

September 2, 2020

To: Todd Gloria for Mayor Team

FROM: Jen Tierney
The Gemini Group

RE: SurveyUSA poll released 9/1/2020

Yesterday's SurveyUSA poll in the San Diego mayor's race provided a lot of excitement but little in the way of reliable information about the race. We aren't the only ones who recognize the highly flawed nature of the poll. Paul Mitchell, the well-respected data expert at Political Data, Inc., California's leading political data provider, took to Twitter last night and called it a "garbage poll" and "horrific." FYI, Paul has no link to or role in the campaign.

CA120 @CA_120 · 11h
Ok, If I've said it once I've said it a dozen times. Something happens when @SurveyUSA does a poll in California. I don't even see who they are polling, what the survey is about, I run straight to the crosstabs and exclaim... (with gifs)...

CA120 @CA_120 · 11h
Replying to @CA_120
This one comes from San Diego where they have historically had some particularly bad polling. For starters, they *randomly call people* and of the 534 that say they are voters, they deem 517 "likely to vote" A 97% rate! Uhm....

CA120 @CA_120 · 11h
Replying to @CA_120
I don't know most of the candidates in this poll, but I have heard of Trump and Biden - and this poll has Biden winning by 24-points - about the margin that Clinton won in THE COUNTY... She has to have beaten Trump by 40-points in the City. If you can't get that race right...

CA120 @CA_120 · 11h
Honestly, I don't know what you're doing polling in this state @surveyusa. This is horrific. Anyone interpreting this poll, or attempting to report on it, should just do this.

1 12

Here's a link to the Twitter thread:

https://twitter.com/CA_120/status/1301020691928547329

We've identified several other issues with the poll:

- This poll assumes that Donald Trump is going to do MUCH better in San Diego in 2020 than he did in 2016. In 2016, Hillary Clinton beat Trump by 37 percentage points in SD, but in this poll Biden leads Trump by just 24 points. And this poll suggests that Trump is improving dramatically while all other indicators point in the opposite direction. For instance, according to data from the SD County Registrar, between November 2016 and today, party registration in the city of San Diego has become significantly more Democratic.
- This poll has far more Republicans in it than in any San Diego election in recent history. The poll sample is 33% Republican, but an analysis from Political Data Inc. shows that the November 2016 and November 2018 electorates in San Diego were just 25% and 24% Republican, respectively. In other words, this survey inflates the GOP voter share by nearly double-digits.
- 2016 exit poll data for California shows that 18% of the statewide electorate was age 65+ (<https://www.cnn.com/election/2016/results/exit-polls/california/president>). Census data shows that the city of San Diego has even fewer seniors than the state. Yet this poll has seniors comprising a full third (33%) of the vote.
- In this poll, Bry is winning both very liberal and very conservative voters. That's an amazing coalition that no other politician on earth can manage.
- Todd's favorables with Democrats are 13 points higher than Barbara's, but the poll shows them tied among Democrats.
- Bry is winning the youngest age cohort by 12 points. That's hard to imagine on its own. But how do they explain the trend on age, where Todd loses the youngest voters by 12 (who are the most Democratic bloc in the electorate), wins 35-49 year-olds by 11, then loses 50-64 year-olds by 17 but is tied among seniors?
- Bry is winning Latinos by 19 points, an unlikely scenario, especially since she won no precincts south of Interstate 8 in the primary.

About the only thing we think they got right is the fact that Bry is the clear choice of Trump supporters, winning them by a wide margin. Todd is a lifelong Democrat who has never changed his principles for political gain. That's why he has been endorsed by Kamala Harris, Gavin Newsom, and the San Diego County Democratic Party.

On the good news front, we've done two polls of our own this summer and we are highly confident in the data. Both show Todd's lead in the double digits. Todd's lead among Democrats? +30 points! He leads among Latinos by a wide margin as well.