our primary ballot and how to cast their vote!

15. What's it like to watch this from [your location]?

Focus: Offer personal perspective, but don't forget your priorities as a DA spokesperson!

Of course offer your personal perspective, and keep it positive :) But do not

make it specific to the country where you are.

BAD example: *"Watching everything from here in Balkistan, where elections are rife with corruption, it makes me appreciate even more how important it is that Americans participate in our election process, no matter where we may live."*

GOOD example: *"It's been hard to watch from abroad, to be honest, because you feel a bit limited with what you can do. But that's a big reason why I was inspired to get involved, to help support the Democratic party that believes in what I do: urgent environmental protection, gun safety legislation, and economic reform that works for the people, and not the corporations. Americans abroad can decide the 2020 election, and we're doing everything we can to make that happen."*

WHILE I HAVE YOU...

If asked about current events when you're in the hot seat, these points may help:

State of the Union

- Trump is not fighting for you — he is looking out for himself and his rich friends.
- After three years in office, Trump has failed to deliver the changes he promised. He is corrupt, ineffective, and has broken his promises to working- and middle-class Americans.
- Instead of laying out any semblance of a plan for what he would do for the American people, Trump turned his State of the Union into a reality show filled with more lies.
- Trump lied when he said he's protecting your health care. He's closer than ever to taking away protections for people with preexisting conditions and kicking up to 21 million Americans off their health insurance. He's tried over and over to cut Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, and said he'll try again if he wins another term.

- Working families aren't doing better. Wage growth hasn't gone up, job growth has stalled, and Trump's tax law helped billionaires and big corporations instead of working Americans.
- Last night, Trump didn't even bother to mention the middle class, climate change, Medicaid, student debt, school shootings, Dreamers, or small businesses.
- Trump has failed Americans on all of these critical issues. He has refused to address climate change. He has sided with the NRA and refused to enact gun safety reforms. He has attacked civil rights, LGBTQ rights, and women's rights. He has demonized immigrants and closed our doors to asylum seekers. And he's made us less safe, and weakened our role in the world.

Democratic Response to State of the Union

- Trump calls Democrats the "Do Nothing Party." The reality is that Democrats in Congress have actually done a lot, but Trump has opposed their legislation, and it has stalled in McConnell's legislative graveyard, despite broad support from voters.
- House Democrats will vote this week to condemn Trump's proposed cuts to Medicaid services, and to expand protections for union workers.
- Here's a look at some of the bills House Democrats have passed:
 - The Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act.
 - The Voting Rights Advancement Act to restore key provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
 - The SHIELD Act to better protect our elections from foreign interference.
 - The Raise the Wage Act to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour.
 - The American Dream and Promise Act to provide hardworking immigrants a much deserved pathway to citizenship.
 - The Equality Act to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
 - A package of bills to protect people's access to health care and help make prescription drugs more affordable.
 - A bill to restore net neutrality.

- The Climate Action Now Act to take action to protect our climate and create economic opportunities.
- Legislation to reauthorize and expand the Violence Against Women Act.
- Legislation to require background checks for all gun sales.
- Legislation to help close the gender pay gap.
- Historic anti-corruption reform.

While Democrats are working for the American people, what has Trump done lately?

Iowa Caucuses

On Feb 03, more than 1,600 precinct caucuses gathered to demonstrate our shared values and goal of taking back the White House.

- As results started coming in, the IDP (Iowa Democratic Party) ran them through an accuracy and quality check and saw inconsistencies.
- Inconsistencies required investigation, which took time. And while the full, verified numbers have still not been released [as of Feb 05, 10am EST], the underlying data was sound and there's a paper trail to verify that.
- Our understanding is that the IDP is working to release this information as quickly as possible, without sacrificing the integrity and accuracy of the results. But the information that's been released by the Iowa state party is quite limited, and that's all the information we have at the moment. We do know that what happened with tallying the results should never happen again. The app that caused these issues won't be used anywhere else during the primary election process.

As frustrating as this has been, let us not lose sight of our ultimate goal: To take back our democracy, to defeat Donald Trump, and to improve the lives of millions by electing Democrats up and down the ballot.

Why does Iowa matter?

Iowa is the first of 57 state parties -- including Democrats Abroad -- to hold their primary or caucus every four years, to help choose who will be the Democratic party's eventual nominee. Since they're first, they get a lot of attention, because the outcome may shape how people in other states vote or caucus for their primary candidates. So the story of who wins the Iowa caucus is just as much if not more a story about who wins the headlines for the week -- we have 56 more primary and caucuses, with the New Hampshire primary coming up just next week.

We heard that Iowa was holding some satellite caucuses abroad. Was Democrats Abroad involved with that?

Democrats Abroad is a separate "state" party, but of course we support each other wherever we can. And it's great that Iowa took steps to be more accessible for voters. We're doing the same with Democrats Abroad, so if you're an Iowa voter and you missed your chance to participate in the caucus, you can still participate in the Democrats Abroad Global Primary, which kicks off on Super Tuesday! Visit DemocratsAbroad.org for more info.

The Case for Impeachment and Removal

- Trump was impeached because of overwhelming and irrefutable evidence that he abused his power and obstructed Congress. Even Republicans admit Trump is guilty. And yet, it's all but guaranteed that Senate Republicans today will vote to acquit the president, regardless.
 - Trump pressured a foreign country to interfere in our elections — for his own personal gain. If that's not impeachable, nothing is.
 - Trump defied lawful subpoenas, blocked key witnesses, and directed government agencies to withhold documents. **His obstruction is unprecedented.**
- **The American people overwhelmingly want to hear from witnesses. But thanks to Senate Republicans, they're being denied witnesses in an impeachment trial for the first time in American history. Voters deserve better.**

- **This isn't a trial. It's a cover-up.**
- **Every senator who voted against having witnesses is complicit in one of the biggest cover-ups this nation has ever seen.** Their votes are both a dereliction of duty and a disgrace to democracy.
- Acquittal requires a fair trial, and a fair trial would have witnesses and documents. An acquittal after this sham trial means nothing.
- Trump's abuse of power is a clear and present danger to our democracy. If Senate Republicans don't hold Trump accountable, they are undermining our national security, legitimizing foreign interference in our elections, and allowing our president to extort other countries for personal gain.

Debunked GOP Talking Points

While Democrats seek the facts, Republicans have wasted their allotted time attacking the witnesses, blaming the process, and peddling already-debunked conspiracy theories.

- LIE: Ukraine interfered in the 2016 election.
 - This is a debunked conspiracy theory pushed by Putin and Russia to distract from Russia's very real interference in the 2016 election on behalf of Trump.
 - The Intelligence Community has stated unequivocally that Russia interfered in our democracy, and continues to do so. Even Republican-led Senate and House Intelligence committees found that was true.
 - There is no evidence that Ukraine interfered in our election — the Republican Senate Intelligence Committee investigated that claim and found no basis for it.
 - A Ukrainian politician writing an op-ed, after Trump said he'd hand Crimea over to Russia, is in no way comparable to the Russian government executing a coordinated campaign to interfere in our elections.
- LIE: Democrats are moving too quickly. They should wait for the courts to compel witnesses to testify.

- The threat facing our democracy is urgent and imminent. The president is already trying to cheat in our next election.
- We already have overwhelming and sufficient evidence that Trump abused the power of the presidency and is now engaged in unprecedented obstruction of Congress.
- Congress cannot allow Trump to interfere in its constitutional duty and delay this process. And relying on the courts can take years.
- This impeachment inquiry has already lasted longer than the impeachments of Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton.
- LIE: Democratic witnesses have no firsthand knowledge of their allegations.
 - Republicans who desire more firsthand testimony should join Democrats in demanding that the White House stop blocking key administration officials from testifying, and release documents they claim would exonerate Trump.
 - We heard from three witnesses who listened in on the July 25 call and two who were directly involved in the pressure campaign.
- LIE: Democrats need to call the whistleblower to testify.
 - The whistleblower's complaint has been corroborated by firsthand witnesses, and the White House itself.
 - The president and Republicans have put the whistleblower's life in danger. House Democrats are following the law and protecting the whistleblower's identity.
- LIE: The process has not been fair.
 - Republicans asked for public hearings, and they got them. They asked for Trump's lawyers to be allowed to cross-examine witnesses, and they've been invited to do that too. But now, Trump says there should be no hearings at all, and the White House won't participate in the House Judiciary Committee's hearings. We're not sure how much longer they can use this excuse.
 - Their real complaint is clear: they don't want Trump to be investigated.
- LIE: Democrats aren't getting anything done because they are focused on impeachment.
 - While Trump is tweeting, **Democrats in the House have passed nearly 400 bills, over 250 of which were bipartisan**, including to lower health care costs and prescription drug prices, raise wages, improve gun safety, clean up corruption, safeguard our elections, and more.
 - Meanwhile, Republicans in the Senate have refused to take up most of these bills, and Trump doesn't have a plan to address these issues.

- The truth is that Trump has broken his promises on everything from infrastructure to gun safety to drug prices and more, and now he is trying to point fingers to excuse his ineffectiveness.
- LIE: The aid was withheld because of concerns about “corruption.”
 - Recently revealed emails confirm the aid was not withheld because of corruption: in fact, the White House scrambled to justify the hold weeks after Trump’s order.
 - The Department of Defense certified that Ukraine met all anti-corruption requirements to receive military aid. There was no reason for aid to be withheld.
 - In fact, every agency except OMB — which had been ordered to freeze the aid — agreed that Ukraine had made substantial progress in combating corruption and corruption in Ukraine did not warrant withholding aid.
 - The concern about corruption is rich, coming from this administration.
 - As multiple witnesses have stated, when Trump said “corruption,” it was code for investigations into his opponent. Trump has even admitted this himself.
 - Trump never said the word “corruption” during his call with Zelensky, but did mention his political rival by name multiple times.
 - If Trump was worried about corruption, he wouldn’t have fired Ambassador Yovanovitch, a standard-bearer of America’s anti-corruption efforts, have sought repeatedly to cut foreign aid programs that combat corruption in Ukraine, or have released military aid to the corrupt previous government.
- LIE: None of this matters because the military aid was released to Ukraine and no investigation was announced.
 - The administration did not release military aid to Ukraine for months. It finally did so just days after Congress learned of the existence of the whistleblower complaint and began investigating the scheme.
 - Before that happened, Zelensky was preparing to announce the investigations Trump wanted in an interview on CNN.
 - As constitutional experts testified, Trump getting caught and not being able to pull off his scheme does not change the fact that his conduct was impeachable.
- LIE: There was no quid pro quo. Sondland only “presumed” there was a quid pro quo linking military aid to investigations.
 - Sondland was explicitly told by Giuliani that there was a quid pro quo linking a White House meeting to a public announcement of the investigations Trump wanted into his political rivals. This came after

Trump personally directed Sondland to work with Giuliani on Ukraine matters.

- In this context, and “in the absence of any credible explanation” for why aid was withheld, Sondland realized that receiving military aid was also contingent on Ukraine announcing the investigations.
 - Multiple other witnesses have confirmed that Trump withheld military aid and a White House meeting to pressure Ukraine to announce investigations that would benefit him politically.
 - Kent testified that the aid was withheld at the direction of Trump, until Ukraine announced “nothing less” than the investigations he requested.
 - We also have the July 25 phone call summary and Mulvaney’s press conference clearly linking military aid to investigations into Trump’s political rivals.
- LIE: Zelensky said there was no pressure on the July 25 call.
 - Of course Zelensky was going to say there was no pressure — Ukraine is heavily dependent on our military aid. By withholding it, Trump endangered Ukrainian lives and strengthened Russia’s hand.
 - Not to mention, Ukraine’s president needs the backing of the United States to shore up his own support in Ukraine and to continue to counter Russian aggression.
 - According to testimony, Zelensky knew it was a bad idea to interfere in an election, but felt so much pressure from Trump that he eventually agreed to make the announcement.
 - In a recent interview, Zelensky criticized Trump for blocking aid, saying “We’re at war. If you’re our strategic partner, then you can’t go blocking anything for us.”
 - LIE: The Ukrainian government was not aware that U.S. military aid was being withheld.
 - This Republican talking point crumbled, live on national TV.
 - Newly revealed emails suggest the Ukrainians knew there was a hold on military aid the very day of Trump’s call with Zelensky — and the day before Sondland and Volker met with Zelensky and Ukrainian officials.
 - Ukraine’s government was aware, months before the call, that Trump wanted them to investigate his political rivals. Zelensky met with his advisors soon after he was elected to discuss how to respond to pressure from Trump and Giuliani to pursue an investigation for Trump’s political benefit.

Trump Obstacles To Securing 270 Electoral Votes

- We take nothing for granted. Our fellow Dems are building the infrastructure to win tight races in battleground states across the country, just as we're prepping for massive get out the vote efforts in 2020.
- Trump's reelection campaign faces major obstacles in securing reelection that Democrats are preparing to capitalize on:
 - **Trump's standing and Democratic victories across "the blue wall."** Beyond our recent victories this year, in 2018 Democrats won statewide elections in PA, MI, WI, OH and MN by significant margins. Public polling shows Trump faces serious challenges in this region.
 - **Trump faces challenges in attempting to expand his map.**
 - **In 2018 and 2019, Democrats made traditionally Republican states more competitive** -- Trump can't take anything for granted.
 - **Democrats are investing earlier than ever before, and volunteers are turning out both across the country and around the world with Democrats Abroad.**

Who are you voting for?

Key takeaway: Democrats Abroad leaders do not share their personal views on this, to avoid appearance of putting our fingers on the scale.

Sample response:

I'm looking forward to voting in the global primary, but I also know that this is something that's personal and up to everyone. My focus right now is about helping Americans vote for who they want to vote for, rather than talking about my personal preferences.

If pressed further: As a leader of Democrats Abroad, I know how important it is that we let the people decide, so I won't be talking about how I'll be voting -- but you can trust that I'll be casting my ballot by March 10 and I'll be doing everything I can to help others do the same.

Do voters have to provide a passport or when voting in the primary?

Key takeaway: No.

Do you have to be American to vote?

Key takeaway: Yes.

Sample response:

Everyone who participates in the Global Presidential Primary must be a member of Democrats Abroad, which includes a verified member process. We're proud to offer same-day registration at our polling centers, but all members, regardless of when or where they join Democrats Abroad, are verified via a multi-step process that occurs after a new voter has signed up, which includes a sworn affidavit that the voter is an American and eligible to vote in the election this year.

If pressed further: Just like voters in the US, we don't want American Democrats living abroad to be disenfranchised by forcing them to bring an ID that they may not even have readily available. This is a far more likely scenario than non-Americans trying to vote in the primary.

Why would you challenge a voter?

Sample Response:

We may challenge a voter in case of eligibility issues. Democrats Abroad follows a process very much like that used in the US; we can challenge voters and ask them for their credentials, which is consistent with the process in the US.

What happens when you challenge a voter?

Sample Response:

The voter is asked to provide evidence that they are eligible to participate. If they can, they receive an official ballot and proceed to vote. If they cannot provide evidence immediately, they receive a provisional ballot and information on how to send their eligibility details to the global chair for confirmation. This information is written up in a challenge form which is also provided to the Global Chair and legal counsel for followup.

How are ballots tabulated?

Sample Response:

At each voting center the voting center manager and at least two tellers are responsible for reviewing each ballot, sorting for spoiled ballots, and then sorting the remaining ballots by candidate. Once they've tallied the official and provisional ballots by candidate, they then tally the total votes and announce the provisional results at the voting center. The voting center

manager is then immediately responsible for notifying the global team of these results through the following steps:

1. Voting center managers call in their preliminary results
2. Voting center managers email a photo of their tally sheet to the global team.
3. Voting center managers also upload their tally numbers to a shared form
4. Finally, voting center managers mail the original tally sheets, along with their ballots, to the global team for verified tallying.

This process ensures that every vote is properly counted, but it's also why results are only provisional until the official tabulation is announced on March 23.

How can we be sure that ballot data is secure?

Sample Response:

Ensuring ballot security is a key consideration for Democrats Abroad. Trainings have been conducted for voting center managers to ensure ballots are properly tabulated, recorded, and sent to Democrats Abroad's global presidential primary team for final tabulation. For those voting via email, ballots are returned by voters to a secure Amazon Web Services container, which has enterprise levels of encryption and security protocols built into its infrastructure.

The ballot data is secured in AWS, which has enterprise levels of encryption and security protocols built into its infrastructure.

We have a security process in place which severely limits ballot access and absolutely prevents data deletion. To ensure accuracy in results, all emailed ballots are reviewed by our online tally team.

Aren't you worried about being too far left / too centrist / etc?

Sample Response:

There are some issues where Democrats Abroad are, on average, more left-leaning than many voting segments back home. Many of us understand that affordable healthcare is possible, and that gun safety legislation works, for example, because of our international perspective. But there are 9 million Americans abroad. We're an incredibly diverse group of people, and I'm as eager as anyone else to hear the results of the global primary.

Are you worried that the party is too divided?

Key takeaway: No. Our focus is getting as many people to vote for their candidate of choice and getting a Democrat in the White House.

Sample Response:

Our party is united on taking out Donald Trump and electing the best candidate that we can. That means bringing together Democrats from across the spectrum.

What happens to someone's vote if their candidate drops out/withdraws/suspends the campaign?

Note: While press may conflate these phrases, please be aware that withdrawing, dropping out, suspending campaign, shutting down a campaign are not all the same thing.

Once a valid ballot is cast, it is counted. If a voter casts more than one valid ballot, the first is counted, and the rest are not. This includes if their first vote went to a candidate that has suspended their campaign or withdrawn.

That doesn't make a vote cast for these candidates a meaningless vote, because such a candidate could still earn one or more delegates. Their votes still count, although I understand their dismay.

If a candidate formally withdraws from our primary or shuts down their campaign before May 15 - which is when Democrats Abroad begins electing delegates at our global and regional meetings - any delegates they have been allocated will be assigned to other candidates who met the 15% threshold in our primary.

ARCHIVE

Impeachment

You will note that all mentions of Ukraine are passive, with the focus on how Trump pressured/asked/called Ukraine, rather than how Ukraine responded or behaved. And of course, no mention of the relationship between Ukraine and Russia, or internal politics within Ukraine.

- Trump abused his power by pressuring a foreign country to interfere in the 2020 election. He has betrayed his oath of office, betrayed our national security, and betrayed the integrity of our elections for his own personal

political gain.

- Trump withheld military aid and a White House meeting as leverage to push Ukraine to smear his political rival.
- Trump pressured and encouraged MULTIPLE countries to help his reelection campaign. **It is profoundly wrong for the president of the United States to solicit foreign governments — including our major adversaries, whose primary objective is to outmaneuver America — to support his own political interests.** Where does it stop?
- The president is not above the law. But many congressional Republicans have remained silent on this gross abuse of power. If these Republicans don't think it's wrong to ask a foreign country to interfere in an election, they should go ahead and admit that they think what Trump did is right.
- The evidence against Trump is overwhelming and continues to build. It includes:
 - The White House summary of the July 25 call, when Trump asked Zelensky to “do us a favor, though” and investigate his opponents
 - The admission by acting Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney that the military aid was held up until Ukraine opened those investigations.
 - Testimony from Bill Taylor, who told investigators that Trump made the release of military aid contingent upon Ukraine announcing those investigations.
 - Testimony from Gordon Sondland, who testified that he told Ukraine the military aid they had been promised would not be released until they announced the investigations Trump wanted.

The 2 Articles of Impeachment

- **The House voted to impeach the president on December 18, 2019:**
Article 1: 230 Yes; 197 No; 1 Present; 3 No Vote
Article 2: 229 Yes; 198 No; 1 Present; 3 No Vote
- **It is not appropriate to comment on how individual Dem reps voted. For these questions, defer to the general talking points. For example:**
 - “Why did Tulsi Gabbard vote present?”
 - “I’m sure that’s the first question she’s going to be getting in her next public appearances! If you ask me, evidence of Trump’s multiple impeachable offenses, abusing the powers of the Oval Office and obstructing Congress, is overwhelming and irrefutable. That’s what

matters here. The majority of the House agreed, and it wasn't close."

- **If asked generally about Dems "defecting," you can follow a similar pattern to the point above, or:**
 - "What's interesting to me is this idea that Republicans are 'unified' in voting against articles of impeachment, when in reality they've just made it a GOP litmus test to blindly support the president. Congressman Amash voted for both articles of impeachment and is clearly a conservative, but he's not a Republican. Why? Because less than six months ago, he had to leave the GOP because of his opposition to the president and blind partisanship. Democratic leaders didn't whip votes on this issue. Representatives were asked to vote their conscience, so that's what they did."
- Evidence of Trump's multiple impeachable offenses, abusing official powers of the Oval Office and obstructing Congress, is overwhelming and irrefutable.
- Trump's misconduct is exactly what the Founders sought to protect our democracy from when they provided Congress with the power to impeach.
 - Trump's ongoing misconduct represents a clear and present danger to our democracy and national security.
- The president is not above the law. Republicans will have to decide: did they take an oath to defend our Constitution or to defend Trump?
- Trump has betrayed his oath of office, betrayed our Constitution's system of checks and balances, betrayed our national security, and betrayed the integrity of our elections for his own personal political gain. He has given Congress no choice: impeachment is the only constitutional recourse.
- To preserve our democracy for now, and for future generations, our Constitution must be upheld. Congress must fulfill its constitutional obligation and move forward to hold the president accountable.

Abuse of Power

- Trump abused the power of the presidency. He used the official powers of his office to pressure a foreign country to interfere in our election on his behalf, risking our national security in the process. That is a violation of his constitutional oath and an impeachable offense.

- **TRUMP PRESSURED UKRAINE:** Trump pressured Ukraine to help his reelection campaign by announcing investigations that would help him politically, including into a potential 2020 opponent.
 - On the July 25 call with Zelensky, Trump asked him to “do us a favor” and investigate a 2016 conspiracy theory and his opponent.
 - Ambassador Sondland, who “followed the president’s orders,” said that military aid they had been promised would not be released, and they would not get the White House meeting they sought, until they announced the investigations Trump wanted.
 - Former Ambassador Bill Taylor told investigators that Trump made the release of military aid contingent upon Zelensky announcing those investigations, and called that demand “counterproductive” and “crazy.”
- **TRUMP ENDANGERED OUR NATIONAL SECURITY:** Trump put his personal political interests over the U.S. national interest by soliciting foreign interference in the 2020 election and withholding military aid.
 - Lieutenant Colonel Vindman testified that “in helping Ukraine, we are helping ourselves” by pushing back on Russian aggression.
 - Laura Cooper testified that providing security assistance was “absolutely” in the U.S. national interest.
 - Former Ambassador Bill Taylor testified that withholding aid had life-and-death consequences.

Obstruction of Congress

- Trump obstructed justice. He violated his constitutional oath by impeding a congressional investigation and keeping the American people in the dark. Trump directed a concerted and unprecedented defiance of lawful subpoenas, at which point impeachment is the only remedy.
- **TRUMP BLOCKED KEY WITNESSES:** Trump refused to comply with the congressional investigation and blocked members of his administration from testifying, despite lawful subpoenas compelling them to do so. At Trump’s direction, TWELVE current or former aides refused to testify in the inquiry.
- **TRUMP DIRECTED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO WITHHOLD DOCUMENTS:** Trump directed the White House and government agencies to defy lawful subpoenas.
 - Congress made 71 specific requests or demands for documents — not a single one was turned over.
 - The Office of Management and Budget and Dep’ts of State, Energy, and Defense refused to turn over even a single record to Congress.

- Witnesses have testified about taking meticulous and contemporaneous notes on the matter, but the State Department has refused to allow congressional investigators to view them.
- TRUMP'S WHITE HOUSE REFUSES TO STATE ITS CASE, despite a lawful subpoena to do so, because they have no case.
 - Trump stonewalled the investigation by refusing to turn over key documents requested by Congress.
 - The White House's attorney officially told Congress they would refuse to participate in the inquiry to even state their case.
 - In an official letter, the White House counsel told Congress that Trump and his administration would not participate in the inquiry.
- Trump's obstruction of justice is unlike anything we've seen in American presidential politics before.
 - Past presidents who were subject to an impeachment inquiry complied with some legal demands for documents at times when Trump has refused, and gave the go ahead to White House aides to testify if subpoenaed.
 - Richard Nixon: "All members of the White House staff will appear voluntarily when requested by the committee. They will testify under oath, and they will answer fully all proper questions."
 - Nixon produced documents in response to some White House subpoenas, including transcripts of more than 30 recordings or meetings involving the president.
 - Bill Clinton provided written responses to 81 questions from the House Judiciary Committee.
 - Among others, both Clinton's Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles and Counselor Mack McLarty testified.
- In America, nobody is above the law — not even the president. Congress must be able to engage in investigations of serious abuses of the public trust.

In the Senate

Background: The House will vote Jan 15 to name impeachment managers and transmit the articles of impeachment to the Senate. The trial is likely to begin early next week.

- At the start of an impeachment trial, senators take an oath to be "impartial" jurors. The American people deserve a full and fair trial.

- Republicans who vote for McConnell's rules will have to explain to their constituents and the history books why a trial without witnesses or documents could ever be considered fair.
- In order to ensure a fair trial there must be witnesses and documents. Otherwise, it's a cover-up. It is up to just four Senate Republicans to support holding a full and fair trial.
- Senate Republicans' partisanship and disregard for new evidence has been put in the spotlight, as more and more information comes out about Trump's abuse of power and the extent of his cover-up.
 - With John Bolton now willing to testify if the Senate subpoenas him, Republicans are out of excuses and have a duty to allow his testimony.
 - The Trump administration is defying a court order and refusing to turn over emails.
 - Newly revealed emails, which the Trump administration withheld from the public, make it clear that the order to withhold military aid came directly from Trump in the face of concerns about the legality of the decision.
 - Further, we learned the White House directed the Pentagon to "hold off" on sending the aid just [90 minutes](#) after Trump's July 25 call with Zelensky.
- Senate Democrats have laid out a structure for a full and fair bipartisan Senate trial, including calling for key documents and testimony from firsthand witnesses who were blocked by Trump from participating in the House inquiry.
 - These witnesses include Mick Mulvaney, John Bolton, top Mulvaney aide Robert Blair, and OMB associate director Michael Duffey.
 - An overwhelming majority of Americans, including [nearly two-thirds](#) of Republicans, say Trump should allow these witnesses to testify in a Senate trial. This includes more than three in five voters who [Susan Collins, Cory Gardner, Martha McSally, and Thom Tillis](#) will have to answer to this fall.
- Republicans who complained for months about the need for more firsthand testimony should join Democrats in ensuring the Senate sees all relevant documents and hears from key witnesses, which the White House claims exonerates Trump.
- Americans deserve a fair trial. Senators must uphold their oath to the Constitution instead of voting for a sham trial that ignores the facts and continues Trump's cover up.

In the House

- **The House voted to impeach the president on December 18, 2019.**

Article 1: 230 Yes; 197 No; 1 Present; 3 No Vote

Article 2: 229 Yes; 198 No; 1 Present; 3 No Vote

- **DNC Chair Tom Perez released the following statement:**

“This is a solemn day for our democracy. House Democrats ran for office not to impeach a president, but to improve people’s lives and fulfill their oath to defend the Constitution. The president violated his oath, and in the face of his abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, the House had a responsibility to hold him accountable.

“Republicans in Congress were given the same choice: to protect the Constitution and serve American voters, or to defend this president’s lies and corruption. They chose the latter, and the American people will not forget their betrayal. They will make their voices heard at the ballot box. And when the history of this day is written, those who voted for impeachment will be remembered for their courage and commitment to protecting our democracy.”

- The House impeached the president because of overwhelming and irrefutable evidence that Trump committed multiple impeachable offenses — abusing official powers and obstructing Congress.

Trump Abandons US Role on the Global Stage

- Without thinking of consequences, Trump continues to make chaotic and reckless decisions that put U.S. troops in harm’s way, hurt our allies and partners and endangered our national security.
- Trump must correct course and outline a clear strategy to protect American interests.
- Trump’s impulsive decision making is divorced from any strategy and

apparently coordinated with few, if any, within his own administration. It is creating more volatility, not less.

- Trump and his family have long displayed unexplained deference to dictators, inviting questions about whether this is a form of payback—or a downpayment for future investments.
 - We know that Trump has shown a pattern of placing his own personal interests ahead of our national security.
- One thing is clear: our foes are emboldened and our partners will no longer be in a position to keep the terrorist group down. Just as importantly, every current and potential partner will have even more reason to doubt America's credibility and resolve going forward.

Gun Violence

- Trump is not serious about addressing gun violence. The White House has been unable to provide any clarity on Trump's position, and Trump is now looking for excuses to abandon the issue entirely.
 - Trump is trying to blame Democrats for standing in the way of gun reform, but House Democrats have already passed legislation to expand background checks while Trump has refused to give any indication to lawmakers of what he would support.
 - Not only has Trump refused to take any action to address gun violence, he has failed to personally condemn a violent video shown at a conference for a pro-Trump group that depicted the president shooting members of the media.
- Trump must act to stem the endless massacres from gun violence. Instead, he refuses to support the House-passed bill to expand background checks and has failed to provide any guidance on what gun reform measures he would support.
 - Trump met with the head of the NRA about securing their financial support in exchange for halting any consideration of further measures to stop gun violence.
- We've heard a lot of talk from Trump about taking gun violence prevention seriously, but it's all been lies and empty promises. Trump has only shown that he stands in lockstep with the NRA.

- While Trump has put a former NRA lawyer on the team drafting gun reforms and met with Wayne LaPierre, anti-gun violence advocacy groups say the White House has ignored their attempts to work with them on gun reform proposals.
 - Trump said “we are working with the NRA” on gun safety, but not Democrats in Congress.
- Trump said he supports background checks, but after speaking with the NRA, Trump backed off his push for new legislation and took universal background checks off the table.
 - We’ve seen this show before -- Trump told Parkland school shooting victims and their families that he would fight for them, stand up to the NRA, and support a comprehensive gun reform bill. Instead, he chose to side with the NRA over the vast majority of Americans who support commonsense gun reforms.
- All we’ve heard from Republican lawmakers are their ‘thoughts and prayers.’ Republicans have refused to talk about these recent mass shootings or seriously address the issue of gun violence in America.
 - 93 percent of Americans support universal background checks, including 89 percent of Republicans and 94 percent of gun households.
 - 70 percent of voters, including 55 percent of Republicans, support an assault weapons ban.
- While Republicans refuse to take action, Democrats will continue to fight for commonsense reforms. There’s a reason why a majority of Americans trust congressional Democrats rather than Trump to handle gun laws.

Americans are sick of this charade. The vast majority of Americans support commonsense gun reforms to ensure that tragedies like the shootings in Texas and Dayton never happen again. It is long past time for Trump and Republicans to join Democrats in taking action.

The Economy

- Americans across the country are not feeling benefits from our economy:
 - [Nearly two-thirds of voters say they are not better off financially](#) since Trump was elected, and 31% say they are actually worse off.
 - [More Americans now say the economy is getting worse](#) (48%) than getting better (46%).

- Trump promised he would improve economic growth — but he hasn't. Third quarter GDP growth slowed to 1.9%, far below the 4% he promised.
 - Trump previously said 1.9% meant ["the economy is in deep trouble."](#)
- Confidence in the economy is falling.
 - Two-thirds of Americans believe a recession is likely in the next year.
- Trump promised he'd raise workers' wages, significantly boost job creation, bring back manufacturing, and put more money in the pockets of working families. Data show that a different story.
 - Recent data shows that real average earnings declined last month.
 - Factory output declined again last month as the manufacturing industry falls further into recession.
 - Trump's erratic trade policies have cost the U.S. hundreds of thousands of jobs so far, and 2019 is on pace for the slowest year of job growth since 2010.
- Trump promised his tax law would pay for itself and that it would benefit workers — but that didn't happen either.
 - For the first time in decades, last year, America's billionaires paid a lower tax rate than the working class.
 - The deficit for FY 2019 reached nearly \$1 trillion, the highest in seven years and \$205 billion more than a year ago.
- Trump promised his tax law would pay for itself and that it would benefit workers — but that didn't happen either.
 - For the first time in history, last year, America's billionaires paid a lower tax rate than the working class.
 - The deficit for FY 2019 reached nearly \$1 trillion, the highest in seven years and \$205 billion more than a year ago.
 - Trump's tax law failed to boost job creation as he promised it would.
 - Americans abroad are still unfairly burdened by the current tax structure.

Trump Escalated Conflict in the Middle East

You will note that all mentions of Iran are passive, with the focus on how Trump is failing to make Americans safer. And of course, no mention of the relationship between Iraq and Iran, or other Middle Eastern countries, or internal politics within Iran.

- Trump's chaotic approach to Iran put American lives at risk, and created a situation in which the best case scenario is simply avoiding all-out war.

- House Democrats took action last week to curb Trump's ability to escalate tensions in the Middle East and reassert Congress's right to declare war.
 - Trump has taken to [tweeting](#) disgusting and Islamophobic attacks on Democrats to try to distract from his administration's inability to get its story straight.
- Trump now wants to take a victory lap for exceeding this low bar, but the reality is that he's made us less safe and we're far from out of the woods of Trump's recklessness.
- The changing rationalization for the strike against Soleimani undermines confidence in Trump's decision-making and whether his administration has been telling the truth.
 - Defense Secretary Esper and National Security Adviser O'Brien were unable to defend Trump's claim that four U.S. embassies were being targeted by Soleimani before the U.S. strike, and the State Department had [no knowledge](#) of any alleged threats to U.S. embassies.
 - In fact, Pompeo and O'Brien have admitted that they didn't even know when or where the "imminent" attack was going to be.
 - Despite claiming it was a response to an "imminent threat," Trump reportedly authorized Soleimani's killing seven months ago.
 - Trump defended his administration's shifting explanations falling apart by claiming "it doesn't really matter" if there was an imminent threat or not.
- The Trump administration owes Congress and the public a full accounting of the "imminent threat" that faced Americans preceding Trump's strike against Soleimani, and its strategy going forward.
 - Both Democratic and Republican members of Congress were deeply concerned by the administration's classified briefing on the escalation of conflict with Iran.
 - The fact that Trump's strike was conducted without authorization for the use of military force against Iran from Congress, and without consulting or even notifying congressional leaders ahead of time, is a further indication that this decision was not handled properly.
- Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign has failed. Instead of stabilizing activity in the region, the increased conflict has done the opposite.
- Trump promised to stop "endless wars," but his recklessness in the region forced us to send in additional troops and brought us to the brink of yet another major conflict.

- This moment calls for real diplomacy — not the temporary de-escalation without a strategy.
- **The fact that this strike was conducted without authorization from Congress for the use of military force, and without consulting or even notifying congressional leaders ahead of time, is a further indication that this decision was not handled properly.**
 - **Trump's actions are in direct opposition to the balance of powers upon which our country was founded.**
 - **The administration must provide an immediate, comprehensive briefing of the full Congress on military engagement related to Iran and next steps under consideration, and it must work with Congress to advance a bonafide de-escalatory strategy that prevents further violence.**
- The Trump administration's poor foreign policy track record raises the question of whether it undertook the necessary analysis before ordering this strike, or has the capacity to prevent this from escalating into a larger conflict. Americans deserve to know what the "imminent threat" against America was.
- Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran, which replaced the Iran deal he abandoned over the objections of many in his national security team, has failed.
- Trump promised to stop "endless wars", but his recklessness in the region has brought us to the brink of yet another major conflict.

February 19 and 25 Debates

- NBC and MSNBC hosted the February 19 debate in Las Vegas, Nevada, on Wednesday, February 19. Candidates that participated included former Vice President Joe Biden, former Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Sen. Bernie Sanders, former Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Sen. Elizabeth Warren.
- February 25: CBS News and the Congressional Black Caucus Institute will co-host the tenth debate at The Gaillard Center in Charleston, South Carolina.

Watch Parties Around the World (and Across the US)

The way we win is by reaching voters and organizing everywhere. That is why the DNC, state parties and voters worldwide are hosting watch parties (with hundreds through Democrats Abroad!), to hear from candidates on their ideas for us.

Qualifying for the Debate

- Voting in the 2020 Democratic presidential primary is underway, and the threshold for debate participation will continue to adjust to reflect the stage of the race and the will of voters.
- The DNC has said, since 2017, that the threshold would go up as we get closer to voting because candidates must show progress, [and that](#) the threshold would be reevaluated as voting begins.
- To qualify for the Feb 19 debate, candidates needed *either* a delegate or polling requirement:
 - Delegate requirement: Pick up one national convention delegate in Iowa or New Hampshire.
 - Polling requirement: Receive 10% support in four national or single-state (South Carolina or Nevada) polls, or 12% in two single-state polls of South Carolina or Nevada.
- To win the presidential nomination, a candidate must win 1991 delegates. To make this debate, you just need one.
- To be awarded a single delegate, a candidate needs to reach 15% support. A polling criteria of 10% is more than fair.
- On voting replacing the small-dollar donor requirement:
 - The donor threshold was appropriate for the opening stages of the race, when candidates were building their organizations.
 - The donor threshold energized millions of grassroots donors earlier in the process and gave them a voice like never before.
 - Collectively, primary campaigns were able to keep fundraising pace with the Trump and RNC because of their small-dollar donor bases.
 - Energized supporters are now motivated to go to the polls, support their candidate, talk to their friends and family, and be the backbone of the rest of the presidential election.

On the Threshold:

- The DNC and its media partners are required by law to implement objective criteria to determine who qualifies for the debate. The DNC can not and does not pick and choose who gets on the stage.
- The DNC has said, since 2017, that the threshold would rise as we near primaries as it's been in previous cycles.
- The DNC has also said repeatedly that the threshold would be reevaluated once votes were cast and the primary was underway.
- The threshold continues to be generous and fair. By mid-February, candidates must be able to demonstrate this relatively basic level of broad-based support.
- The DNC has had the most inclusive process in history.
 - The first two debates consisted of 20 people with two consecutive nights of prime time; and we've had low polling thresholds of 1%, 2%, 3%, 4% and 5%.
 - The polling threshold has included more state polls than ever before, online polls, and there have been multiple polling pathways.
 - More candidates have made the debate stage than ever before, more women than ever before and more people of color than ever before.
 - The DNC has required every network to have a woman and person of color moderator for each debate. This didn't happen on its own.

Upcoming Debates

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DNC's Approach To Primary Debates

- **12 DEBATES TOTAL:** The DNC will host 12 DNC-sanctioned debates total - that's double the number of debates first announced in 2016.

- **EMPOWERED THE GRASSROOTS:** The DNC added a grassroots fundraising component to the threshold to empower small-dollar donors and to be as inclusive as possible. Setting this benchmark for campaigns encourages and rewards them for engaging in work that the DNC believes they absolutely must do in order to beat Donald Trump.
- **PRIME TIME, WEEKNIGHTS:** The DNC negotiated with its media partners to ensure the debates were held in prime time and on weeknights - including two nights in a row if necessary, something unprecedented for either party.
- **NO KIDS TABLE:** For debates spanning two nights, the lineup for each night was selected through a process that ensured no candidate began the debate calendar at an immediate disadvantage because of a "kids table" debate.

DIVERSE AND FEMALE MODERATORS: The DNC required media partners to have a female moderator and a person of color moderating every debate.

About the February 7 Debate

- ABC, in partnership with WMUR-TV and Apple News, will host the eighth debate at St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire, on Friday, February 7.
- Seven candidates have qualified for the debate so far, though candidates have until 11:59 p.m. on Feb. 6 to make it. The stage will include: former Vice President Joe Biden, former Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Sen. Bernie Sanders, executive Tom Steyer, Sen. Elizabeth Warren and entrepreneur Andrew Yang.

About the January Debate

- The following candidates qualified for the seventh Democratic debate co-hosted by CNN and the Des Moines Register at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, Tuesday, January 14:
 - Joe Biden, Pete Buttigieg, Amy Klobuchar, Bernie Sanders, and Elizabeth Warren.
- The debate aired live on CNN, CNN International and CNN en Español and be available worldwide online.

- The qualification threshold for the seventh debate required a reasonable grassroots fundraising requirement and polling requirement:
 - GRASSROOTS FUNDRAISING REQUIREMENT: Candidates had to receive donations from at least 225,000 unique donors, with 1,000 unique donors in a minimum of 20 states. That's a moderate increase from the 200,000 donor requirement in place for the January debate.
 - POLLING REQUIREMENT: The debate criteria continued to give candidates two pathways to meet the polling requirement. Candidates had to either receive 5% support in four national or early-state polls, or 7% in two early-state polls.

About the December Debate

- The following candidates qualified for the sixth Democratic debate co-hosted by PBS NewsHour and POLITICO at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles Thursday, December 19:
 - Joe Biden, Pete Buttigieg, Amy Klobuchar, Bernie Sanders, Tom Steyer, Elizabeth Warren, and Andrew Yang.
- The debate aired live on PBS nationwide, simulcast live on CNN, CNN International and CNN en Español and was available worldwide online.
- The qualification threshold for the sixth debate required a relatively low grassroots fundraising requirement and polling requirement:
 - GRASSROOTS FUNDRAISING REQUIREMENT: Candidates had to receive donations from at least 200,000 unique donors, with 800 unique donors in a minimum of 20 states. That's a moderate increase from the 165,000 donor requirement in place for the November debate.
 - POLLING REQUIREMENT: The December debate criteria continued to give candidates two pathways to meet the polling requirement. Candidates had to either receive 4% support in four national or early-state polls, or 6% in two early-state polls.

About the November Debate

- The fifth debate took place Nov 20 in Atlanta, Georgia.
- 10 candidates qualified to participate, based on criteria announced in Sept:
 - VP Joe Biden, Sen. Cory Booker, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, Sen. Kamala Harris, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Sen. Bernie Sanders, Mr. Tom Steyer, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, and Mr. Andrew Yang.
- The DNC is committed to an inclusive approach and has taken steps to run fair, transparent Democratic presidential primary debates, aiming to:
 - (1) give the grassroots a bigger voice than ever before;
 - (2) showcase our candidates in this historically large field;
 - (3) have a debate on the issues, not hand size; and
 - (4) reach as many voters as possible
- The qualification threshold required candidates to reach a relatively low grassroots fundraising requirement and a polling requirement:
 - Candidates had to receive donations from at least 165,000 donors, with 600 donors in a minimum of 20 states. That's a moderate increase from the 130,000 donors required for the Sept/Oct debates.
***In other words, if a candidate totaled their number of donors per state, at least 20 states have to have at least 600 donors each.*
 - The polling threshold also increased but the new criteria gave candidates two pathways to meet the polling requirement. Candidates had to either receive at least 3% support in four national or early-state polls, or at least 5% in two early-state polls.
- The threshold was intended to be generous and fair, requiring candidates to demonstrate a minimal level broad-based support.
 - The DNC has said, since 2017, that the threshold would go up as we get closer to voting because candidates must show progress. It's been this way in previous cycles for both parties.
 - At 3%, the general polling threshold is still below the margin of error of the vast majority of reputable polls.
 - Candidates who go on to be competitive in the primaries, let alone win the nomination, have polled well above 3% in October and November of the year before voting begins.
 - Candidates are not asked to average their polls, as has been done in many past cycles. This means that candidates that might have 0% in

multiple polls are not penalized and could still make the debate stage.

- The polling window was two months long. The DNC's list of qualifying polls is longer than ever, and the polls the DNC uses are more diverse than ever before.

About the October Debate

- The 4th Democratic presidential primary debate was on Oct 16 in Ohio.
- Based on the qualification criteria agreed to by the DNC, CNN, and NYT in May, the following candidates qualified for the debate:
 - Vice President Joe Biden, Sen. Cory Booker, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Sec. Julian Castro, Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, Sen. Kamala Harris, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Rep. Beto O'Rourke, Sen. Bernie Sanders, Mr. Tom Steyer, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, and Mr. Andrew Yang
- The debate is available for free worldwide on CNN and NYT platforms.

QUALIFICATIONS: Candidates who qualified for the Sept debate automatically qualified for October. Those that didn't qualify for September had until Oct 1 to meet the same requirements:

- **Polling: At least 2% in 4 national polls.**
- **Donors: At least 130,000 unique donors, with at least 400 unique donors in 20 or more states.**
***In other words, if a candidate totaled their number of donors per state, at least 20 states have to have at least 400 donors.*
- **Candidates must reach BOTH requirements to qualify.**
 - This is double the 1% polling threshold and a 65,000 donor minimum from June/July, when candidates had to clear one of the two bars.
 - The June/July debates were more lenient, giving as many candidates as possible the opportunity to introduce themselves to America.

About the September Debate

TOPLINES: Integrity, ideas, substance, solutions

- The American people saw leadership on stage last night. They saw candidates who are laser-focused on the future. And they saw a debate on the issues.

- The contrast with Donald Trump was clear: this debate focused on the policy solutions to serious problems. We didn't hear candidates talk about hand-size.
- What's the biggest takeaway? As Americans, it's clear that the Democratic Party has our back. No matter which one of our exceptional candidates clinches the nomination, the American people know they'll have a leader they can trust.
- The third Democratic presidential primary debate was held Sept 12 in Houston, Texas. The DNC partnered with ABC and Univision to put on this debate, and it was held at HBCU Texas Southern University.
- The rules for participation were transparent, fair, and most importantly, they were laid out early. Democrats have gone above and beyond to run the most fair and transparent presidential primary debates in history.
- The debate has been made available to as many viewers as possible, and is available for the international audience via ABC and Univision's YouTube channels, as well as ABC's Facebook page.
- The debate featured ten candidates. These candidates were invited to participate based on qualification criteria agreed to by the DNC and ABC, as announced in May 2019.
 - Vice President Joe Biden, Sen. Cory Booker, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Sec. Julian Castro, Sen. Kamala Harris, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Rep. Beto O'Rourke, Sen. Bernie Sanders, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Mr. Andrew Yang
- Debate topics included:
 - Gun violence - No matter what candidate or where a candidate is from, everyone believes we need to act on gun violence, while Republicans have done nothing.
 - Health care - Everyone on that stage agrees we need to expand access to health care, not take it away.
 - Economy
 - Climate Change
 - Immigration
 - Education

About the July Debate

- 20 candidates joined the 2nd Democratic presidential primary debate, July 30 and 31 in Detroit, Michigan.
 - Night 1: Gov. Steve Bullock, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Rep. John Delaney, Gov. John Hickenlooper, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Rep. Beto O'Rourke, Rep. Tim Ryan, Sen. Bernie Sanders, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Ms. Marianne Williamson.
 - Night 2: Sen. Michael Bennet, Vice President Joe Biden, Sen. Cory Booker, Sec. Julian Castro, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, Sen. Kamala Harris, Gov. Jay Inslee, Mr. Andrew Yang
- They talked about:
 - Gun violence - No matter what candidate or where a candidate is from, everyone believes we need to act on gun violence, while Republicans have done nothing.
 - Health care - Everyone on that stage agrees we need to expand access to health care, not take it away.
 - Economy
 - Climate Change
 - Immigration

About the June Debate

- TWO NIGHTS, 20 CANDIDATES in Miami, Florida, making it the largest debate of its kind, ever.
 - Night 1: Sen Cory Booker, Sec Julián Castro, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Rep John Delaney, Rep Tulsi Gabbard, Gov Jay Inslee, Sen Amy Klobuchar, Rep Beto O'Rourke, Rep Tim Ryan, Sen Elizabeth Warren
 - Night 2: Sen Michael Bennet, VP Joe Biden, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Sen Kirsten Gillibrand, Sen Kamala Harris, Gov John Hickenlooper, Sen Bernie Sanders, Rep Eric Swalwell, Ms Marianne Williamson, Mr Andrew Yang

- They talked about:
 - Health care
 - Economy
 - Climate Change
 - Immigration
 - Women's reproductive rights
 - Racial and economic justice
 - Gun violence

- Candidates were divided over two nights through random selection by the media partner. The random selection was divided into two groups - those polling at 2% or above and those under 2% (so half of the >2% were selected, at random for night one, and half for night two; similarly, half of the <2% were selected at random for night one, and half for night two).