

Q: Who is the biggest threat to Trump's reelection?

Brian Lockhart, CFP®: The easy answer is Trump himself. If Trump were to lose in his 2020 reelection campaign, Twitter should be hailed by all on the left as the reason they won. Democrats have put themselves in a difficult political quandary this election cycle. According to Gallup polling, about 26% of Americans identify as liberal while 35% claim to be conservatives, about the same figure that claim to be moderates.

It is well established that most elections are about “winning the middle.” Candidates also typically are forced to move far right or far left in order to secure their party’s nomination during the primary season but then immediately move to the center of the political spectrum to win a general election.

Most astute political strategists know that Democrats need to nominate a moderate to run against Trump. Biden is perceived to be the candidate capable of securing the moderate vote, but he seems to be losing support as some question his “fitness” to run against Trump in the general election.

Elizabeth Warren is the Democrat candidate drawing the largest crowds and is now the seen as the most likely challenger to Biden. Many of her policies, however, are way outside of mainstream America. The quarter of the country that is liberal may think she is fantastic, but I do not believe she could win a national election as the country is today. If the economy continues to grow, I don’t think it will matter who the Democrats nominate, it will be four more years of Trump.

Clint Pekrul, CFA: Well, now president Trump has an opponent from the Republican party, although I doubt Joe Walsh (no, not the guy from the Eagles) will pose much of a challenge. Based on the current polls from realclearpolitics.com, it looks like a three-way race between Joe Biden, Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren to win the Democratic nomination. The gap between these three candidates and the rest of the field is rather large, so I’m assuming we’ll see more people drop out in the next several months. Regardless of your own political views, I think it’s going to be tough for any of them to beat Trump, unless we enter a recession. If we do, then I think Joe Biden poses the biggest challenge to Trump. I think at the national level, Biden has the greatest appeal. Senators Warren and Sanders seem too far to the left to garner the necessary electoral votes to win. Plus, I think Trump has deeper pockets. I think Biden can appeal to a wider audience. It wouldn’t surprise me though that if he does get the nomination, Biden would choose Elizabeth Warren as his running mate. That ticket would likely appeal to broad base, particularly if we enter a recession. Proposals of universal healthcare and student loan forgiveness would resonate with voters.