

“Current Events” with Frank Damon



Doelger Senior Center has been most fortunate to have Frank Damon leading both our Current Events and History discussion groups for the last 5 years. During this current time of physical distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Frank is sharing his current events discussion topics online. He will begin offering discussion groups using ZOOM in the very near future. Stay tuned for updates!

Frank received his BA degree from the University of San Francisco (USF) with a dual major in Political Science and American History. He also earned his MA in Political Science and teaching credentials at USF. Over the course of his career, Frank taught in the San Mateo Union High School District and at Marin Catholic High School, Terra Nova High School, Golden Gate University, College of San Mateo, Skyline College and Canada College.

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Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in these articles and discussion topics are those of the authors and group participants and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any agency of the City of Daly City.

Refusing to lose

Trump's insistence that late Biden votes are 'suspicious'



Joe Biden Beats Donald Trump To Win the Presidency

ELECTION 2020

Here is what Joe Biden and other political leaders said Saturday about his election to the presidency.

“America, I’m honored that you have chosen me to lead our great country. The work ahead of us will be hard, but I promise you this: I will be a president for all Americans — whether you voted for me or not. I will keep the faith that you have placed in me.”

President-elect Joe Biden

“I could not be prouder to congratulate our next president, Joe Biden. In this election, under circumstances never experienced, Americans turned out in numbers never seen. ... I know he’ll do the job with the best interests of every American at heart, whether or not he had their vote.”

Former President Barack Obama

“This election is about so much more than Joe Biden or me. It’s about the soul of America and our willingness to fight for it. We have a lot of work ahead of us. Let’s get started.”

Vice President-elect Kamala Harris

“What an important day for our democracy. Congratulations to President-elect Joe Biden. The image that we’ll get to see in just a couple of months — a Black woman, the daughter of immigrants, taking the oath of office for vice president — is one that will forever have a profound impact for Black people and for women and girls!”

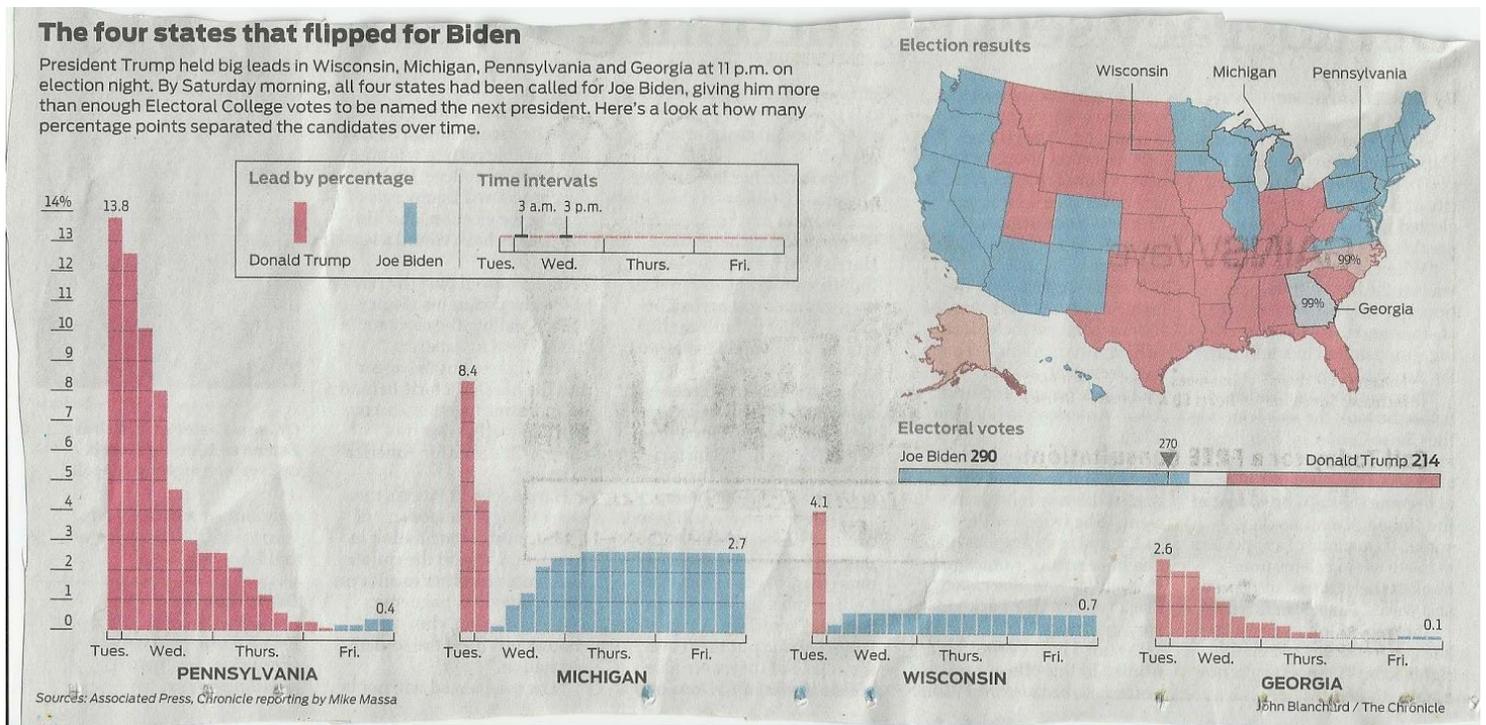
San Francisco Mayor London Breed

Global Leaders Quick To Congratulate Biden

Although President Trump wasn't conceding defeat, world leaders quickly congratulated Joe Biden for his victory. They express hope that the new white house will prioritize the fight against climate change. Congratulations were sent by french President Emmanuel Macron, german Chancellor Angela Merkel, NATO's Security General James Stoltenberg, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, and many others.

The Four States that Flipped for Biden.

What gave Biden the last of the 270 electoral college votes needed to be elected president were the four states, Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Georgia. These were states the Hillary Clinton lost to Trump four years ago. Trump also lost the popular vote by 4 million votes. Although Hillary Clinton lost the election four years ago, she won the popular vote by 3 million votes.



Where Biden Won: 279 Electoral Votes

Boldface: swing states that were most contested
 ■ Winning party flipped from 2016

	ELECTORAL VOTES	PERCENTAGE OF VOTES COUNTED AS OF 10:33 P.M. EASTERN		BIDEN VOTES/ PCT. OF TOTAL	TRUMP VOTES/ PCT. OF TOTAL
Calif.	55	77%		8,180,018 65%	4,152,425 33%
N.Y.	29	84%		4,235,992 58%	2,934,143 40%
Ill.	20	89%		3,016,834 55%	2,330,734 43%
■ Pa.	20	98%		3,350,534 50%	3,313,236 49%
■ Mich.	16	>98%		2,794,853 50%	2,646,956 48%
N.J.	14	80%		2,090,126 58%	1,434,474 40%
Va.	13	>98%		2,384,014 54%	1,958,619 44%
Wash.	12	96%		2,303,430 59%	1,514,563 39%
Mass.	11	92%		2,247,362 65%	1,117,629 32%
Md.	10	70%		1,367,129 63%	759,962 35%
Minn.	10	96%		1,717,991 52%	1,485,677 45%
■ Wis.	10	>98%		1,630,569 49%	1,610,030 49%
Colo.	9	95%		1,753,416 55%	1,335,253 42%
Conn.	7	97%		1,059,216 59%	699,049 39%
Ore.	7	97%		1,318,475 56%	942,737 40%
Nev.	6	95%		647,474 50%	619,944 48%
N.M.	5	>98%		498,022 54%	400,920 44%
Hawaii	4	>98%		365,802 64%	196,602 34%
Maine*	3	91%		419,309 54%	340,512 43%
N.H.	4	>98%		422,284 53%	365,248 46%
R.I.	4	97%		300,325 59%	197,421 39%
D.C.	3	80%		258,561 93%	14,449 5%
Del.	3	>98%		295,413 59%	199,857 40%
Vt.	3	95%		227,231 65%	111,131 32%

Where Trump Won: 214 Electoral Votes

Texas	38	97%		5,216,321 46%	5,872,348 52%
Fla.	29	96%		5,269,926 48%	5,646,949 51%
Ohio	18	90%		2,576,590 45%	3,038,247 53%
Ind.	11	>98%		1,239,529 41%	1,727,085 57%
Tenn.	11	>98%		1,139,364 37%	1,849,791 61%
Mo.	10	>98%		1,242,851 41%	1,711,848 57%
Ala.	9	>98%		843,473 36%	1,434,159 62%
S.C.	9	>98%		1,092,518 43%	1,386,207 55%
Ky.	8	98%		777,813 36%	1,342,474 62%
La.	8	>98%		855,630 40%	1,255,528 58%
Okla.	7	96%		503,890 32%	1,020,280 65%
Ark.	6	>98%		420,985 35%	761,251 63%
Iowa	6	92%		757,689 45%	896,102 59%
Kan.	6	>98%		542,646 41%	748,608 57%
Miss.	6	86%		447,162 39%	683,527 60%
Utah	6	88%		444,531 37%	701,078 59%
Neb.*	4	>98%		367,930 39%	550,231 58%
W.Va.	5	>98%		259,193 30%	589,848 68%
Idaho	4	>98%		286,991 33%	554,019 64%
Mont.	3	>98%		243,714 40%	341,763 57%
N.D.	3	91%		114,687 32%	234,962 65%
S.D.	3	>98%		150,475 36%	261,108 62%
Wyo.	3	>98%		73,445 27%	193,454 70%

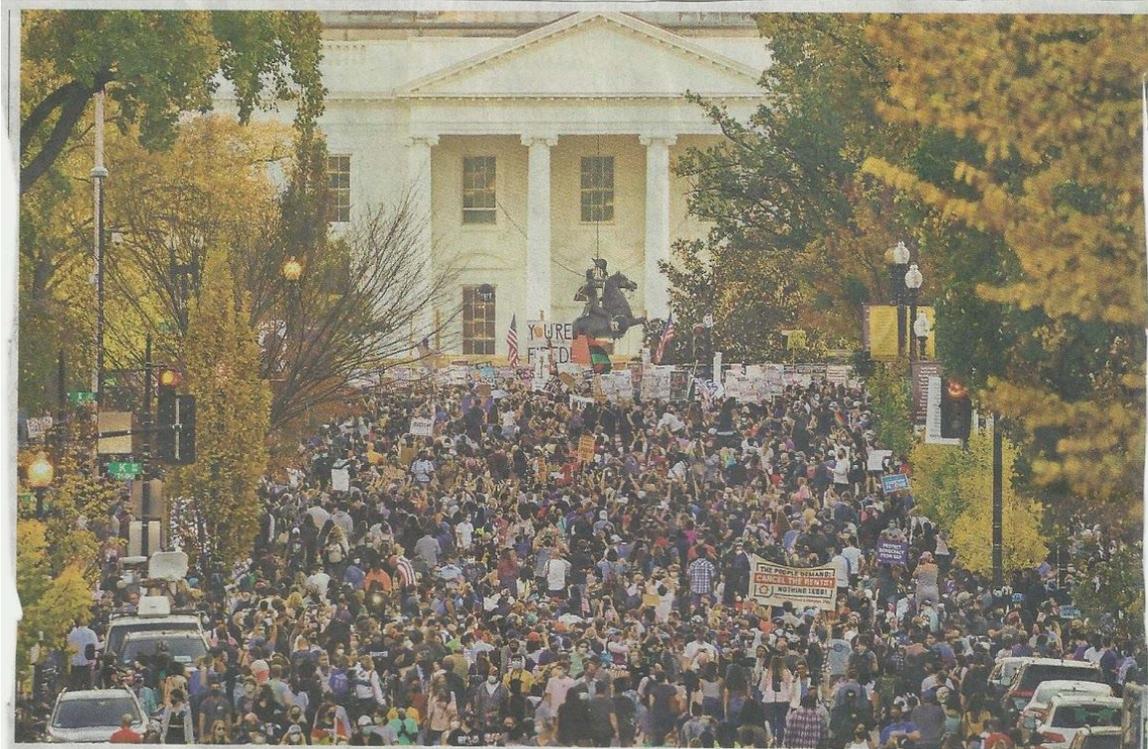
Not Called: 45 Electoral Votes

Ga.	16	>98%		2,463,889 50%	2,454,729 49%
N.C.	15	98%		2,658,274 49%	2,733,681 50%
Ariz.	11	97%		1,631,195 50%	1,612,585 49%
Alaska	3	56%		56,849 33%	108,231 63%

Total 74,561,950 51% 70,391,664 48%

Biden Backers Rejoice as Trump Fans Fume

Crowds gathered outside the White House in order to celebrate the presidential race being called in favor of Joe Biden. Trump did have his supporters, because he did get almost half of the votes, and his supporters are arguing that he had the election stolen from him.



Pablo Martinez Monsivais / Associated Press

A crowd gathers outside the White House to celebrate the presidential race being called in favor of Democrat Joe Biden.



Jacquelyn Martin / Associated Press

Angelique McKenna (left) and Vivian Mora listen in Washington, D.C., as President-elect Biden pledges to unite the divided nation during a speech from his hometown of Wilmington, D.C.

Top Republicans are Silent on Biden win as Trump Refuses to Concede

Senator Mitch McConnell, the majority leader and republican of Kentucky, declined to acknowledge Biden's victory. McConnell outlined "How this must work in our great country." every legal vote should be counted." he said, "Any illegally submitted ballots must not, all sides must get to observe the process. And the courts are here to apply the laws and resolve disputes". "That's how American votes decide the results" He said.

His silence on Saturday came as other Republican leaders kept mum about the results. And Trump openly questioned them.

"The election isn't over until all legal votes are counted and certified." Rep. Steve Scalise of Louisiana said on twitter "There are still serious legal challenges that may have been made, and until the process has resolved the election is not final. The American people deserve a fair and transparent process."

The reaction suggested that representatives on Capitol Hill, who have spent four years clinging tightly to Trump, or at least have avoided publicly countering him, for fear of invoking an angry tweet, were sticking to those approaches even after his loss.

Only a handful of Rank-and-file Republicans, including some who are not likely to face voters again offered their good wishes to Biden.

"It's time to come together" Rep. Will Hurd, Republican of Texas, who was retiring "America has spoken and we must respect the decision. More unites us than divides us we can find common ground. I hope that President-elect can embody this. I wish him good luck, and I wish the president a successful final few weeks."

Senator Mitt Romney of Utah, and 2012 Republican Presidential Nominee and a frequent critic of Trump, also offered a statement of well wishes to the victor, and was one of the few members of his party to refer to Biden by his new title.

Trump violated norms of office, got away with it



President Trump, accompanied by Vice President Mike Pence, displays an executive order on immigration in June 2018.

Trump ran for president as an outsider, and the problem is if an outsider wins they're still outsiders, but with all the responsibilities of running a country as large and diverse as the United States. And Trump often struggled.

"I love my previous life. I had so many things going," he said in an interview with Reuters three months after taking office. "This is more work than in my previous life. I thought it would be easier."

Democrats and republicans who had battled the year before barely passing Obama's Affordable care Act in 2010 rolled their eyes when Trump told a group of governors in a White House meeting in 2017 that "Nobody knew healthcare could be so complicated." Although he is still trying the health care law, he never proposed an alternative. The healthcare question became even more complicated in January when the cases of Coronavirus were reported in the United States. The amount Trump downplayed the seriousness of the disease was threatening the economic prosperity he hoped to carry him back to the White House.

But as the pandemic spread, many of the nation's governors shut down businesses, closed schools, and called on people to stay home, sending unemployment soaring and sending the economy into freefall.

By election day Trump had also been stricken by the disease himself and was reduced to saying that the country was, "Rounding a turn" on the coronavirus, and that masks and local shutdowns weren't needed. At the same time states across the nation were reporting record numbers of new coronavirus cases, with the national death toll topping 235,000. Unlike previous Presidents who had extended political or military experience, Trump's business background came from running his own privately held family company. He was the boss, he set the policy and made the decisions. In his past his only job was to make it happen.

That's not the way it works in Washington, where the president has a corporate board of 535 members of congress looking over his shoulder, making suggestions and criticising his decisions. Trump didn't think that's how the presidency should work.

"When somebody is the president of the United States, the authority is total, and that's the way it's gonna be," he said in April.

But that's not the way the constitution reads, it is not the way Biden, who spent decades in the senate and eight years as Vice President, is likely to view the job. When even a former constitutional law professor like Obama would get frustrated with congress he and presidents before him recognised the need for a separation of powers.

To Trump though the presidency was an extension of his career in business, a full time effort to get his way regardless of what he had to do.

"My style of deal making is quite simple and straightforward." Trump said in his 1987 book, "The Art of the Deal". "I aim very high and then I just keep pushing and pushing and pushing to get what I'm after".

Long Tradition of Public Concessions in Peril

For more than a century, a routine part of American democracy has been a public concession by losing presidential candidates. The message varies in all particulars except one: the vanquished call on the country to unify behind the new president. A 124-Year-tradition appears in peril in 2020, as president Trump signals his determination to lead a campaign to reverse the victory by former Vice President Joe Biden. "I'd easily WIN the presidency of the United States by 'legal votes cast'," Trump claimed in a tweet early friday, one of a string of contentions by the president and his followers that were unsupported by substantial evidence.

It was not a new message by a president who had been signaling for months that he might not accept the results of the election that he has worked to delegitimize.

"I'm not a good loser. I don't like to lose," Trump had told Fox news host Chris Wallace in July.

This is not the norm. Most incumbents and presidential aspirants say they respect and will honor the electoral process. Though there have been challenges of laser thin contests. There is not a precedent for a candidate to suggest that the election was rigged.

Biden's Ambitious Agenda to Face Daunting Obstacles

Joe Biden won the White House with one of the most progressive agendas of any major party of any candidate in history.

But his ability to implement any of it will depend on his ability to govern a divided nation through what he called a "perfect storm" of crises, starting with the coronavirus pandemic, which has taken more than 235,00 American lives.

The three others: "The worst economic crisis since the great depression, the most compelling call for racial justice since the 1960's, and the undeniable realities and the accelerating threats of climate change." Biden said while accepting the democratic nomination.

The Pandemic

Biden promised to level with the american people on what needs to be done, and to follow the science to find the answers, not just for public health but also to get the economy in

order. This is the issue that got Biden elected, and the one he will be judged on foremost. If he fails to pull the nation out of the crisis it will doom the rest of his agenda.

Biden calls for a tripling of the one million tests a day that the U.S. now conducts. He said he will work with governors and local leaders to create a national mask mandate. And he would use the Federal Defense Production Act to produce PPE, which allows the federal government to fulfill its orders first, to fortify the supply chain for Personal protective equipment and ventilators, especially in lower income and hard-hit communities.

Opposition will come from many quarters, starting with those who consider mask-wearing to be a political statement.

Red state governors will resist a national mask-mandate as a violation of personal freedom, even if infection rates continue to soar. Right-wing activists protest the federal government trying to tell them what to do. Republicans in congress may deride the idea of invoking the Federal Defense Production Act as a socialist incursion on private industry of “Nationalization”, as Trump referred to it in March.

Expanding Health Care

Biden wants to expand the Affordable Care Act, by allowing people to buy into the government healthcare known as the Public Option. Those who don't want to do so will still have their private insurance. He also supports lowering the medicare eligibility age from 65 to 60. What could append Biden's plans: If the Supreme Court kills the health care law in a case it will hear Tuesday. If the courts strike down the entire law, Biden says he would “pass Obamacare with the public option -- it becomes Bidencare”. That sounds easy but it becomes difficult if republicans hold the senate.

Reforming Immigration

Biden pledged that within 100 days he will direct congress to craft a pathway to citizenship for more than 11 million undocumented citizens living in the US.

“It had better happen” said Jacqueline Martinez Garcel, CEO of the Latina Community Foundation. Obama promised it to, but we got shafted by the Obama presidency, Biden has a plan ready to go.

Biden also pledged to undo many of Trump's more hardline immigration policies, including a travel ban that largely effects people from predominantly muslim nations, construction of a southern border wall and separation of families at the border. None of those reversals would need congressional approval.

“There's a lot that can be done immediately,” Garcel said. “And given the fact that support from millions hands down guaranteed his victory he must act immediately to keep building the momentum so folks stay engaged int 2022.”

Stronger action on Climate Change

Biden wants the U.S. to be fully powered by renewable energy by 2035 like many progressives, however he hasn't disavowed fracking, A national gas extraction process that releases greenhouse gasses that can taint groundwater.

He wants to spend nearly 2 trillion dollars over four years on increasing renewable power and creating incentives to build more energy efficient buildings, homes and cars.

But again, without a friendly senate bidens climate plan won't go far. The top 20 recipients of campaign contributions from Oil and Gas industries in the senate this year were all republicans.

Free Collage - For some

Biden proposed to make college education tuition-free for students whose families make less than 125,000 dollars annually. He would make community college free for everyone regardless of income.

The entire plan would cost 683 billion dollars over the next ten years. However there's a big question hovering over the plan. Biden says the federal government would cover two-thirds of the tuition costs, with states picking up the rest, but the pandemic has crushed many states' budgets. California, for example, has to cut spending on its public universities this year to help eliminate a 54 billion dollar deficit. Biden is also backing a plan that would help eliminate up to 10,000 dollars of student loan debt.

Raising the Minimum Wage

Biden has said he supports raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour to be phased in of several years. This is a favorable cause of progressives such as Bernie Sanders, and senator Elizabeth Warren, however they might have trouble getting more moderate democrats from state with a lower cost of living, to support raising the minimum wage from its current \$7.25 an hour, let alone republicans. The wage hasn't been raised since 2009. It is now \$12 or \$13 an hour in California depending on how many workers an employer has and the schedule with an increase to \$15 by 2023.

Biden would Raise Taxes on Wealth Americans to Pay for Programs

An increase in property tax for corporations failed in California and other states in recent elections. These tax proposals by Biden would raise an estimated 4.3 Trillion dollars over a decade, of course any attempts to raise taxes would be fiercely opposed by the republicans who passed a huge tax cut in 2017 that predominantly favored corporations and wealthier Americans. So if the republicans run the senate Bidens tax proposal will never see daylight.

BIDEN WINS



Kamala Harris and Joe Biden celebrate in Wilmington, Del., after a presidential election that left the nation on edge for days.

Andrew Hanik / Associated Press