TULCHIN RESEARCH

April 22, 2019

To: Interested Parties

From: Ben Tulchin and Ben Krompak, Tulchin Research

New Polling Finds Sanders Defeating Trump in Industrial Battleground States

Tulchin Research recently conducted statewide surveys among likely November 2020 general election voters in the crucial presidential battleground states of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania in order to assess the political environment and Senator Bernie Sanders's ability to defeat Donald Trump in a general election match-up in these states. Given that these three states were key to Trump's Electoral College victory in 2016 and will likely be crucial battlegrounds again in 2020, whomever becomes the Democratic nominee must be able to compete in and win them. **The data clearly demonstrates that *Donald Trump can be beaten and that Bernie Sanders can defeat him*.**

In line with other public polling, we find that Sanders currently leads Trump well outside of the margin of error in head-to-head polling in all three of these industrial battleground states that were key to Trump's upset win and effectively put him in the White House. The polls find that voters believe Sanders has better leadership qualities than Trump, that they strongly prefer Sanders's approach on key issues like education and healthcare including supporting his plan for *Medicare For All*, and that Sanders demonstrates significant resilience and continues to lead Trump even following a simulated general election campaign in which Sanders is attacked.

Voters in MI, PA and WI See Country on Wrong Track, Disapprove of Trump's Job Performance

Voters in all three of these states are deeply concerned about the direction in which Donald Trump is leading the country. By double-digit margins, voters in Michigan (36% right direction to 57% wrong track), Wisconsin (35% right direction to 56% wrong track), and Pennsylvania (35% right direction to 58%) say that the country is off on the wrong track. Additionally, Trump receives poor marks for his handling of his job as President and is underwater by 17 points with Michigan voters (41% approve to 58% disapprove, -17), 12 points in Wisconsin (43% approve to 55% disapprove, -12), and 16 points in Pennsylvania (41% approve to 57% disapprove, -16).

Sanders Leads Trump in a Horserace in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania

Our poll finds Bernie Sanders leading Donald Trump by comfortable margins in head-to-head match-ups in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. Sanders attracts majority support in each of the three states and leads Trump by 11 points in Michigan (52% to 41%), 10 points in Wisconsin (52%-42%), and 8 points in Pennsylvania (51% to 43%). These findings are in line with other public polling of the horserace in these states.

2020 Presidential General Election: Bernie Sanders vs. Donald Trump			
"If the election for President were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were…:"			
	Michigan	**Wisconsin**	**Pennsylvania**
Bernie Sanders, the Democrat	**52%**	**52%**	**51%**
Donald Trump, the Republican	**41%**	**42%**	**43%**
Sanders – Trump	**+11**	**+10**	**+8**

Notably, Sanders runs well with key subgroups of voters whom Trump won in 2016 and with whom Democrats must improve their performance with in order to win these crucial states. Specifically, Sanders leads Trump by wide margins among ***independent voters*** (MI: Sanders 55% to Trump 33%, Sanders +22; WI: Sanders 54% to Trump 36%, Sanders +18; PA: Sanders 48% to Trump 37%, Sanders +11) and proves competitive with ***white voters without a four-year college degree*** in both Wisconsin (Sanders 50% to Trump 45%, Sanders +5) and Michigan (Sanders 47% to Trump 47%) and does better with this cohort in Pennsylvania than Democrats did in 2016.

Sanders Widely Seen as Having Better Leadership Qualities Than Trump and the Right Approach on Key Issues

Sanders matches up very well against Trump on key character traits and issues. In contrast with Trump, voters across these crucial battleground states see Sanders as "***honest and trustworthy***" (MI +23, WI +23, PA +18) and as someone who "***brings people together***" (MI +29, WI +26, PA +20) and can unite the country. While Trump has sought to brand himself as a champion of the forgotten men and women of our country, voters in all three states say that it is *Sanders* who "***understands the struggles of ordinary Americans***" (MI +32, WI +28, PA +17) and is "***on the side of the middle class***" (MI +18, WI +22, PA +17). And while Trump once campaigned for president on a promise to "drain the swamp" in Washington, it is Sanders who voters say is "***independent of special interests***" (MI +13, WI +11, PA +13) and who "***stands up to the wealthy and powerful***" (MI +14, WI +15, PA +14).

Sanders also has a significant edge on key issues facing the country, with overwhelming majorities in all three states saying it is Sanders and not Trump who "***will make healthcare more affordable***" (MI +19, WI +24, PA +16) and who "***will improve education and make college more affordable***" (MI +30, WI +35, PA +28).

Sanders Has Edge on Key Leadership Traits, Policy Priorities									
"Which candidate for President – Bernie Sanders or Donald Trump – does each of the following phrases best describe in your opinion?"									
	Michigan			Wisconsin			Pennsylvania		
	Sanders	Trump	Sanders - Trump	Sanders	Trump	Sanders - Trump	Sanders	Trump	Sanders - Trump
Honest and trustworthy	42%	19%	**+23**	42%	19%	**+23**	42%	24%	**+18**
Brings people together	42%	13%	**+29**	41%	15%	**+26**	40%	20%	**+20**
Understands the struggles of ordinary Americans	49%	17%	**+32**	47%	19%	**+28**	44%	27%	**+17**
Is on the side of the middle class	44%	26%	**+18**	46%	24%	**+22**	45%	28%	**+17**
Independent of special interests	37%	24%	**+13**	33%	22%	**+11**	38%	25%	**+13**
Stands up to the wealthy and powerful	41%	27%	**+14**	40%	25%	**+15**	41%	27%	**+14**
Will make healthcare more affordable	44%	25%	**+19**	44%	20%	**+24**	43%	27%	**+16**
Will improve education and make college more affordable	46%	16%	**+30**	49%	14%	**+35**	45%	17%	**+28**

In addition to Sanders's advantage over Trump on key domestic issues, the poll also suggests that his approach to global affairs is more in-line with the views of the electorate. Specifically, we find that voters overwhelmingly reject U.S. involvement in the Saudi Arabia-led war in Yemen – a foreign policy controversy that has pitted Sanders against Trump in recent months. Voters oppose "***the U.S. providing military aid to Saudi Arabia in its war in Yemen***" by a margin of 47 points in Michigan (16% support to 63% oppose), 40 points in Wisconsin (21% support to 61% oppose), and 35 points in Pennsylvania (22% support to 57% oppose).

Sanders Demonstrates Resilience and Sustains Lead Over Trump After Being Attacked

To simulate a general election campaign, voters were given statements by supporters and critics of both Sanders and Trump (see Appendix) and then re-asked the horserace. Sanders withstands the attack and proves highly resilient, continuing to attract majority support and lead Trump by comfortable margins in each of the three states. After balanced messaging about both candidates, Sanders leads Trump in Michigan by 10 points (51%-41%), in Wisconsin by 8 points (50%-42%), and in Pennsylvania by 9 points (51%-42%).

2020 Presidential General Election: Initial Vote & Final Vote After Balanced Messaging						
"If the election for President were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were…:"						
	Michigan		Wisconsin		Pennsylvania	
	Initial	Final	Initial	Final	Initial	Final
Bernie Sanders, the Democrat	**52%**	**51%**	**52%**	**50%**	**51%**	**51%**
Donald Trump, the Republican	**41%**	**41%**	**42%**	**42%**	**43%**	**42%**
Sanders – Trump	**+11**	**+10**	**+10**	**+8**	**+8**	**+9**

Voters in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania Strongly Favor *Medicare For All*

Sanders's advantage over Trump on healthcare is further reflected in voter support for ***Medicare For All***, a signature Sanders domestic policy initiative. Strong majorities of voters in Michigan (58% support to 36% oppose, +22 net support), Wisconsin (57% support to 37% oppose, +20), and Pennsylvania (61% support to 32% oppose, +29) say they support "***a Medicare For All plan that would expand Medicare to provide health insurance to every American."***

Solid Majorities Favor *Medicare For All* in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania			
Do you support or oppose a Medicare For All plan that would expand Medicare to provide health insurance to every American?			
	Michigan	**Wisconsin**	**Pennsylvania**
Total Support	**58%**	**57%**	**61%**
Total Oppose	**36%**	**37%**	**32%**
Support – Oppose	**+22**	**+20**	**+29**

Just as importantly, support for Medicare For All remains strong even when the plan is subjected to attack. In each of the three states, voters widely agree with the case for Medicare For All made by *supporters* over the detailed arguments put forth by *opponents* of the proposal.

Support for *Medicare For All* Still Strong Even After Attack			
"Here are two statements about Medicare For All. Please indicate which is closer to your opinion."			
	Michigan	**Wisconsin**	**Pennsylvania**
SUPPORTERS *say our healthcare system needs major reform as premiums and prescription drug costs keep increasing while coverage keeps decreasing. Medicare for All would expand Medicare to every American to ensure everyone has access to affordable healthcare, reduce the cost of healthcare and prescription drugs by eliminating the greed and profit motive from our healthcare system, and let patients choose their own doctors.*	**52%**	**53%**	**50%**
OPPONENTS *say this plan is a government-run healthcare system that will cost $32 trillion funded by higher taxes paid by consumers and businesses, take away the current private health plans of millions of people, make it harder for patients to see their own doctor, and eliminate millions of good-paying jobs in the healthcare industry around the country.*	**31%**	**33%**	**32%**
Supporters – Opponents	**+21**	**+20**	**+18**

Conclusion

Our polling data clearly demonstrates that Donald Trump can be beaten in the battleground states of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania – and that Bernie Sanders is in a very strong position to defeat him in these three key states and win the election. Voters in all three states see the country headed in the wrong direction and disapprove of Trump's job performance as president. Solid majorities choose Sanders in head-to-head match-ups against Trump both initially and after hearing from supporters and critics of both candidates. Sanders is viewed as having better leadership qualities than Trump and voters prefer Sanders's approach to key foreign and domestic policy issues – and specifically support Sanders's *Medicare For All* plan to lower healthcare costs while covering everyone.

Methodology: *From April 14-18, 2019, Tulchin Research conducted survey research in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania among 400 likely November 2020 general election voters in each state, collecting data via online panels that were then matched to the voter file. The margin of error for each survey is +/- 4.9 percentage points.*

APPENDIX: Simulated Campaign Messages

To simulate a general election campaign, survey respondents were given statements by supporters and critics of both Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump and then re-asked which of these candidates for president they would support if the election were held today.

"Here are some statements about candidates running for President."
SUPPORTERS of Bernie Sanders *say he is fighting to improve the lives of ordinary Americans. With the rich getting richer while the middle class struggles, Sanders has fought for living wages for workers, against unfair trade deals that send jobs overseas, and to make the wealthy and big corporations pay their fair share in taxes so we can invest in the middle class. As President, Sanders will stand up to insurance and pharmaceutical companies and pass Medicare For All to ensure everyone has affordable care and to lower healthcare and prescription drug costs. He will rebuild our crumbling infrastructure and invest in renewable energy to power-up our economy while reducing pollution. He will make public college tuition-free and expand job training so workers can compete in a global economy.* ***CRITICS of Sanders*** *say he is a socialist who will do to America what socialism did to Venezuela. Sanders believes in expanding the federal government, increasing government control over our lives, and raising our taxes by trillions to pay for his extreme agenda.*
SUPPORTERS of Donald Trump *say he is making America Great Again. Trump has jump-started America's economy into record growth - creating nearly 3 million new jobs since taking office, increasing take-home pay for working Americans, and sending the stock market to record highs. Trump signed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act - the first major tax reform in 30 years. He has enacted trade policies and agreements that put America first and reversed years of policies that locked up American energy and restricted our ability to sell to other countries. He has protected the American homeland, rebuilding our military and crushing ISIS, and is enforcing immigration laws and building a wall along the Southern border so we protect our communities from illegal immigrants.* ***CRITICS of Trump*** *say he has broken his promises. He cut taxes for the wealthy and big corporations while raising taxes on the middle class and he keeps trying to take healthcare away from millions of Americans and end protections for pre-existing conditions.*