



# PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: NEIL NEWHOUSE -- PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES

SUBJECT: POLL RESULTS: MOVE TOWARD SOCIALISM?

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*Public Opinion Strategies just completed a national telephone poll of 800 registered voters. The survey was conducted February 16-20 and has a margin of error of +/- 3.1% in 95 out of 100 cases.*

**1. More than 40% of Americans agree “the country would be better off if our political and economic systems were more socialist...”**

- While a majority of voters disagree with this notion (51%), fully 45% of voters agree that:  
*“The country would be better off if our political and economic systems were more socialist, including taxing the wealthy to pay for social programs, nationalizing health care so that it’s government-run and redistributing wealth.”*
- The partisan gap on this question is more like a chasm. Democrats agree with the notion that the country would be better off if our political and economic systems were more socialist by a whopping 77%-19% margin, while Republicans (14%-83%) and Independents (37%-56%) strongly disagree.
- Potential Democratic primary voters are even stronger in their agreement with this statement. “Strong” Democrats (representing 22% of the electorate) agree with the statement by 80%-17%, with a majority (54%) strongly agreeing.
- Voter intensity is on the “disagree” side – 23% of voters strongly agree with this statement while 41% strongly disagree.
- There is a wide generational divide on this question, with younger voters (under age 45) agreeing with the statement by a 53%-40% margin, and older voters disagreeing by 60%-38%.

- Significant majorities of key 2020 swing voter groups like white suburban women (40% agree/57% disagree), voters in key '20 Presidential states (42% agree/54% disagree) and suburban voters (41% agree/56% disagree) all disagree with this statement.

**BOTTOM LINE**

The President's State of the Union warning against a shift to socialism makes sense given these poll results. During the 2018 campaign, the threat of socialism and socialist policies found its way into Congressional campaigns across the country as a background or back-burner concern, but as 2020 approaches and Democrats prepare to do battle for the Presidential nomination, this data indicates that a debate over socialism is likely to be the framing of the '20 election.