The Cook Political Report’s
Road Map to the 2020 Election

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American Psychological Association
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The opinions presented are those of the presenter only.
Disclaimer: A Failed 2016 Prediction…
I. How Did We Get Here?
Lifestyle Realignment of the Electorate

Lebanon, TN → Austin, TX
The Great Organic/Nostalgic Sort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>Election Winner</th>
<th>Whole Foods</th>
<th>Cracker Barrel</th>
<th>Culture Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Clinton (D)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Clinton (D)</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Bush (R)</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Bush (R)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Obama (D)</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Obama (D)</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Trump Era: Huge Suburban/Rural Divide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Whole Foods Counties</th>
<th>Cracker Barrel Counties</th>
<th>Culture Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Trump (R)</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **2016**: Whole Foods/Cracker Barrel gap was widest ever.
- **2018**: 70% of districts Democrats flipped contain a Whole Foods.
2014 Pew Study: Conservatives Want Bigger Houses, Liberals Desire “Walkability”

Liberals Want Walkable Communities, Conservatives Prefer Bigger Houses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Ideology</th>
<th>Consistently Liberal</th>
<th>Mostly Liberal</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Mostly Conservative</th>
<th>Consistently Conservative</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The houses are larger and farther apart, but schools, stores, and restaurants are several miles away.</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The houses are smaller and closer to each other, but schools, stores, and restaurants are within walking distance</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2014 Political Polarization in the American Public
Notes: Ideological consistency based on a scale of 10 political values questions (see Appendix A). Don’t know responses not shown.
Parties Diverge on Nation’s Top Priorities

**1999**
- Average Partisan Gap: 14 Pts.
- 100% of Rep/Lean Rep
- 25
- 50
- 75
- 100
- % of Dem/Lean Dem

**TOP PRIORITIES FOR ...**
- **Republicans**: Education, Crime, Social Security, Morality, Health care
- **Democrats**: Education, Health care, Social Security, Crime, Medicare

**2009**
- Average Partisan Gap: 15 Pts.
- Providing health insurance to the uninsured

**TOP PRIORITIES FOR ...**
- **Republicans**: Terrorism, Economy, Jobs, Military, Social Security
- **Democrats**: Jobs, Terrorism, Military, Education, Social Security

**2019**
- Average Partisan Gap: 19 Pts.
- Largest Gap: 46 Pts.
- Climate change

**TOP PRIORITIES FOR ...**
- **Republicans**: Terrorism, Economy, Social Security, Immigration, Military
- **Democrats**: Health care, Education, Environment, Medicare, Poor and needy

*PEW RESEARCH CENTER*
Four Takeaways from the Midterms
1. High Passions = Historic Turnout

- **Modern Record**: At roughly 84% of 2016 presidential race, it was the highest recorded turnout for a modern midterm election.
2. 2018: A Tale of Two Elections

Rural vs. Suburban
House: A Suburban Revolt Against Trump Powered a Democratic Takeover

- **Democratic gains**: 40 seats – largest Democratic pickup since Watergate. Southern suburbs voting like northern ones.
But in the **Senate**, Democrats *Lost* Seats, Mostly in Rural States (Now **53R** to **47D**)

![Map showing Senate seats lost by Democrats, mostly in rural states.](map.png)
3. **Women**: 2018 as the “Year of the Fired Up Female College Graduate”

- **Gender Canyon**: Democrats won white **women with** college degrees by 20% but lost white **men without** degrees by 34% (Edison Research).
2018: First Year in History Americans Elected 100 Women to the U.S. House

- **Reaction to Trump**: Democrats expanded their ranks of women by 46%, while Republican women declined 43%.
4. **Red Exodus**: Out with Trump Skeptics…

And in with Trump Loyalists (Mostly)…
II. Where Are We Going?
Dominant Perception of DC: Dysfunction

- **Longest in history**: 35-day partial government shutdown only ended when President Trump faced immense pressure from business leaders & his own agency heads – not just Democrats & Republicans in Congress.
Still Playing *Without* a Full Team on the Field

Of 706 key positions requiring Senate confirmation...

- **382** Confirmed
- **195** Formally nominated
- **125** No nominee
But Beneath Chaos, Plenty Getting Done

Fact: More new laws passed in Trump’s first two years (443) than under Obama (385) or Bush (383). (Source: Mehlman Castagnetti Rosen & Thomas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bipartisan Legislation</th>
<th>House Yeas</th>
<th>Senate Yeas</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russia/Iran Sanctions (6/17)</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHIP Reauthorization (1/18)</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice Reform (12/18)</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Bill (12/18)</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
New Congress: Meet the 92 (!) Freshmen

- **Democratic newcomers:** Many women, military veterans & Obama officials - not political officeholders.

- **Republican newcomers:** Trump loyalists, a former minor league hockey player & Mike Pence’s brother.
Implications of a Newly Divided Congress

- **Border Part II**: Congress unlikely to override National Emergency veto

- **Aggressive Oversight**: Trump finances, opioid distribution/drug pricing, migrant detention, CEO pay, net neutrality

- **Reversing Regulatory Rollback?** New scrutiny on banking/energy sectors

- **Potential Deals**: Infrastructure, RX prices, USMCA & trade, antitrust/privacy

- **But, Looming Over it All**: Mueller Report and/or impeachment fervor
Senate 2020: Republican “Insurance” Pickups Make Dems’ Path Difficult

- **Limited exposure**: Only Republicans in Clinton-won states are Cory Gardner (CO) & Susan Collins (ME). And, Dems will probably lose Alabama (Jones).
Opposite Presidents. Similar Political Trajectories?

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catchy Slogan</td>
<td>“Change You Can Believe In”</td>
<td>”Make America Great Again”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Success</td>
<td>Affordable Care Act</td>
<td>Tax Cuts &amp; Jobs Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Failure</td>
<td>Carbon Tax (Cap and Trade)</td>
<td>Healthcare Repeal &amp; Replace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Result</td>
<td>Loses House, Holds Senate</td>
<td>Loses House, Holds Senate</td>
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Three Reasons Trump Could Absolutely Win Again in 2020*

*Despite sporting a lower approval rating than Clinton, Bush or Obama had at this point in their presidency
1. **Trump** Has United Republican Support

- Trump’s approval rating among *Republican* voters is still 89% (Gallup weekly average).
2. Democrats Have a Fundamental Geography Problem

- Every four years, the U.S. electorate gets 3% more college-educated and 2% less white. Theoretically, this should benefit the Democratic Party.
But Demographics Benefit **Democrats** the Most in States that Matter the Least

**Latinos are most influential in non-swing states**
Estimated Latino share of the likely 2016 electorate, by state
2016: 3 of 3,141 Counties Elected Trump

- Trump lost the popular vote by 2.9 million votes, but won the Electoral College thanks to Macomb, MI; Westmoreland, PA & Waukesha, WI.
3. **Dems’ Primary Rules: Trump’s Best Ally?**

- Democrats’ delegate rules & “frontloaded” primary calendar – CA & TX now vote on March 3rd – increases the risk of a “brokered convention.”
# 2020 Democrats: Contenders to Watch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Left/Progressive</th>
<th>Centrist/Blank Slate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Established/Elite</td>
<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Photo" />  <img src="image2.jpg" alt="Photo" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.jpg" alt="Photo" /> <img src="image4.jpg" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Elite/Disrupter</td>
<td><img src="image5.jpg" alt="Photo" /> <img src="image6.jpg" alt="Photo" /></td>
<td><img src="image7.jpg" alt="Photo" /> <img src="image8.jpg" alt="Photo" /></td>
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Democrats/2020: Expect the Unexpected
Democrats/2020: Expect the Unexpected
Questions…