



DEMOCRATIC PARTY

FRESNO COUNTY

NEWS

2020 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: PART 1

“They’re off and running!” So says the race caller when you go to the Big Fresno Fair to play the ponies in October. Here, though, we’re talking about the 2020 Presidential race. At this writing, according to the *Chicago Tribune*, 19 people officially have declared they’re running for the Democratic Party nomination. We’ll present brief candidate profiles this month and next month, splitting the field in roughly half each time and presenting them in alphabetical order, for convenience. The order does not reflect any official ranking by the Fresno County Democratic Party.

Joe Biden. Biden’s long political career began in 1973, when he served as U.S. Senator from Delaware from 1973 until 2009, when he became the 47th Vice President, with President Barack Obama. There is no question that Biden has long sought the Presidency. Many early polls suggest he already might be the frontrunner in this crowded field. A recent article in *The Atlantic* indicates that Biden sees “a clear path down the middle” of the Democratic Party. If elected, he would be the oldest-serving President in U.S. history.

Cory Booker. Booker served as mayor of Newark, N.J., from 2006 to 2013, before beginning his service in the U.S. Senate in 2013. He announced his candidacy for the Presidency on Feb. 1, 2019—the first day of Black History Month—by releasing a video on his YouTube channel. He is seen by many as a centrist. Booker recently introduced legislation in the U.S. Senate to evaluate reparations for African American descendants of slavery. He also supports decriminalization of marijuana and ending for-profit prisons, backs a \$15/hour minimum wage and wants to ban assault weapons.

Pete Buttigieg. Buttigieg, the youngest in the field, announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination in South Bend, Ind., where he is serving his second term as mayor. His policies are widely credited with significantly spurring economic growth and business investment in the city. He served in the Naval Reserve as an intelligence officer and served a seven-month tour in Afghanistan. He is a Rhodes Scholar and is conversational in seven languages other than English. He supports universal healthcare and policies to reduce income inequity, an end to discrimination against the LGBT community (he is openly gay), pro-environmental policies and universal background checks for firearm purchases.

Julian Castro. Castro is the second-youngest candidate in this crowded field, born one month after Richard Nixon resigned as President in 1974. He served as the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in the second term of the Obama administration—the youngest cabinet member. He was elected as the youngest member of the San Antonio, Tex., City Council in 2001 and served as mayor beginning in 2009, easily winning reelection in 2011 and 2013. In mid-2014, he resigned as mayor to serve in the Obama administration. He announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination in December 2018. Castro supports a green new deal, universal pre-kindergarten, the Affordable Care Act and the Paris Climate Accord. Castro also will be the keynote speaker at the Fresno County Democratic Party’s annual fund-raiser dinner on May 3.

John Delaney. Previously with a career in the financial sector, Delaney began serving three terms in the U.S. Congress, representing Maryland’s 6th Congressional District. He was the first of the large field of Democratic candidates to announce that he is seeking the nomination, having announced in a *Washington Post* op-ed in July 2018. He chose not to run for reelection to the House to focus on his Presidential bid. He supports raising the corporate tax rate to 23% to raise money for infrastructure, making Election Day a national holiday and requiring independent redistricting commissions in every state to reduce gerrymandering.

Tulsi Gabbard. Gabbard, when elected to the Hawai’i House of Representatives in 2002, at age 21, was the youngest person to have ever been elected to any U.S. state legislature. Gabbard served in a field medical unit in the Hawai’i Army National Guard in a combat zone in 2004 and 2005 and was deployed to Kuwait in 2008–2009. She has served in the House representing Hawai’i’s 2nd Congressional District since 2013. A candidate for the nomination since January, she is one of the youngest candidates. Gabbard participated in the protests in North Dakota in late 2016 against the Dakota Access Pipeline. She supports a green new deal, Medicare for All, reproductive rights and same-sex marriage.

Kirsten Gillibrand. A candidate for the nomination since March, Gillibrand is currently serving in the U.S. Senate from New York, having been reelected to a second term in 2018. She was originally appointed in 2010 by then New York Governor David Paterson to serve the remainder of Hillary Clinton’s term, when Clinton was confirmed as President Obama’s first Secretary of State in 2009. Before the U.S. Senate, Gillibrand served two terms in the House in New York’s 20th Congressional District. Seen initially in her career as a centrist, Gillibrand’s positions on issues now lean more toward the progressive side. She has been outspoken concerning sexual assault in the military and supports paid family leave, a federal jobs guarantee, and abolishment and replacement of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency).

Kamala Harris. Harris is the junior U.S. Senator from California, having been elected in 2016, succeeding the retiring Barbara Boxer. Before that, she served as San Francisco City/County district attorney from 2004 to 2010 and was elected as California’s attorney general in 2010 and reelected in 2014. She announced her candidacy in January at a major public event in Oakland. She supports Medicare for All, the legalization of recreational marijuana, sanctuary cities, passing a federal DREAM Act and lowering taxes for the working and middle classes, while raising taxes on corporations and the wealthiest 1% of Americans.

John Hickenlooper. After a career as a geologist and a brewpub entrepreneur, Hickenlooper was elected mayor of Denver in 2003 and served from 2004 to 2011. As mayor, he was widely liked by both Democrats and Republicans. In 2011, he began his first term as governor of Colorado and was elected to a second and final term in 2014. Although he publicly opposed Colorado Amendment 64, legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use, he said he would enforce the will of the people. A candidate for the Democratic nomination since March, he supported an expansion of Medicaid in Colorado as part of the Affordable Care Act. He supports hydraulic fracturing as a method of harvesting natural gas but supports the greenhouse gas reductions of the Paris Climate Accord.

Jay Inslee. A candidate for the nomination since March, Inslee is serving his second term as the governor of the State of Washington, having been reelected in 2016. Before that, he served in the Washington House of Representatives from 1989 to 1993 and in the U.S. House from 1993 to 1995 and again from 1999 to 2012. He served as the chair of the Democratic Governors Association for the 2018 election cycle. Speculation arose last year that he might seek the Democratic nomination, having gained notoriety for his lawsuit challenging the Trump administration’s order to ban entry of people from seven Muslim-majority countries. Inslee’s announced focus during his candidacy is combatting anthropogenic climate change.

(In the June issue, profiles on the rest of the candidates, from Klobuchar through Yang.)

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