

Joe Biden still leads Florida, but Elizabeth Warren gaining fast, FAU poll finds

34 percent of Floridians picked the former vice president. Background checks for gun sales saw overwhelming support.



Democratic presidential candidates former Vice President Joe Biden, left, and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass. talk during a break Thursday, Sept. 12, 2019, during a Democratic presidential primary debate hosted by ABC at Texas Southern University in Houston. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip) [DAVID J. PHILLIP | AP]

By [Langston Taylor](#)

Published Sep. 18

Updated Sep. 18

While former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden has maintained his front-runner status in Florida, a second place candidate is closing the gap, according to a new poll released Wednesday.

Biden leads the pack of hopefuls for the Democratic presidential nomination in the state, with 34 percent of registered voters naming him as their first choice, according to the Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative. Behind him is U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, at 24 percent.

Warren's support jumped considerably [since May](#), the last time the pollster released a Florida survey. The senator from Massachusetts was tied with U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders then, polling at just 12 percent in Florida.



Biden had led by 27 percentage points in May. That gap has now shrunk to 10 points.

Now, Sanders has fallen clearly to third place in Florida, at 14 percent. Lagging behind the top three candidates are South Bend, Ind., Mayor Pete Buttigieg (5 percent) and U.S. Senator Kamala Harris (4 percent).

Warren, Biden and Sanders are all in a “dead heat” in head-to-head polls against U.S. President Donald Trump, according to a release from the pollster.

Nationally, Biden leads with 28 percent of the vote, with Warren in second at 18 percent, according to [RealClearPolitics' polling average](#).

The university polled 934 registered voters in Florida from Sept. 12 to Sept. 15. The most recent Democratic Party debate was Sept. 12.

In addition to presidential candidates, the pollster asked how Florida voters felt about universal background checks for gun sales and tariffs on Chinese goods.

Overwhelmingly, Floridians would like universal background checks for all gun buyers, according to the poll. 75 percent of voters supported the idea, while 14 percent opposed.

On the tariffs, only 33 percent said they help America, while 40 percent said they hurt the country.

“It seems that the majority of Democrats, Republicans and Independents agree on universal background checks,” said Monica Escaleras, director of the Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative, according to a release from the organization.

RELATED STORY: [Better background checks ‘makes sense,’ key Florida Republican says](#)

“However, if tariffs become a central issue in the presidential election, then Independents appear to be more aligned with Democrats.”

Voters ranked the most important issues to them as the economy (21 percent), immigration (19 percent), healthcare (18 percent) and the environment (11 percent).



LANGSTON TAYLOR

Data and General Assignment Reporter