

# Democratic Dilemma

## UNRAVELING THE MESS OF DEMOCRATS RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT IN 2020

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As of April 25, 22 candidates are running for president in the 2020 election, with 20 being Democrats, and two being Republicans. For the sake of this analysis, President Donald Trump will be excluded because most are already familiar with his policies and problems. The top 10 candidates have been chosen and elaborated on here based on the Real Clear Politics average of polls.



**JOE BIDEN**

The former vice president of the United States is a popular contender for the nomination, but has come under fire recently due to sexual harassment allegations and for his role in the Clarence Thomas Supreme Court confirmation hearings of 1991, specifically his response to Anita Hill's testimony. He has since issued an apology, but that's part of the controversy — it has been 28 years and he's choosing to issue an apology now. In regards to his past, he doesn't exactly have a clean record either, as he voted for the Defense of Marriage Act and was in favor of the Iraq War. A lot has changed since then and Joe Biden hopes to further his platform based off his experience and the lack of it from his rivals. His platform currently lacks in actual policy, but he names off what he has plans for, such as a healthcare and college debt.

**BERNIE SANDERS**



The 77-year-old senator from Vermont plans to run for president again after his failed attempt to claim the Democratic nomination in 2016. Sanders plans to run on a similar platform to what he ran on in 2016, this time with the addition of a Medicare-for-all plan to create the single-payer healthcare system. Additionally, he is a co-sponsor of the Green New Deal, another sweepingly important plan. With these large plans, we find one of his major criticisms, the fact that all these plans would require a large amount of government spending. However, he does counter these plans with the fact that he would tax the wealthy exponentially. His other major criticisms are his age and the fact that he self-identifies as a socialist, since he's always been registered as an independent and never been a part of the Democratic party.



**ELIZABETH WARREN**

Former bankruptcy law scholar and current Massachusetts senator has been spearheading a plan to eliminate \$640 billion in student debt and offer free public college by taxing the wealthy. She is one of the few senators to propose plans to break up Google, Amazon and Facebook mergers. She claims to be a "democratic capitalist" as opposed to Sander's "democratic socialist" claims. She is another co-sponsor on the Medicare-for-all plan, the Green New Deal and the Marijuana Justice Act. She has been criticized in the past saying she is of Cherokee descent, and after a DNA test, she later made a public apology.

**KAMALA HARRIS**



Longtime lawyer and recent senator, Harris is positioned to change the government she works for. Harris signed on as a co-sponsor to the Medicare-for-all plan and the Green New Deal. She plans to lift taxes on middle-class households, wants to increase teacher pay and decriminalize sex work. She has received most of her flak from her actions as the California Attorney General, such as opposing a bill that investigates police shootings and defending the death penalty. Some of her controversy comes from a bit of hypocrisy on her part, as she supports marijuana and has admitted to using it personally, but has put away nearly 1,500 people for possession and usage. Most of her career as an attorney general contains these contradictions, so make of that what you will



**PETE BUTTIGIEG**

Openly-gay, young mayor of South Bend, Indiana and looking to be a popular contender in the election. Buttigieg is a strong proponent of The Paris Climate Agreement, The Green New Deal and believes climate change to be a national threat. In addition, he supports universal background checks on guns and banning guns in schools. He shares most of the key hallmarks of other democratic platforms, but highlights his views in regard to climate change, college costs and guns. He has no major controversy surrounding him, with the most notable controversy being that he's a millennial candidate, which is apparently a problem for some people.

**BETO O'ROURKE**



The seemingly unheard of and now household-name comes from his nationally publicized, narrow loss against Sen. Ted Cruz in the 2018 midterm elections, but seeks to attain the Democratic nomination along with 21 other Democratic candidates. O'Rourke's strongest policy is perhaps his stance on climate change, having proposed a \$5 trillion dollar plan to address it, listing it as the "greatest threat we face" according to his Facebook. He is vocal critic of Trump's border wall plan and supports immigration reform. Additionally, one of his more controversial ideas is Supreme Court reform, expanding the amount of judges and giving each party an equal amount of picks. These ideas scare some democrats into thinking that he may "not be progressive enough," despite sharing a large amount of policies with other traditional democrats.