



To: Interested Parties
From: Faiz Shakir and Jeff Weaver
Re: The Establishment Bets On Joe Biden -- It Won't Work

In the last 24 hours, the Biden campaign has worked to coalesce the Washington establishment and its big donors around his campaign to protect the status quo. Heading into Super Tuesday, the choice in the Democratic primary is now crystal clear: voters face a decision between Bernie's working-class movement and his message of change, and Biden's effort to -- in his own words -- make sure that "nothing will fundamentally change" for the billionaire class that buys elections.

Up until now, [polls](#) have shown that voters are responding to Bernie's message of change. National and battleground state polls show Bernie is the strongest general election candidate against Donald Trump. They also show Bernie winning key swing demographics, including independent voters, Latino voters, suburban women and young voters.

However, with Biden bankrolled by a super PAC and boosted by billionaire donors, the primary is far from over. We are now entering the phase of the primary in which the differences between Bernie and Biden will take center stage. These differences make clear that the choice between these two candidates is stark -- it is a choice between the party's core economic and social justice agenda, and the Washington establishment's agenda that aims to protect and enrich the wealthy and well-connected. The differences also spotlight how Bernie's agenda is a far more popular general election agenda than Biden's.

What follows are just some of the contrasts that we expect to now be in the spotlight as we head into Super Tuesday and beyond.

SOCIAL SECURITY: Donald Trump is pushing Social Security cuts, and Mitch McConnell says he wants to help a Democratic president cut Social Security. Joe Biden spent 30 years trying to cut Social Security, while Bernie fought those cuts and pushed to expand the program.



- **FACT:** Mitch McConnell recently told Bloomberg news that he wants to work with the next Democratic president to cut Social Security -- which is exactly what Biden has tried to do for 30 years. Indeed, during Biden pushed to raise Social Security's the retirement age, reduce Social Security benefits and freeze Social funding. As recently as 2007, Biden said Social Security cuts should be on the table. [Source: Bloomberg News, [1/18/20](#); Wilmington News Journal, [10/25/96](#); The Intercept, [1/13/20](#) & [1/25/20](#)]
- **FACT:** Within weeks of being sworn into Congress, Bernie was one of only a handful of lawmakers who signed onto legislation to expand Social Security benefits. He also consistently fought to block Biden's push for cuts to the program. In January 1995, Bernie gave a floor speech warning that the balanced budget amendment would "mean, in my view, the destruction of the Social Security system

as we know it.” Five days later, Biden went to the floor of the Senate bragging that he pushed to freeze funding for Social Security four separate times. [Source: [HR 865](#) and [HR 53](#); Congressional Record, [1/26/95](#) & [1/31/95](#)]

TRADE: Bernie fought NAFTA & China PNTR, Biden voted for the deals, which cost millions of jobs. While Bernie stood with environmental groups in opposing Trump’s new NAFTA, Biden supported it.

- **FACT:** While Biden was raising big money from corporate proponents of free trade deals, he supported the NAFTA and China deals, whose trade deficits resulted in more than 4 million lost jobs in the United States. Those deals also helped drive workers’ wages down and crush unions. Biden also boosted Trump’s new version of NAFTA. [Source: EPI, [10/23/18](#); Public Citizen, [6/7/17](#); The Hill, [12/21/19](#)]



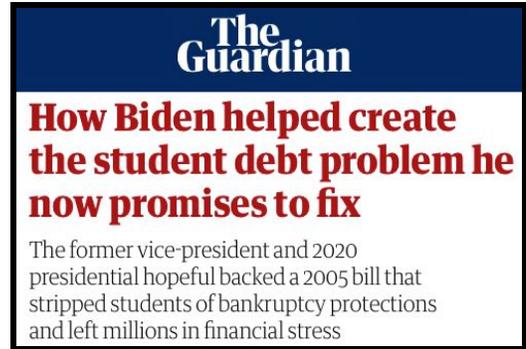
HEALTH CARE: While Bernie rejects super PAC money and fights for Medicare for All, Biden is being bankrolled by a super PAC run by health care industry lobbyists and he is opposing Medicare for All. While Bernie fought for universal health care, Biden split with Democrats to help the credit card industry crush people with medical debt. And while Bernie pushed anti-price-gouging legislation -- Biden helped the GOP and pharma lobbyists kill it.

- **FACT:** Biden reversed his opposition to super PACs and is now being bankrolled by a super PAC that is run by health care lobbyists whose clients are trying to stop Medicare for All. This super PAC is funded by Wall Street executives. [Source: The Intercept, [10/25/19](#); Politico, [1/31/20](#)]
- **FACT:** Biden’s campaign is run in part by Steve Ricchetti, the namesake of a lobbying firm that represents major health care clients and Ricchetti has personally lobbied for drug companies. Biden’s first fundraiser launching his campaign was with the CEO of Blue Cross Blue Shield. He has refused to sign Bernie’s pledge to reject contributions from top executives in the health insurance and pharmaceutical industries. [Source: American Prospect, [7/18/19](#); Huffington Post, [4/24/19](#); New York Times, [7/17/19](#)]
- **FACT:** Biden split with Obama to become one of only 3 Democrats who voted to help credit card companies subject medical debtors to harsher debt collection rules. [Source: Senate roll call vote #16, [3/2/05](#)]
- **FACT:** Biden split with Democrats to help the GOP kill legislation by Bernie and Wellstone to ensure that prescription drugs are offered to Americans at an affordable price. The amendment would have restored a NIH rule requiring that drugs developed at taxpayer expense are offered to Americans at a fair and reasonable price. This vote is particularly significant because at least one possible coronavirus vaccine is being developed with taxpayer-funded research -- without the rule in place, the pharmaceutical industry could be in a position to profiteer off the vaccine. [Source: The Intercept, [3/2/20](#)]



Student debt: Bernie fought the bankruptcy bill; Biden worked to make it harder to reduce student debt.

- **FACT:** While raking in credit card industry donations, Biden broke with Democrats to help Republican lawmakers pass the infamous bankruptcy bill, which generally made it harder for Americans to reduce their credit card debt -- and which specifically made it nearly impossible for Americans to reduce their student debts. Specifically, Biden led the 30-year effort to repeatedly make it harder and harder for Americans to discharge any of their educational debt in bankruptcy court. Biden's initiative was so extreme that Barack Obama pushed to roll it back. [Source: Mother Jones, [December 2019](#)]



The Guardian

How Biden helped create the student debt problem he now promises to fix

The former vice-president and 2020 presidential hopeful backed a 2005 bill that stripped students of bankruptcy protections and left millions in financial stress

Iraq & Foreign Policy: Bernie had the judgment and courage to vote against the Iraq War resolution, while Biden led the fight to pass it -- and to kill Democratic amendments limiting it.

FACT: Biden not only pushed the Iraq War and said he did not regret it, he led the floor fight to block three separate Democratic amendments to weaken or stop the Iraq War resolution. [Source: Senate roll call votes [234](#), [235](#) & [236](#), 10/10/02]



The New York Times

Joe Biden's Vote for War

In October 2002, he was one of 77 senators who gave President George W. Bush the authority to use force in Iraq. He is still trying to explain that choice.