

What a Sanders Nomination Would Mean for Minnesota Democrats



Third Way

Minnesota will play an important role in choosing who the Democrats nominate to take on Donald Trump. And with the right person at the top of the ticket, Minnesota Democrats could win the state's 10 Electoral College votes and expand on recent down-ballot wins. That candidate is not Bernie Sanders, whose self-described "democratic socialist" ideas could push Minnesota from a battleground state into the Republican column this November. Sanders has not only promoted, but actually introduced legislation that would ban certain industries and eliminate thousands of Minnesotans' jobs. There's a reason why Donald Trump calls Sanders his "ideal Democratic opponent."

Sanders' Socialism Will Lose to Trump

Sanders self-identifies as a democratic socialist. He has said on camera, "Of course, I'm a socialist."

- Socialism is viewed unfavorably by 58% of Americans.
- 53% of voters said they would not vote for a socialist candidate for President, which was the only characteristic that a majority of Americans said they would oppose in a candidate for President.
- His far-left plans would double the size of the government. Last month, he refused to say how he'd raise taxes to pay for it, and his recent plans fall trillions and trillions of dollars short.

Sanders' Health Care Plan is Bad for Minnesota and Will Lose to Trump

Sanders introduced legislation that would ban all private health insurance.

- 58% of Americans would oppose a national Medicare for All plan if it eliminated private health insurance.
- 17,564 Minnesotans were employed in private health insurance jobs in 2018.
- State data shows health care employs 12.6% of Minnesotans and insurance carriers employ an additional 1.4%.
- Job losses could hit Minnesotans hard because the state has “the highest percentage of insurance-related and medical device jobs in the country.”
- Many of those jobs are concentrated in places Democrats won in 2016, including Hennepin County, "which produced nearly half of Minnesota's 2016 turnout and gave Clinton more than 10 times more votes than her statewide victory margin," and Olmstead County—where Minnesota's largest employer, the Mayo Clinic, is located—which went narrowly for Clinton.

Sixty percent of Americans would oppose a national Medicare for All plan if it required most Americans to pay more in taxes.

- Sanders' plan would require *at least* a 7.5% increase in payroll taxes.
- Sanders' announced tax increases fall \$13.4 trillion short of paying for his health care plan.

Minnesota's Open Primary Means Republicans Can Vote for Sanders on Super Tuesday

State Republican officials in South Carolina and elsewhere have urged their voters to vote in Democrats' primaries in an effort to throw the nomination to Bernie Sanders.

Because Minnesota has open presidential primaries, Republican voters here can vote for Sanders in the Democratic primary and sabotage the vote.

Sanders and Down-Ballot Races

Groups aligned with Bernie Sanders, like Our Revolution and Justice Democrats, ran candidates on his playbook in the midterms, and they failed to flip a single U.S. House district from Republican to Democratic in 2018. This is true even in a cycle in which Democrats flipped 43 such seats overall including two in Minnesota (net 41 cycle, net 40 election night).

- A 2019 University of Virginia study found that supporting Sanders' signature Medicare for All policy cost candidates 5-points of support in the 2018 elections.

In 2020, Minnesota Democrats should run the playbook that helped them gain seats in 2018: focusing on kitchen table issues that matter to voters, not revolution. Having Sanders at the top of the ticket will make it harder to appeal to the coalition that delivered a blue wave in the midterms.

Conclusion

Sanders' extremist policies could push Minnesota from a battleground state into the Republican column. If Democrats want to beat Trump in Minnesota and across the country, and build on the successes they saw in the 2018 election, they must think wisely about who is representing them at the top of the ticket.