



“Challenging People to Shape
a Better Future Now”

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Democrats Need Winning Formula

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel just got spanked. Despite a campaign war chest of more than \$15 million and the support of President Barack Obama, the former Congressman and White House chief of staff could not avoid a run-off in the non-partisan election.

Garnering 45 percent of the vote to runner-up Jesus “Chuy” Garcia’s 34 percent, he did not clear the 50 percent bar for victory. Emanuel, the darling of the main-stream Democratic Party, has earned the dubious distinction of being in the first Chicago mayoral runoff in nearly 20 years. He also runs the risk of being the first incumbent mayor ousted since Harold Washington beat Jane Byrne in 1983.

The man who delivered the Emanuel whipping, Chuy Garcia is a county commissioner and former alderman. His base is the poorer neighborhoods of Chicago, the Latino community, and the teachers’ union. He pounded on the theme of income inequality and exploited the widespread perception that Emanuel is arrogant and removed from poor people. Indeed, most of Rahm Emanuel’s support came from wealthy White voters who helped raise his large campaign fund. Garcia didn’t have a fraction of Emanuel’s money, but he had a large cadre of volunteers to help deliver his votes.

There were three other candidates in the race, and their combined 20 percent of the vote will likely determine the outcome of the April 7 election. Just a day after the election, both Emanuel



**BENNETT
COLLEGE**

Julianne
Malveaux

and Garcia were courting their competitors, seeking their endorsements. So far, those opponents have been noncommittal.

Emanuel’s loss is a major setback to the Democratic establishment. Voters are tired of income inequality being acknowledged, with nothing being done about it. Their only recourse is the

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According to the Chicago Tribune, Emanuel rode to victory on the coats of Blacks four years ago with 58 percent of the votes in the six wards that are more than 90 percent Black. This time, he won 42 to 45 percent of those same wards.

Another possible Democratic setback is looming as Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) weighs the possibility of challenging former Secretary of State

Hilary Rodham Clinton.

Warren has been portrayed as a champion of the people, especially where consumer protection and financial matters are concerned. She has raised her voice against financial skullduggery by banking institutions, been a critic of attempts to weaken the Dodd Frank bill, and a defender of consumer rights.

The architect of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), Warren has been the darling of the left, and has enhanced that status with her travel to many progressive gatherings. While she has demurred when asked if she will run for president, her replies, if somewhat definite, also seem

coy. Additionally, there have been efforts to draft her into running, with online petitions and other efforts.

While Warren seems to have little baggage, Hilary Rodham Clinton seems less than invincible. Questions have been raised about the Clinton Foundation and the sources of its money, especially when this money has come from foreign governments that have mixed relationships with the United States.

Other questions have been

raised about the high six-figure speeches Clinton gives and the audiences she gives them to. Certainly, she is entitled to earn what the market will bear, but some say those who foot the bill are the very Wall Street scions that Elizabeth Warren rails against.

Could Elizabeth Warren seriously challenge Clinton? If she chooses to enter the presidential race in the next several months, she will be entering the race at about the time Barack Obama did eight years ago. Like Obama, she has penned an autographical book that explains the origins of her populist views. And like Obama, she has the chance of “catching on” with voters.

After Clinton, the only competition Warren is likely to have for the Democratic nomination is Vice President Joe Biden. But Biden, at 73, may be considered too old to be considered a viable choice for president. Biden also has a history of both oral and behavioral gaffes, most recently offering a rather intimate whisper into the ear of Defense Secretary Ashton Carter’s wife Stephanie at Carter’s swearing in.

Whether she enters the race or not, Warren’s very presence pushes Clinton to the left on populist economic issues. And if Warren enters the race and pulls three or four states, and about 20 percent of the popular vote, she offers Clinton a serious challenge. If these “draft Warren” petitions catch on and hundreds of thousands of signatures are gathered, that too, presents a challenge to Hilary Clinton.

Shelby County to D.C. March Needed

After ceremonies wrap up Sunday in Alabama commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Selma-to-Montgomery March and the signing of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, a group of die-hard demonstrators will re-enact the full march.

“We are re-enacting the full 54-mile March this year,” Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) President Charles Steele announced at a press conference in Montgomery. “The March will begin in Selma on Sunday, March 8th, with the Commemoration of Bloody Sunday, and will conclude on Friday, March 13, with an 11 a.m. event on the steps of the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery.”

At the news conference, Alabama State Senator Hank Sanders (D-Selma) correctly noted, “The right to vote is being challenged at every turn. From voter photo ID (modern day poll tax), proof of citizenship to register (modern day literacy test) and reduction in voting and voter registration days to the Shelby County v. Holder decision gutting the 1965 Voting Rights Act and more, Americans are losing the right to vote, which so many people sacrificed their lives and blood to secure.”

In Shelby V. Holder, by a margin of 5 to 4 in June 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court voted to gut Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, which required jurisdictions with a



**THE CURRY
REPORT**

George E.
Curry

proven history of racial discrimination to pre-clear any election law change with the U.S. Attorney General or the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C.

The case grew out of a decision

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by Calera, a small city in Shelby County, Ala., to implement a redistricting plan that led to the defeat of the city’s lone African American City Council member. Under the plan, a district that was 71 percent Black was redrawn so that its Black population was reduced to 23 percent. The plan was never submitted for pre-approval.

According to the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law, more than 40 bills have been introduced

in 17 states that would restrict access to registration or voting.

In view of these politically motivated efforts to suppress the Black vote in particular, I am hereby proposing a Shelby County, Ala. to Washington, D.C. March, with the goal of getting Congress to protect the integrity of voting in the U.S. Just as the Selma-to-Montgomery March led to the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, a Shelby County to D.C. March could pressure Congress to act again to protect the sacred right to vote.

The march would kick-off in Calera, and address the relevant

voting issues along the march route.

After Calera, Ala., the next stop would be in Georgia, where marchers could express support for proposed legislation that would expand opportunities for eligible citizens to vote.

In South Carolina, demonstrators could support a bill that would relax voter ID or citizenship laws and legislation that would make it easier for people with disabilities to cast a ballot.

Crossing into North Carolina,

demonstrators can join an effort to overturn the Voter Information Verification Act, a voter suppression bill signed into law by Republican Gov. Pat McCrory. The measure requires government-issued voter ID, ends same day voter registration, bans Sunday voting and discontinues pre-voter registration for 16- and 17-year-olds.

Marchers might want to spend some extra time in Virginia before moving on to D.C. to oppose a bill that would restrict access to registration and voting and support a competing one that would increase access to voting, oppose a bill that would require proof of citizenship to register or to vote, support proposed legislation that would expand early in-person voting, back a proposed legislation to reduce waiting times for voting, endorse a bill to expand opportunities to vote by absentee ballot, support a bill to protect voters from having their name wrongfully removed from voting lists, and back a proposed bill to increase the likelihood of contested provisional ballots being counted.

In Washington, demonstrators should underscore the embarrassing reality that D.C. is the only capital of a democratic country in the world that does not enjoy voting representation in its national legislative body or true home rule.