



GPG 2020 Election Polling Update

September 2020



The Latest

Justice Ginsburg's passing just raised the stakes of this election.

Polling before

More voters trusted Biden to make the next appointment.

52%

trusted Biden

45%

trusted Pres. Trump.

Biden voters were more motivated by SCOTUS appointments.

59%

of Biden voters

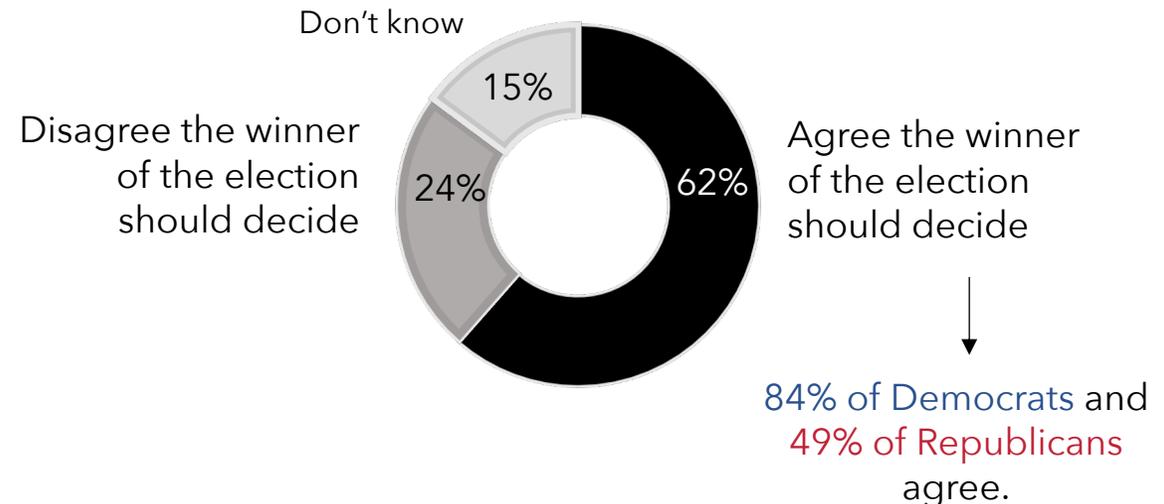
51%

of Trump voters

say SCOTUS pick was very important to vote choice

Polling after

Voters want the winner in November to choose the nominee.



Source: Marquette Law School, 9/8-15/2020, n = 1,523 adults (<https://www.marquette.edu/news-center/2020/public-views-of-justice-ginsburg-and-appointments-to-the-supreme-court.php>); Fox News, 9/7-10/2020, n = 1,191 likely US voters (https://static.foxnews.com/foxnews.com/content/uploads/2020/09/Fox_September-7-10-2020_Complete_National_Topline_September-13-Release.pdf); Ipsos/Reuters, 9/19-21/2020, n = 1,006 U.S. adults (<https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2020-09/topline-reuters-rbg-supreme-court-vacancy-092120.pdf>)

What does this mean for the presidential election?



President Trump

President Trump needed a shake-up.

Filling this vacancy is expected to energize Trump's base and remind hesitant Republicans why they voted for him in 2016.

This distracts from other issues.

News around the pandemic and law and order had favored Biden. The Trump campaign needed another news event to dominate.



Vice President Biden

Biden donors are energized.

ActBlue raised over \$100m in 38 hours following news of RGB's death.

But he could face criticism from the left.

Democrats in the Senate have threatened to pack the Court with liberal Justices if they take the White House and Senate. Biden has not publicly supported this idea, which could frustrate progressives he can't afford to lose.

Similar to Kavanaugh, this nomination is expected to benefit both camps.

But in this case, Trump needed the boost most.

Republican Senators have fallen in line; some will be more impacted than others.

Analysts expect the Supreme Court fight to help vulnerable Senators in red states but hurt those in more moderate states.

Support filling vacancy now



**Mitch
McConnell
(R-KY)**



**Lindsey
Graham
(R-SC)**



**David
Perdue
(R-GA)**



**Steve
Daines
(R-MT)**



**Joni
Ernst
(R-IA)**



**Thom
Tillis
(R-NC)**



**Martha
McSally
(R-AZ)**



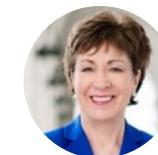
**Cory
Gardner
(R-CO)**

*Less
vulnerable*



*More
vulnerable*

Prefer to wait



**Susan
Collins (R-ME)**



Source: NYT, 9/19/2020 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/19/us/politics/rbg-vacancy-senators.html>); Politico, 9/22/2020 (<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/09/22/romney-supports-holding-a-vote-on-next-supreme-court-nominee-419898>); NPR, 9/19/2020 (<https://www.npr.org/sections/death-of-ruth-bader-ginsburg/2020/09/19/914774433/use-my-words-against-me-lindsey-graham-s-shifting-position-on-court-vacancies>)



The Battleground

Biden maintains a national lead but needs a solid margin to take the Electoral College.

Current National Average

Biden leading by 7 points

Joe Biden	President Trump
50%	43%

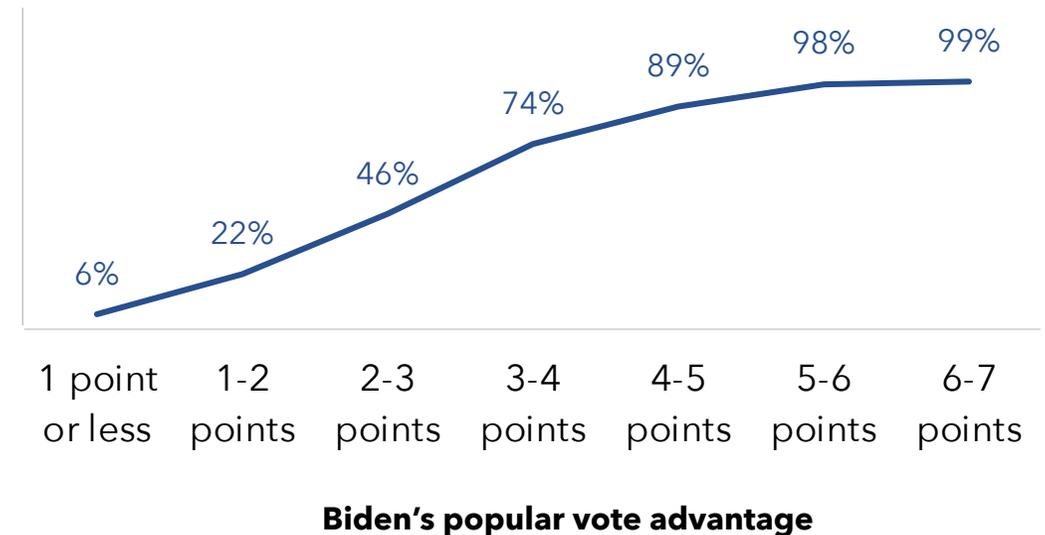
*Based on aggregated polling from
September 7 - September 22*

Across polls, fewer than 10% are undecided.

Chance of Winning the Electoral College

According to statistical modeling,
Biden must win the popular vote by at least 3 pts.
to have a good chance of winning the Electoral College.

**Biden's
chance of an
electoral
college win**



Source: RealClearPolitics, 9/7-22/2020 (https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2020/president/us/general_election_trump_vs_biden-6247.html); Monmouth, 9/3-8/2020, n = 758 registered US voters (https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/documents/monmouthpoll_us_091020.pdf); Yahoo/YouGov, 9/15-17/2020, n = 1,539 US adults (https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/xzjstoh1m2/20200918_yahoo_election_toplines.pdf); Nate Silver, 9/2/2020 (<https://twitter.com/NateSilver538/status/1301190941110341632>)

The economy is top of mind for most voters.

Most important issue this election



The economy



40%



The Coronavirus outbreak



24%



Health care



24%



Race relations



19%



Crime and violence



13%

Pres. Trump maintains a slight edge on the economy:

37%

thinks the economy will improve under Trump

32%

thinks the economy will improve under Biden



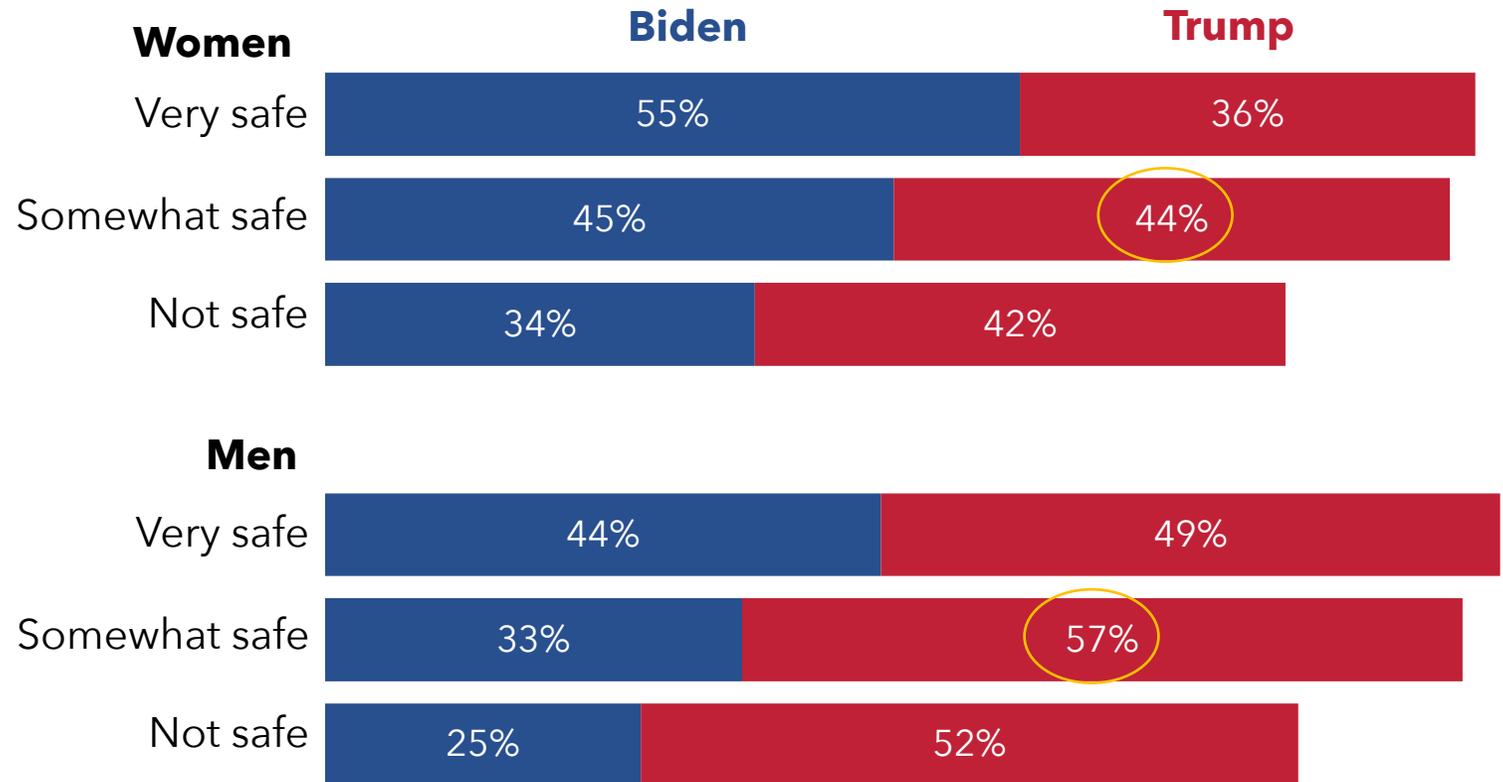
Source: Hart Research/Public Opinion Strategies, 9/13-16/2020, n = 1,000 registered U.S. voters (<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/7213809-200625-NBCWSJ-September-Poll.html>); Economist/YouGov, 9/20-22/2020, n = 1,500 U.S. adults (<https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/u2uc6j0f93/econToplines.pdf>)

Expect President Trump to hit the safety message hard.

Most polls show his safety message doesn't cut through overall, but **white suburban voters** who don't feel "very safe" lean towards Trump.

White suburban women who only feel "somewhat safe" are divided.

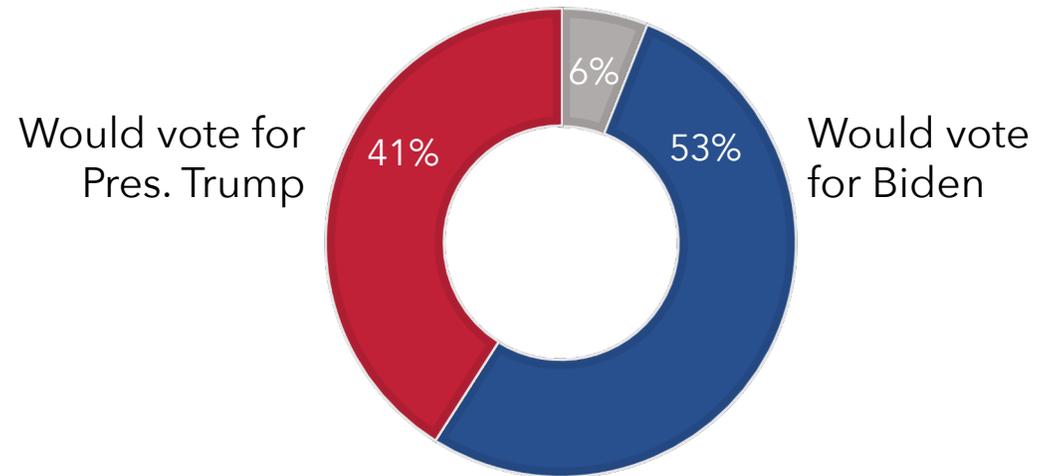
Among White suburban Americans



The SCOTUS pick could change the dynamic with Catholic voters.

President Trump
won Catholics by
12 pts. in 2016.

**Before RBG's death Catholic
voters broke for Biden**

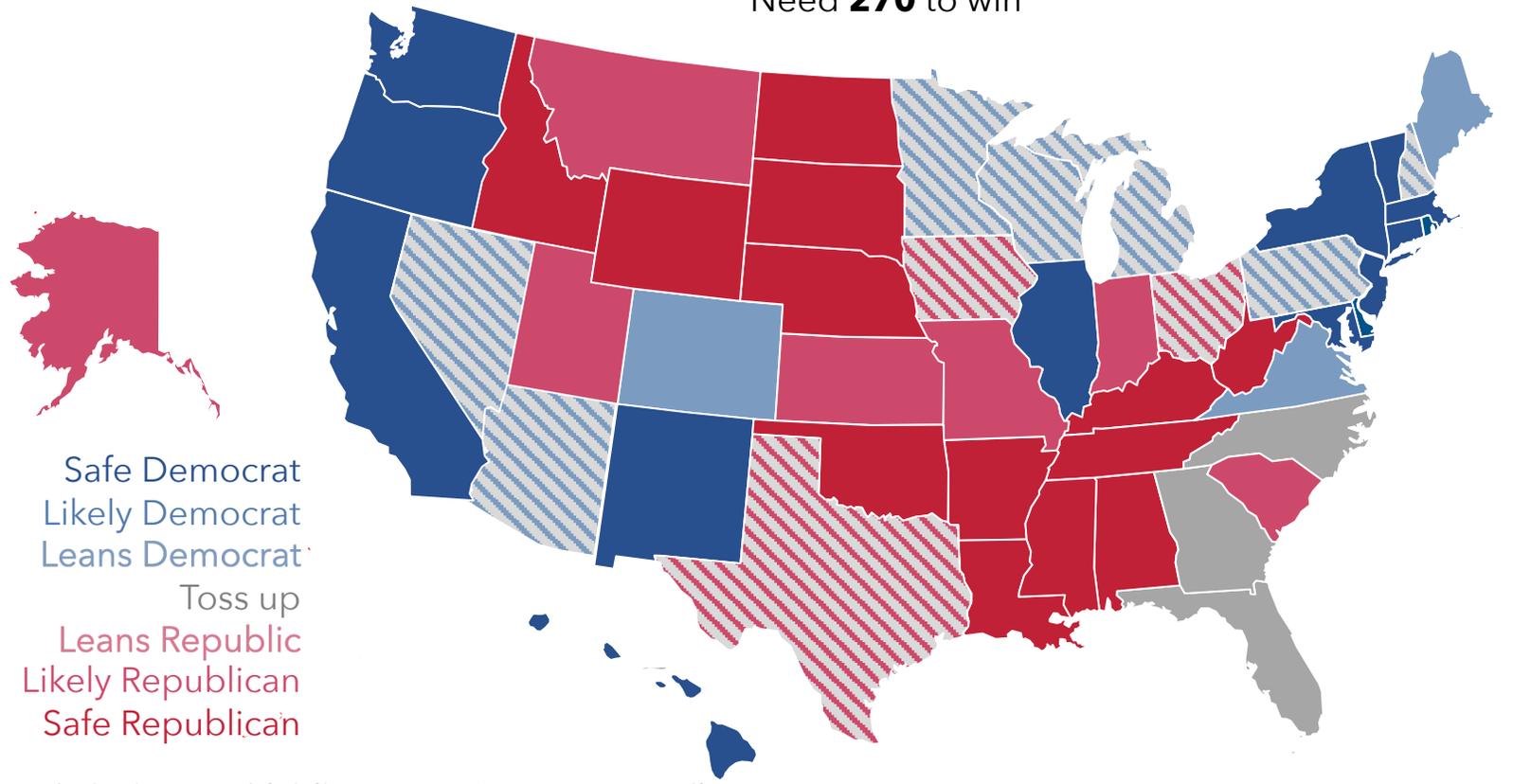


Analysts predict Pres. Trump will have a hard time closing this gap before the election, but **he could make gains among white, active Catholics in key states like PA and WI.**

The latest forecast puts Biden at 290 electoral votes, but it continues to change.



- **Florida** and **Nevada** have shifted away from Biden
- **Arizona** leans towards Biden but is still anyone's race
- **Georgia** remains a swing state, though recent polls show Trump ahead



Biden has held a solid lead in key Midwest battlegrounds.



Michigan
Biden +8



Michigan polling looked more competitive in 2016. This year, Biden has consistently held the advantage.



Wisconsin
Biden +9



Trump's safety message may be resonating with right-leaning white voters worried about local unrest, but not enough to make a difference overall.



Minnesota
Biden +16



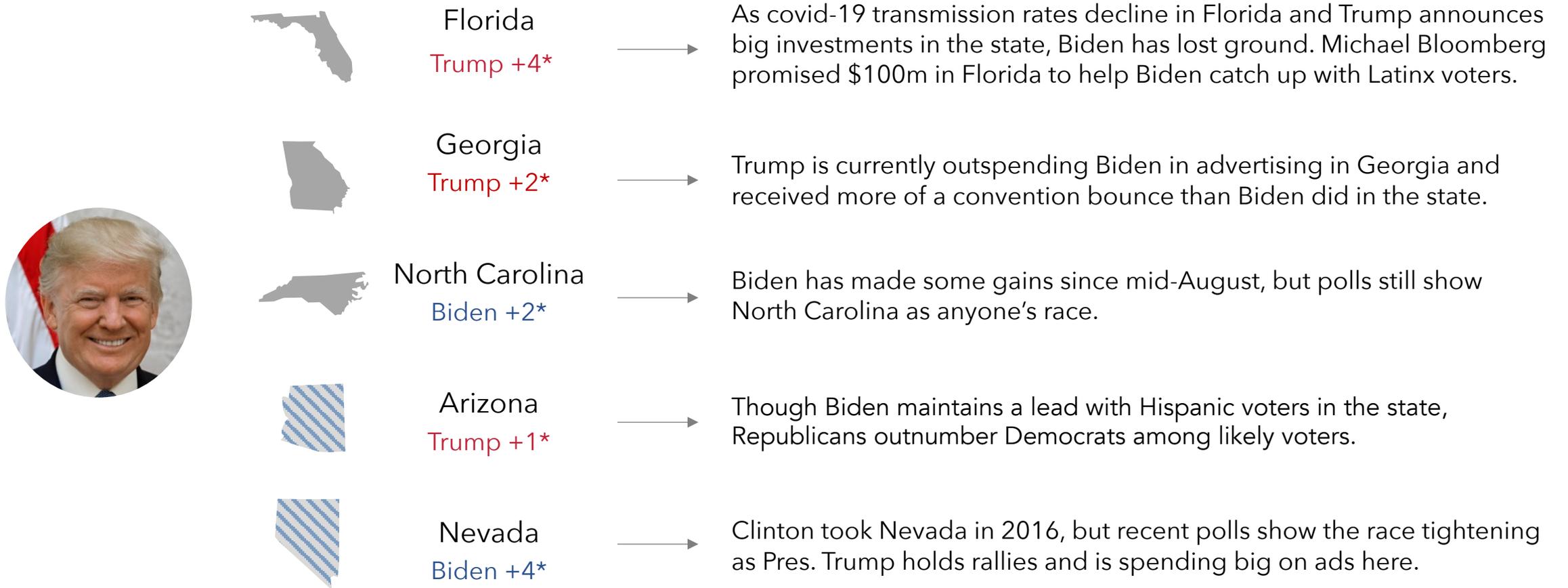
Trump's safety message also hasn't broken through in Minnesota, as voters in the state support protests 55%-41%.

Blue striped shading signifies "lean Democrat" states.



Source: EPIC/MRA, 9/10-15/2020, n=600 likely MI voters (<https://www.woodtv.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2020/09/September-Statewide-EPIC-MRA-poll-091820.pdf>); CNBC/Change Research, 9/18-20/2020, n = 571 likely WI voters (<https://changeresearch.com/post/states-of-play-battleground-wave-14/>); NYT, 9/12/2020 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/12/us/politics/wisconsin-poll-biden-trump.html>); ABC News/Washington Post, 9/8-13/2020, n=615 MN likely voters (<https://www.langerresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/1216a12020StateBattlegrounds-WIMN.pdf>)

But don't discount Trump in other key states.



Blue striped shading signifies "lean Democrat" states and gray shading signifies "toss up" states.

*denotes polling within the margin of error



Source: ABC News/Washington Post, 9/15-20/2020, n = 579 likely AZ voters, 613 likely FL voters (<https://www.langerresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/1216a22020StateBattlegrounds-FLAZ.pdf>); Monmouth, 9/17-21/31, n = 402 likely GA voters (https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_ga_092320/); CNBC/Change Research, 9/18-20/2020, n = 579 likely NC voters (<https://changeresearch.com/post/states-of-play-battleground-wave-14/>); NYT/Siena College, 9/8-10/2020, n=462 NV likely voters (<https://scri.siena.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/NV0920-Crosstabs.pdf>)

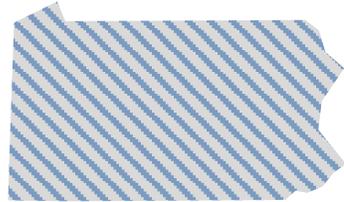
Analysts say the election could ultimately come down to Pennsylvania.

What's happening in Pennsylvania?

Electoral votes: 20

Current Cook Political Report Rating: Lean Democrat

Most recent polling: Biden +4



In previous elections: PA went for the Democratic candidate in the six presidential elections prior to 2016. Pres. Trump won the state by only **0.7 points** in 2016.

Population: 55% of PA voters over 25 are white and without college degrees.

Economic factors: Labor union membership is half of what it was in the 1980s. Many blame the decline of Pennsylvania's manufacturing and mining industries on Democrats' environmental policies.

Blue striped shading signifies "lean Democrat" status.



Source: CNBC/Change Research, 9/18-20/2020, n = 579 likely PA voters (<https://changeresearch.com/post/states-of-play-battleground-wave-14/>) ; FiveThirtyEight, 9/15/2020 (https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-pennsylvania-could-decide-the-2020-election/?fbclid=IwAR2nfAo6vXWqYxTj2863q4TSRqagM9CVAal_k43yCDM1UMU3cReRbPmBkrw)



House and Senate Updates

Democrats maintain their advantage in Senate races.

Solid Dem	Likely/Lean Dem	Toss Up	Likely/Lean Rep	Solid Rep
DE-Coons	MI-Peters	ME-Collins	AL-Jones	AR-Cotton
IL-Durbin	AZ-McSally	NC-Tillis	GA-Loeffler	ID-Risch
MA-Markey	CO-Gardner	MT-Daines	KS-Open	LA-Cassidy
NH-Shaheen		IA-Ernst	KY-McConnell	MS-Hyde-Smith
NJ-Booker		GA-Perdue	SC-Graham	NE-Sasse
OR-Merkley			TX-Cornyn	OK-Inhofe
RI-Reed			AK-Sullivan	SD-Rounds
VA-Warner				TN-Open
MN-Smith				WV-Moore Capito
NM-Open				WY-Open

62%

chance of Democrats taking the Senate based on current forecasts

Bold text indicates races that have recently shifted left.



Source: Cook Political Report 9/23/2020 (<https://cookpolitical.com/ratings/senate-race-ratings>; <https://cookpolitical.com/analysis/senate/senate-overview/almost-100-days-out-democrats-are-favored-take-back-senate/>); FiveThirtyEight (<https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2020-election-forecast/senate/>)

Maine becoming less competitive; other Senate toss ups remain close.

Georgia



Incumbent: **David Perdue (R)**
 Challenger: **Jon Ossoff (D)**
 Recent polling: **Perdue +2[^]**

Maine



Incumbent: **Susan Collins (R)**
 Challenger: **Sara Gideon (D)**
 Recent polling: **Gideon +5^{*}**

Montana



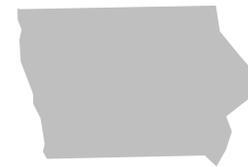
Incumbent: **Steve Daines (R)**
 Challenger: **Steve Bullock (D)**
 Recent polling: **Daines +1[^]**

North Carolina



Incumbent: **Thom Tillis (R)**
 Challenger: **Cal Cunningham (D)**
 Recent polling: **Cunningham +6^{*}**

Iowa



Incumbent: **Joni Ernst (R)**
 Challenger: **Theresa Greenfield (D)**
 Recent polling: **Greenfield +3[^]**

[^]denotes polling within the margin of error

^{*}denotes polling conducted after Justice Ginsburg's passing

Democrats hold more vulnerable House seats than Republicans, but analysts predict they will increase their margins this year.

Lean Dem		Toss Up			Lean Rep	
AZ-01 O'Halleran	<i>NJ-07 Malinowski</i>	<i>CA-21 Cox</i>	<i>OK-05 Horn</i>	NE-02 Bacon	AK-AL Young	NC-08 Hudson
<i>CA-48 Rouda</i>	<i>NV-03 Lee</i>	<i>FL-26 Mucarsel-Powell</i>	<i>SC-01 Cunningham</i>	<i>NJ-02 Van Drew</i>	CO-03 Open	NY-01 Zeldin
<i>GA-06 McBath</i>	<i>NY-19 Delgado</i>	<i>IA-01 Finkenauer</i>	<i>UT-04 McAdams</i>	NY-02 Open	<i>FL-15 Spano</i>	NY-24 Katko
<i>GA-07 Open</i>	<i>PA-07 Wild</i>	IA-02 Open	<i>VA-02 Luria</i>	OH-01 Chabot	IL-13 Davis	PA-01 Fitzpatrick
ME-02 Golden	PA-08 Cartwright	<i>IA-03 Axne</i>	<i>VA-07 Spanberger</i>	PA-10 Perry	MI-03 Open	<i>TX-03 Taylor</i>
<i>MI-08 Slotkin</i>	<i>TX-07 Fletcher</i>	MN-07 Peterson	<i>AZ-06 Schweikert</i>	<i>TX-21 Roy</i>	MI-06 Upton	TX-10 McCaul
<i>MI-11 Stevens</i>	<i>TX-23 Open</i>	<i>NJ-03 Kim</i>	<i>CA-25 Garcia</i>	TX-22 Open	<i>MN-01 Hagedorn</i>	
<i>MN-02 Craig</i>		<i>NM-02 Torres Small</i>	IN-05 Open	TX-24 Open	MT-AL Open	
		<i>NY-11 Rose</i>	<i>MO-02 Wagner</i>	VA-05 Open		
		<i>NY-22 Brindisi</i>				

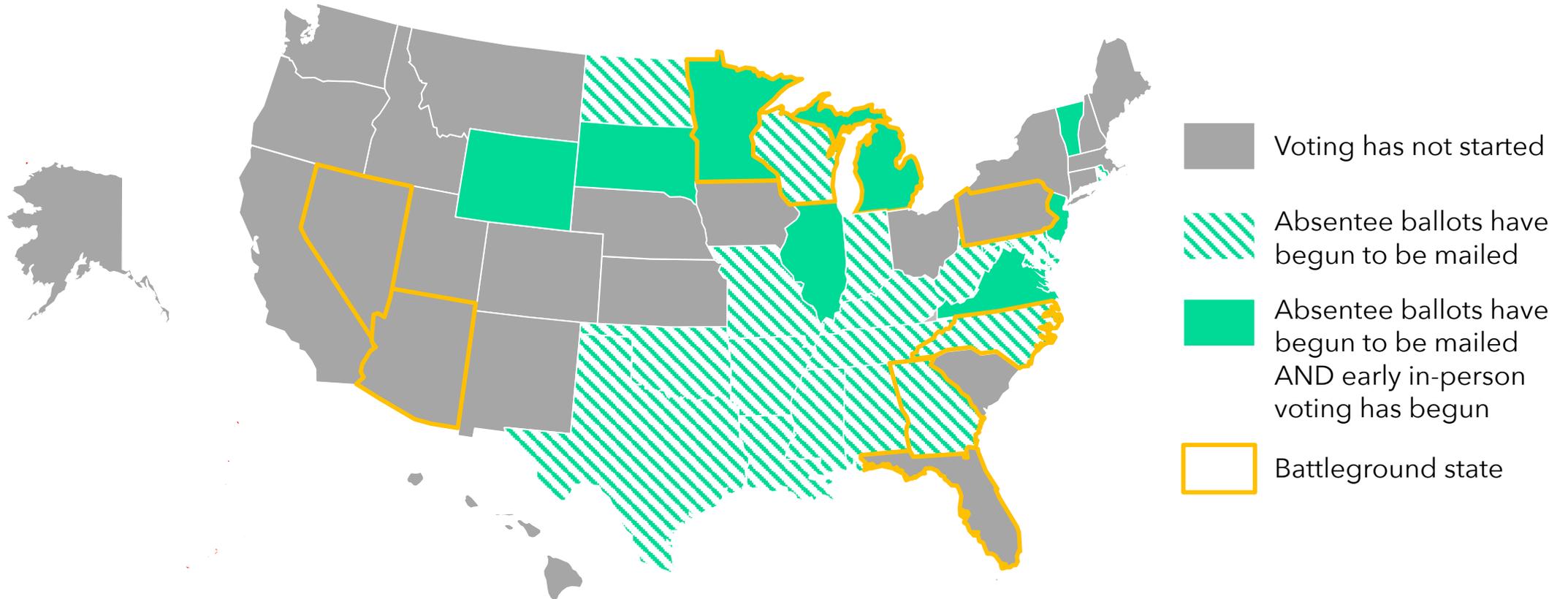
Bold denote ratings that have shifted left since early September.
Italics denote freshman representative.





Looking Ahead

26 states have already begun voting, including most battlegrounds.



61% of voters expect to vote before Election Day, either in person or by mail.
This could significantly change campaign spending strategy.



Source: CNBC, 9/4/2020 (<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/09/04/election-early-absentee-mail-voting-every-state.html>); Washington Post/University of Maryland, 8/24-31/2020, n = 1,929 US adults (https://www.washingtonpost.com/context/washington-post-university-of-maryland-poll-by-ipsos-on-voting-issues-aug-24-31/d0ca1dc3-4b85-40b1-92b1-4c91986d0be3/?itid=lk_inline_manual_67)

What's Ahead: First Presidential Debate

NEXT KEY EVENT: **FIRST PRES. DEBATE**

*Tuesday, Sept. 29
9:00-10:30 pm ET
Cleveland, OH*

Format is six 15-minute segments covering:

- Candidates' records
- Supreme Court
- Pandemic
- Economy
- Race and violence in cities
- Election integrity



OCTOBER

DEBATES CONTINUE

- Vice Presidential debate in Salt Lake City (Oct. 7).
- Second presidential debate in Miami (Oct. 15).
- Third presidential debate in Nashville (Oct. 22).

SCOTUS CONFIRMATION

- Confirmation hearing expected week of Oct. 12.
- Vote to confirm appointment expected late-Oct.

NOVEMBER

POSSIBLE VACCINE?

- US Surgeon General has directed states to be prepared to distribute a vaccine by Nov. 1.

ELECTION DAY

- Tuesday, Nov. 3.

STATES TALLY MAIL-IN BALLOTS

- Expected to continue into the weeks after Nov. 3.

Key Post-Election Dates

DECEMBER

DEADLINE FOR DISPUTING RESULTS

- Election disputes must be resolved by Dec. 8.

ELECTORAL COLLEGE MEETS

- Electors in each state will meet on Dec. 14 to cast their votes.

DEADLINE FOR SENATE TO RECEIVE ELECTORS' BALLOTS

- The U.S. Senate must receive Electors' ballots by Dec. 23

JANUARY

BALLOTS COUNTED BY CONGRESS

- A joint session of Congress will meet to count Electors' ballots on Jan. 6.

INAUGURATION

- The winner will be sworn in on Jan. 20.

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