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SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
PAUL SIMON
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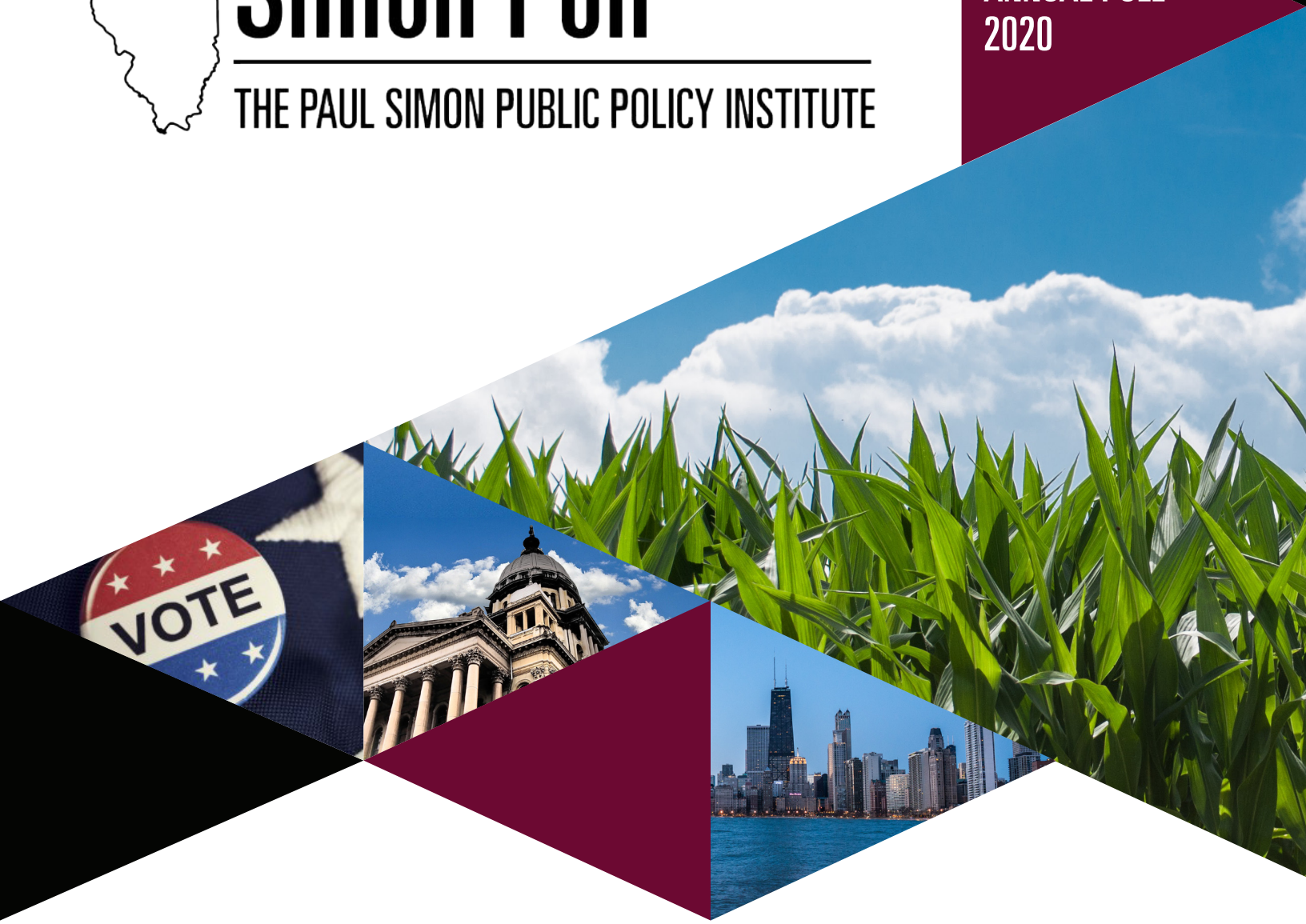
Simon Poll™

THE PAUL SIMON PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE

ANNUAL POLL
2020



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Bernie Sanders leads for the Democratic Nomination; Michael Bloomberg not far behind
Governor J. B. Pritzker Job Approval Improves

With just less than a month to go until the March 17th presidential primaries in Illinois, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders leads former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg in the Democratic primary race. Former Vice President Joe Biden is in third place. In the Republican primary, President Donald J. Trump holds a commanding lead of 89 percent among likely voters. Those are the highlights of the statewide Simon Poll™ released today by the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

The poll of 1,000 registered voters was conducted between February 10 and 17. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. Registered voters were asked about their likelihood of voting, with a subgroup of them identified as "likely voters." This group (N = 821) included 58 percent saying they would vote in the Democratic Primary and 28 percent saying they would vote in the Republican Primary. These subsamples of likely voters have margins of error of 4.5 and 6.4 percentage points, respectively.

The likely voters in each party's primary were asked, "If the Democratic (or Republican) primary for president were held today, would you vote for___" followed by a list of all the candidates who were viable at that time.

On the Democratic side, 22 percent said they would support Senator Sanders; 17 percent said they would vote for former Mayor Bloomberg; and 14 percent planned to vote for former Vice President Joe Biden. The top three were followed by former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg at 13 percent and Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar at 8 percent. Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren received 6 percent while the remaining candidates were at one percent.

"This pro-Bernie tilt is similar to what has been happening in the early states, and what the national polls show, and it is likely to continue until Super Tuesday and then on to Illinois and other big states on March 17th," said John S. Jackson, one of the co-directors of the poll. "Sanders has a dedicated base of around 20 to 30 percent of the primary voters, and the rest are

factionalized among three to five other candidates. The question will remain as to whether he can expand that base to a majority of voters or delegates," Jackson continued.

In Chicago, 22 percent of likely Democratic primary voters supported Sanders; 22 percent supported Bloomberg, while Biden came in third at 14 percent. In the Chicago suburbs (Cook County outside the city plus the collar counties of DuPage, Will, Kane, McHenry, and Lake) 21 percent supported Sanders, 16 percent planned to vote for Bloomberg, and 15 percent supported Biden. Downstate 23 percent supported Sanders, Buttigieg came in second at 17 percent, followed by Bloomberg at 15 percent and Biden in fourth place at 10 percent.

On the Republican side, President Trump has an overwhelming level of support among likely primary voters. Eighty-nine percent of the responders said they would vote for the president compared to 11 percent who selected Bill Weld, named another candidate, or remained undecided.

The regional breakdown showed some geographical differences in Republican primary support for the president, with 75 percent of Chicago and 88 percent of suburban, and 93 percent of downstate voters saying they planned to vote for him.

"Eighty nine percent is an extraordinarily high level of support for the president among Republicans, and his nomination is not in any doubt; however, it is notable that 11 percent of the Republican primary voters said they would vote for one of the other candidates or had not made up their mind yet" said John Shaw, Director of the Paul Simon Institute**.**

The questions turned next to the job approval ratings for major office holders, Governor J. B. Pritzker, U.S. Senator Richard Durbin, and President Donald Trump. (Results reported below are for the entire sample of one thousand registered voters).

For Governor Pritzker, who is not on the ballot this year, 51 percent approve of the job he is doing, and 38 percent disapprove. The governor, in his second year in office, has a net positive approval rating of 13 percentage points.

When controlling for party, there are stark differences. Among Democrats, the governor enjoys a 77 percent approval to 14 percent disapproval rating. Seventy-three percent of Republicans disapprove and 20 percent approve of Pritzker's job performance. Independents are in the middle, with 44 percent approval to 43 percent disapproval.

As for the geographical breakdowns, 68 percent of Chicago voters approve and 22 percent disapprove. In the Chicago suburbs, his approval rating is 53 percent, while disapproval is at 36 percent. Downstate 38 percent of the voters approve of the job the governor is doing and 52 percent disapprove.

Governor Pritzker had been in office only two months when the 2019 Simon Poll was done. In that poll, 40 percent approved or strongly approved of the job he was doing while 38 percent

disapproved or strongly disapproved. At that time we noted that Pritzker had not enjoyed much of a honeymoon in his new office. This means that his approval rating is up by 11 percent, while his disapprove rate remained the same over the ensuing year.

"In last year's poll, we speculated that the governor's relatively low approval rating meant that voters had given him a short 'honeymoon period,'" said Charlie Leonard, one of the co-directors of the Simon Poll. "However, given these results a year later, it seems more likely that last year's large 'undecided' group of voters have come around to a positive appraisal of Governor Pritzker's performance, given that his disapproval rating is virtually identical."

Senator Richard Durbin, who is running for re-election, garnered a 52 percent job approval rating, while 36 percent disapproved. This gave the senator a net positive approval rate of 16 percentage points—slightly higher than the governor's.

Seventy-nine percent of Democrats approve or strongly approve of the job Senator Durbin is doing, while 12 percent disapprove. Those figures are almost reversed for Republicans, among whom 70 percent disapprove and 20 percent approve. The Independents are in the middle, with 42 percent who approve and 43 percent who disapprove of the senator's job performance.

The geographic distribution for Senator Durbin finds that 64 percent of Chicago voters approve and 26 percent disapprove. In the Chicago suburbs 54 percent approve and 34 percent disapprove of the job Durbin is doing. Downstate 39 percent approve and 47 percent disapprove.

In contrast, just 39 percent of Illinois voters approved of the job President Donald J. Trump is doing, while 58 percent disapproved — a net negative job approval rate of 19 percentage points.

Not surprisingly, the job approval scores are heavily dependent on partisanship. Eighty-seven percent of Republicans approved and 12 percent disapproved of the job the president is doing. Among Democrats, 92 percent disapproved while only 7 percent approved; among Independents 43 percent approved and 52 percent disapproved.

Regionally, President Trump is markedly more popular downstate than he is in Chicago and the suburbs. In Chicago 73 percent disapprove while only 22 percent approve; in the suburbs 62 percent disapprove and 36 percent approve; downstate 56 percent approve and 41 percent disapprove.

It is interesting to note that these results on job approval for President Trump are almost identical to those obtained by the Simon Poll in March 2019 when his approval rate was 39% and his disapproval rate was 59%. This indicates great stability in how Illinois voters evaluate him.

"Our results are generally in line with what national polls have shown for most of Trump's three years in office," said Leonard. "However, in more recent polls, Trump's Real Clear Politics polling average has been 45 percent approval to 52 percent disapproval. Given Illinois' status as a Blue state, our more negative view of Trump is not surprising."

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The margin of error for the entire sample of 1,000 voters is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. The margin of error for the Republican sample (n=232) is 6.4 percentage points and the margin of error for Democrats (n=475) is 4.5 percentage points. This means that if we conducted the survey 100 times, in 95 of those instances, the population proportion would be within plus or minus the reported margin of error for each subsample. For subsamples, the margin of error increases as the sample size goes down. The margin of error was not adjusted for design effects.

Live telephone interviews were conducted by Customer Research International of San Marcos, Texas using the random digit dialing method. The telephone sample was provided to Customer Research International by Scientific Telephone Samples. Potential interviewees were screened based on whether they were registered voters and quotas based on area code and sex (<60 percent female). The sample obtained 56 percent male and 44 percent female respondents. Interviewers asked to speak to the youngest registered voter at home at the time of the call. Cell phone interviews accounted for 60 percent of the sample. A Spanish language version of the questionnaire and a Spanish-speaking interviewer were made available.

Field work was conducted from February 10 to 17. No auto-dial or "robo" polling is included. Customer Research International reports no Illinois political clients. The survey was paid for with non-tax dollars from the Institute's endowment fund. The data were not weighted in any way. Crosstabs for the referenced questions will be on the Institute's polling web site, simonpoll.org.

The Paul Simon Public Policy Institute is a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research's (AAPOR) Transparency Initiative. AAPOR works to encourage objective survey standards for practice and disclosure. Membership in the Transparency Initiative reflects a pledge to practice transparency in reporting survey-based findings.

The Institute's polling data are also archived by four academic institutions for use by scholars and the public. The four open source data repositories are: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research (http://ropercenter.cornell.edu/polls/), The University of Michigan's Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (http://openicpsr.org), the University of North Carolina's Odum Institute Dataverse Network (http://arc.irss.unc.edu/dvn/dv/PSPPI), and the Simon Institute Collection at OpenSIUC (http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/ppi/).

Note: *The "Simon Poll" and the "Southern Illinois Poll" are the copyrighted trademarks of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University. Use and publication of these polls is encouraged- but only with credit to the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at SIU Carbondale.*

Frequency Tables[1]

Job Approval

I would like you to tell me how Governor J.B. Pritzker is doing his job. Do you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove, or strongly disapprove of the job Governor Pritzker is doing?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
Approve	51%
Strongly approve	*16%*
Somewhat approve	*35%*
Neither	3%
Disapprove	38%
Strongly disapprove	*24%*
Somewhat disapprove	*14%*
Other/don't know	7%

And what about U.S. Senator Dick Durbin? Do you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove, or strongly disapprove of the job Senator Durbin is doing?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
Approve	52%
Strongly approve	*24%*
Somewhat approve	*28%*
Neither	2%
Disapprove	36%
Strongly disapprove	*23%*
Somewhat disapprove	*13%*
Other/don't know	10%

And what about President of the United States Donald Trump? Do you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove, or strongly disapprove of the job President Trump is doing?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
Approve	39%
Strongly approve	*23%*
Somewhat approve	*17%*
Neither	1%
Disapprove	58%
Strongly disapprove	*52%*
Somewhat disapprove	*7%*
Other/don't know	2%

Presidential Primaries

As you are probably aware, primary elections in Illinois will be held Tuesday, March 17. How likely is it that you will vote in the primary elections? Are you certain to vote, is there a small chance you might not get the time to vote, or will you probably not vote?

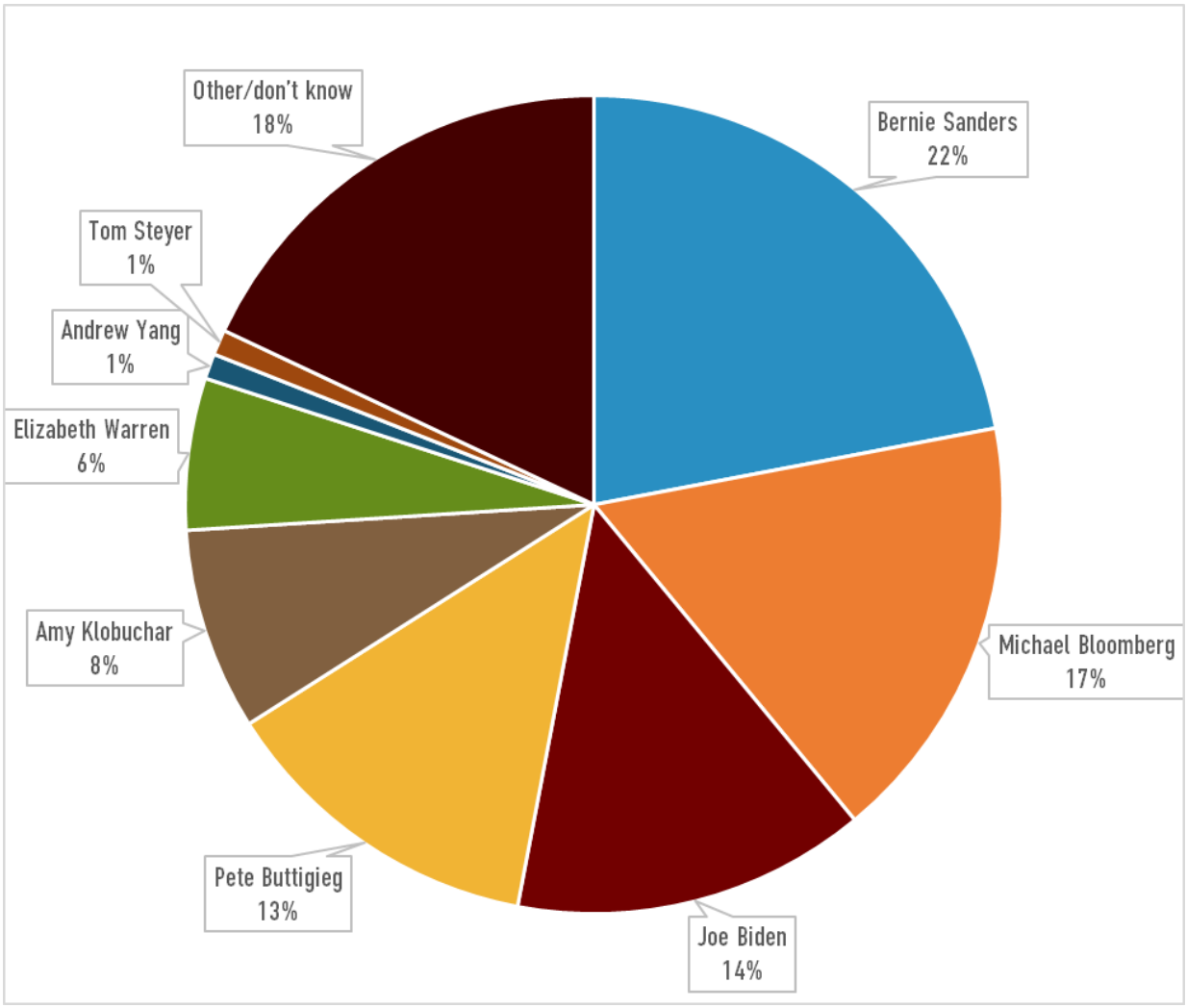
Response	Percent (n=1000)
Certain	82%
Small chance	9%
Probably not	7%
Other/don't know	1%

Are you planning to vote in [ROTATE] the Republican primary, the Democratic primary, or will you probably not vote in the March primary?

Response	Percent (n=821)
Democratic	58%
Republican	28%
Other/don't know	14%

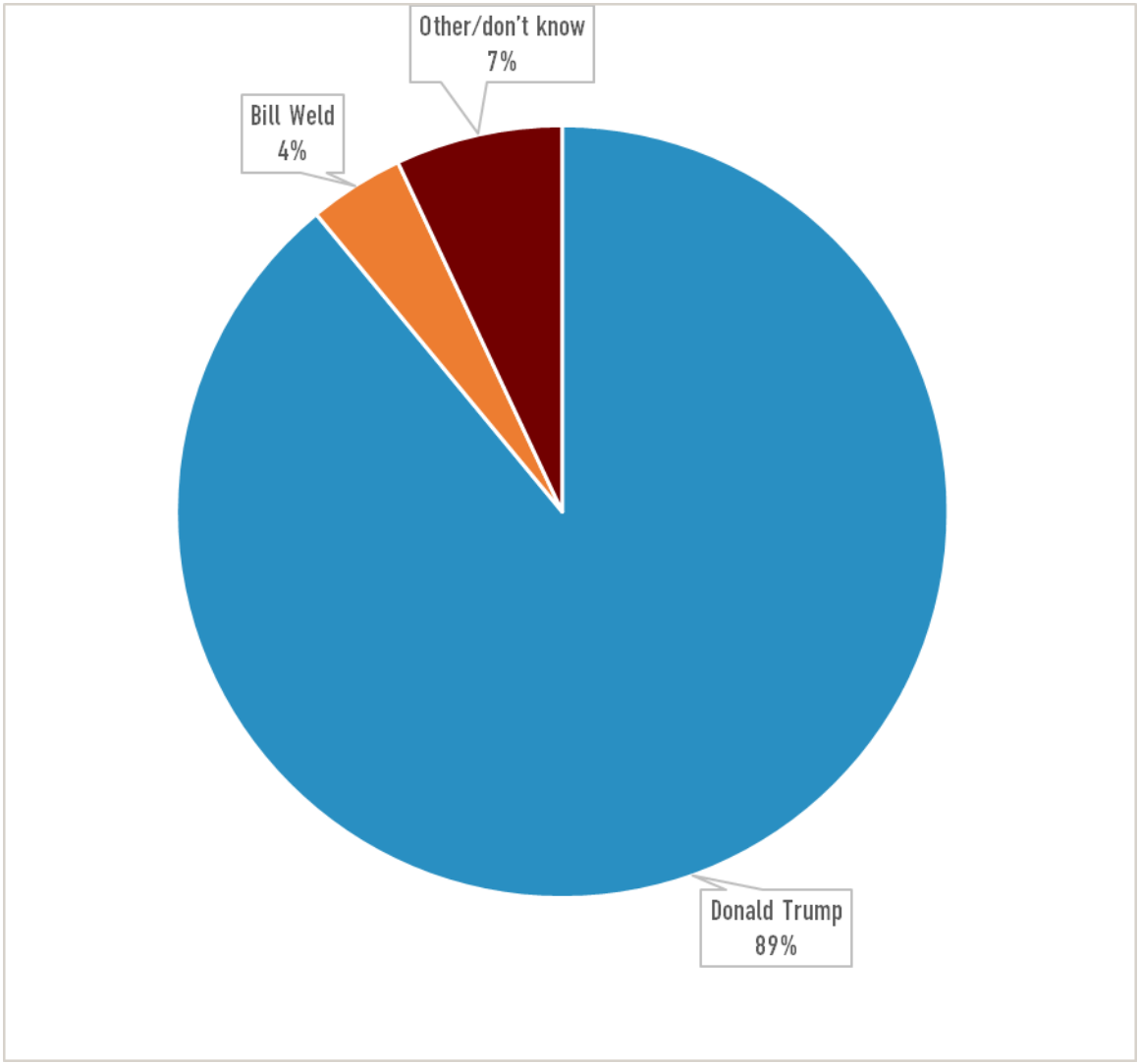
[If "Vote Democratic"] If the Democratic primary for president were held today, would you vote for [ROTATE]

Response	Percent (n=475)
Bernie Sanders	22%
Michael Bloomberg	17%
Joe Biden	14%
Pete Buttigieg	13%
Amy Klobuchar	8%
Elizabeth Warren	6%
Andrew Yang	1%
Tom Steyer	1%
Someone else	1%
Other/don't know	17%



[If "Vote Republican"] If the Republican primary for president were held today, would you vote for President Donald Trump or one of his Republican opponents [ROTATE]

Response	**Percent (n=232)**
Donald Trump	89%
Bill Weld	4%
Someone else	2%
Other/don't know	5%



Longitudinal Data and Demographic Crosstabs

PRITZKER APPROVAL
(n=1000)

By AREA

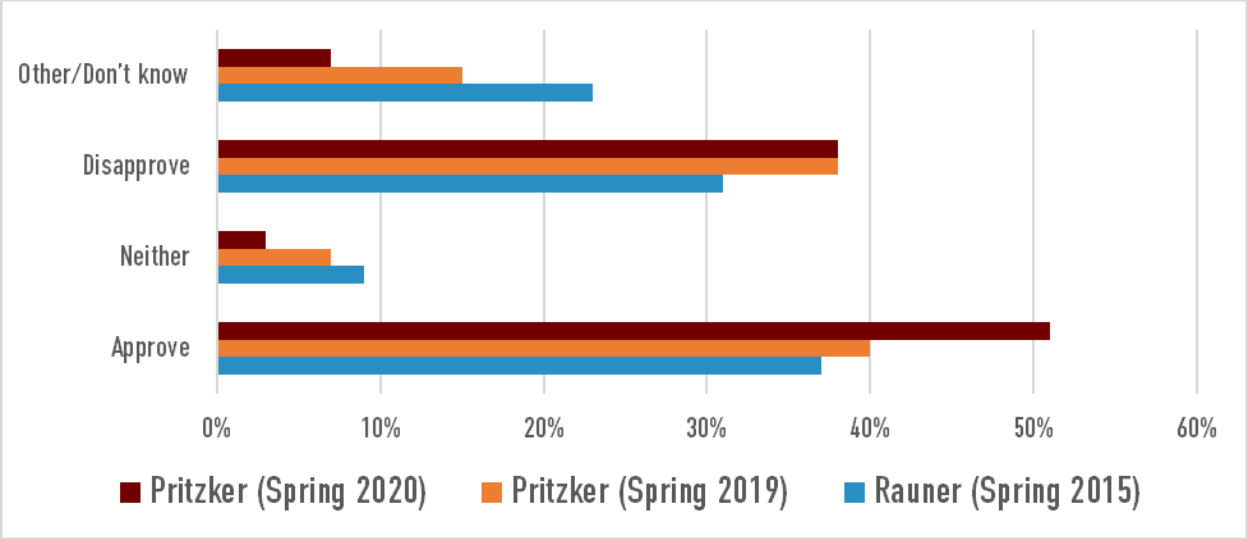
	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
Approve	68%	53%	38%
Neither	3%	4%	2%
Disapprove	22%	36%	52%
Other/Don't know	8%	7%	7%

By PARTY

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Approve	77%	44%	20%
Neither	3%	4%	2%
Disapprove	14%	43%	73%
Other/Don't know	6%	9%	5%

HISTORIC GOVERNOR APPROVAL

	Rauner (Spring 2015)	Pritzker (Spring 2019)	Pritzker (Spring 2020)
Approve	37%	40%	51%
Neither	9%	7%	3%
Disapprove	31%	38%	38%
Other/Don't know	23%	15%	7%



DURBIN APPROVAL

(n=1000)

By AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
Approve	64%	54%	39%
Neither	3%	2%	2%
Disapprove	26%	34%	47%
Other/Don't know	8%	10%	11%

By PARTY

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Approve	79%	42%	20%
Neither	2%	3%	2%
Disapprove	12%	43%	70%
Other/Don't know	7%	11%	9%

TRUMP APPROVAL
(n=1000)

By AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
Approve	22%	36%	56%
Neither	2%	1%	2%
Disapprove	73%	62%	41%
Other/Don't know	4%	1%	1%

By PARTY

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Approve	7%	43%	87%
Neither	1%	3%	1%
Disapprove	92%	52%	12%
Other/Don't know	-	3%	-

HISTORIC TRUMP APPROVAL

	Spring 2019	Spring 2020
Approve	39%	39%
Neither	1%	1%
Disapprove	59%	58%
Other/Don't know	1%	2%

Democratic Primary
(n=475)

By AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
Bernie Sanders	22%	21%	23%
Michael Bloomberg	22%	16%	15%
Joe Biden	14%	15%	10%
Pete Buttigieg	13%	12%	17%
Amy Klobuchar	8%	7%	8%
Elizabeth Warren	7%	7%	5%
Andrew Yang	1%	1%	2%
Tom Steyer	0%	1%	3%
Someone else	0%	1%	1%
Other/don't know	14%	19%	14%

Republican Primary
(n=232)

By AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
Donald Trump	75%	88%	93%
Bill Weld	17%	6%	0%
Someone Else	0%	3%	2%
Other/Don't know	8%	3%	5%