

June 12, 2020

Dear Vice President Biden,

Every election is called "the most important in our lifetime" but, as you have emphasized, 2020 really is. Due to the twin pathogens of Trump and Trumpism, the outcome this fall could keep America on the road to lawless authoritarianism or reroute us to a stronger democracy.

A crisis election as big as 1932 requires a big running mate. So why not the best?

You have announced both that you will choose a woman and "the most important thing is that it has to be someone who, the day after they're picked, is prepared to be president of the United States of America if something happened."

This choice of course is yours alone to make. Since you're a well-known listener, however, we'd like to offer our advice. We 100+ progressive former public officials, authors, actors, activists, advocates and scholars agree that the most important criterion is who would be most capable to be President if necessary. In our view, **Elizabeth Warren has proven herself most prepared to be President if the occasion arises and deeply expert on the overlapping emergencies now plaguing America – Covid-19, Economic Insecurity, Racial Injustice and Climate Change:**

***She's a policy expert.** During the presidential campaign, her refrain was, "I have a plan for that" – and she did. Her 50+ "plans" over the past year distinguish her as the only campaign that provided a de facto real-time transition report for whomever won the office. After her candidacy ended, she returned right back to the Senate and immediately responded to our multiple monumental crises with an array of much-lauded policy proposals.

It would be a great advantage to have such a recognized expert inside the campaign and the White House helping you stabilize the economy and close the epic inequality gap. (["It Really Could Be Warren"](#), ["Elizabeth Warren Knows What Joe Biden Needs in a Vice President"](#))

***Senator Warren's vision, competence and national experience have enabled her to get big things done.** For example, in the Nineties and Aughts, her scholarly studies explained how economic fraud and banking practices especially devastated families of color...and what to do about that racial injustice. She was one of the first to publicly sound the alarm before the '07-'08 fiscal crisis, and then originated and led the successful effort to create a Consumer Finance Protection Bureau.

Three years ago, she warned the Trump Administration that it wasn't doing enough to anticipate the next pandemic. In late 2019 she warned about a coming Trump recession, which hit in February 2020 before widespread coronavirus lock-downs in March. As a presidential candidate, she was the first to urge a) Trump's impeachment after release of the Mueller Report, b) a congressional study into the most workable form of "reparations" – ideally focused more on

communities than individuals – to adjust for inter-generational equity theft by race, and c) an "ultra-wealth tax" to help restore economic growth and fairness. As you saw, she ran among the best-organized and well-funded presidential campaigns in history.

***She personally connects to working-class voters.** She was the first in her family to go to college, then law school, and then teach law for over twenty years at the University of Texas, University of Pennsylvania, and Harvard, while authoring pioneering books that framed progressive public policy proposals. Senator Warren is a self-made working-class person who is trusted by blue-collar voters.

***She is both personable and a team player.** From her kindness to staff to her "pinkie promises" with thousands of young girls and her three hour selfie-lines, she embodies someone who's confident, compassionate, honest and humble. She works well with peers, whether they are other professors, senators or rivals. Intellectually curious, she listens to those with different opinions. She combines being open-minded, big-hearted, and well-grounded. We all know the difference between show-horses and work-horses – and it's obvious which Senator Warren is.

***She has a gift for explaining the role of affirmative government.** After the century-long assault on the public sector – from Coolidge to Reagan to Gingrich to Trump – it's essential that your ticket educate citizens that the federal government exists to do what individuals, companies and states often cannot – advance national public health, security and prosperity. "I believe in markets, but markets without rules is theft," she often said in the campaign, adding that smart government should "be a consumer cop on the regulatory beat." And she's a very skilled communicator and debater. Imagine her on stage debunking Mike Pence or needling 'President Tweety.'

***She could best unite the party.** Anyone can speculate about who could most help your ticket politically in swing mid-western states or with people of color, both areas where you're already strong. Another big variable is who could persuade millions of disappointed Sanders supporters to vote for your ticket. According to Jeff Weaver, the top adviser to Senator Sanders, "There is a real and urgent need to help Biden consolidate Sanders supporters," adding that "if all of Sanders' base turned out for Joe Biden in November, he could defeat Trump and take back the White House for Democrats. Here's the problem: significant portions don't currently plan to."

When a poll asked only Sanders voters who they thought could best help a Biden ticket, Warren was first by far among the women reportedly under consideration. (["Poll Finds Elizabeth Warren VP Pick Most Likely To Pull In Bernie Sanders Voters"](#)) All other polls show the same thing. Polls don't determine who a VP nominee should be but the truths they mirror can contribute to a final decision.

Barack Obama later said of his 2008 choice for vice-president, "this was the best decision I ever made." Your choice of Senator Warren, in our shared view, would also be embraced by the breadth of the Democratic Party and most Independent voters as well as reflect well on a nominee who

would choose such a talented, strong, capable woman to help you run the United States government.

With friendship and support,

Co-Signers Below

PS Retaining the MA Senate Seat: Fyi, here is a misconception that a Warren nomination and election would lead to a GOP Senate pickup in a state with a (liberal) Republican governor. In fact, state law allows the heavily Democratic-controlled state legislature to override his choice and then negotiate for an agreed-on interim successor until a special election within four months. (See [“Elizabeth Warren’s Path to Becoming VP Is Easier Than It Looks”](#) and [“About Warren’s Senate Seat”](#))

LIST OF CO-SIGNERS (in progress)

Christela Alonzo

Comedian. Actress. Creator and star of ABC sitcom, Christela.

Kurt Andersen

Host, Studio 360. Author of, among others, Fantasyland & Turn of the Century. Ex-editor-in-chief, New York Magazine.

Dante Atkins

Principal, Atkins Strategies. Former Congressional Aide.

David Atkins

Democratic activist, writer and research professional.

Nancy Bagley

Publisher, Washington Monthly. Philanthropist.

Ady Barkan

Organizer and activist.

Roberta Baskin

Award-winning investigative tv reporter for 25 years with NBC and CBS.

Adam Best

Filmmaker, Progressive Activist.

Daniel Biss

Former Illinois State Senator.

Adam Bonin

Former Chairman, Netroots Nation.

Will Bunnett

Principal, Clarify Agency. Messaging and Content Strategist.

Smitha Chadaga

Chair Indivisible Oregon. Co-Host, EndTimesPepTalk. Physician Women for Democratic Principles.

Charles Chamberlain

Chair, Democracy for America.

Joan Claybrook

U.S. DOT, Administrator, NHTSA ('77-'81). Author Freedom from Harm. President, Public Citizen for 27 years.

Cindy Cohn

Executive Director at Electronic Frontier Foundation.

Debra Cooper

Long-time party activist. Board Member of the Progressive Congress.

Bob Craemer

President, Democracy Partners.

Emily Crockett

Writer.

Robert Cruickshank

Member of Washington State Democratic Central Committee.

Alan Cumming

Tony-awarding-winning actor on Broadway and tv -- Cabaret, MacBeth, The Good Wife. Author and activist.

David Donnelly

Former President, Every Voice. Principal, Of By For Consulting.

Jeffrey Dugas

Progressive communications professional and organizer.

Erica Fein

Advocacy Director, Win Without War. Leader in the movement to demilitarize and humanize U.S. foreign policy.

Robert Fellmeth

Endowed chair in Public Interest Law at Univ. of San Diego Law School. Founder, Children's Advocacy Institute. Author/contributor to 14 policy books.

David Fenton

Founder of Fenton & Associates. "Incubator" of J Street, Climate Nexus, Death Penalty Information Center.

Jane Fonda

Winner of two Oscars and seven Emmys for movies and tv -- Kluge, 9-5, They Shoot Horses/Don't They?, Frankie & Grace. Activist on climate change.

Jamison Foser

Senior Political Strategist & Writer. Formerly at Next Gen, PCCC, MMFA, DCCC, DNC.

Reg Garcia

Retired Fire Chief, Berkeley California.

Kathleen Geier

Progressive writer at In These Times, The Nation, The Baffler.

Dr. Jacquelyn Gill

Associate Professor, University of Maine.

Steve Gillers

Elihu Root Professor of Law at NYU. Ethics expert. Author of Regulation of Lawyers.

Danny Goldberg

Founder of Gold Village Entertainment. Author of *Serving the Servant: Remembering Kurt Cobain*.

Alexis Goldstein

Writer and financial policy analyst.

Mark Green

First NYC Public Advocate. Author/editor of 24 books -- most recently *Fake President*. Creator of @ShadowingTrump.

Greg Greene

Activist & digital communications professional.

Arshad Hasan

Principal, Convey Communications. Media strategist. Trainer. Organizer.

James S. Henry

Investigative journalist, lawyer, economist. Global Justice Fellow at Yale, where he teaches.

Jodi Jacobson

Senior Advisor, Strategic Planning and Fundraising, Movement Voter Project. Reporter. Editor.

Taj James

Founder and former Executive Director of the Movement Strategy Center.

Sam Jammal

Clean Energy Attorney. Former Obama Administration official.

Eugene Jarecki

Two-time Emmy, Peabody & Sundance Grand Jury Prize winning filmmaker of *Why We Fight*, *The House I Live In*, *Reagan*, *The King*. Founder, *The Eisenhower Project*.

Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson

Marine biologist. Founder of Ocean Collective and Urban Ocean Lab.

Nicholas Johnson

FCC Commissioner ('66-'73). Professor at Iowa College of Law. Author of eight books, including *How to Talk Back to Your Television Set*.

Amaha Kassa

Founder and Executive Director, African Communities Together.

Kate Kizer

Policy Director at Win Without War. Leading progressive foreign policy expert and activist.

Karen Thomas

Kolber Development Professional.

Eddie Kurtz

Former executive director, California Courage.

Kaili Lambe

Veteran digital campaign strategist. Organizer and activist.

Alex Lawson

Executive Director, Social Security Works. Partner, Strong Arm Press

Gabriela Lemus

CEO, Revolution Strategies.

Crea Lintelhac

Director of Lintelhac Foundation in Vermont, which focuses on water quality, energy and conservation.

Mike Lux

Special Assistant to President Clinton. Senior staffer in seven presidential campaigns, two presidential transitions, and the DNC.

Brian O'Grady

Principal, Clarify Agency. Digital Media Strategist.

Dr. Terry McGlynn

Professor of Biology, California State University Dominguez Hills.

Andrew McGuire

MacArthur Fellow. Executive Director, The Trauma Foundaton. Helped found MADD. Documentary filmmaker.

Duncan Meisel

Digital campaigner. Organizer and writer.

Urvi Nagrani

Board Advisor eIQ. Mobility. Consultant in vehicle electrification technologies and sustainable transportation policy.

Victor Navasky

Publisher of The Nation (1976-1997). Author of Kennedy Justice and Naming Names (winner of Nat'l Book Award).

Josh Nelson

President, Kennedy Heights Group. Digital and Communications Strategist.

Eliza Orlins

NYC public defender for the past decade.

Eli Pariser

Former Executive Director, MoveOn. Co-Director, Civil Signals.

Heather Parton

Political blogger and columnist for Salon.com.

KevinPerez-Allen

National Latino Communications professional.

Rick Perlstein

Author of, among others, Nixonland and the forthcoming Reaganland..

Michael Pertschuk

Chief Counsel, Senate Commerce Committee (1965-1976). Chair, Federal Trade Commission (1977-1981).

Chris Pyle

Professor of political science, Mount Holyoke College, Author of several books on the Presidency, including Getting Away with Torture.

Claire Potter

History Professor at The New School.

Wendell Potter

President, Business Leaders for Health Care Transition Nation.

Varshini Prakash

Co-founder, Executive Director, Sunrise Movement.

Jim Pugh

Founder & CEO, ShareProgress.

Ricardo Ramírez

Progressive Communications Strategist. Former Senate Leadership and DNC Aide.

Andrew Rasiej

Leading technology strategist. Founder of annual Personal Democracy Forum and NY Tech Alliance. Creator of Civic Hall.

Diane Ravich

Educator and author, *Slaying Goliath* and *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*. President of The Network for Public Education.

Robert Reich

Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy, UC Berkeley. Former Secretary of Labor. Author.

Alberto Saavedra

Computer industry entrepreneur. MBA.

Guy Saperstein

Civil Rights attorney. President, Sierra Club Foundation.

Jeanine Saperstein

Educator. Health advocate. Philanthropist.

David Segal

Former Rhode Island State Rep and Minority Leader of Providence, Rhode Island City Council.

Ricky Silver

Co-lead Organizer at Empire State Indivisible.

Gail Sheehy

Author of 17 books, including *Passages* and *Hillary's Choice*

Steve Schlesinger

Author, *Bitter Fruit*. Fellow at Century Foundation. Director of World Policy Institute (1997-2006)

Steve Skrovan

Stand-up comedian, actor, TV comedy writer (*Seinfeld*, *Everybody Loves Raymond*).
Co-director/producer, *An Unreasonable Man* documentary about Ralph Nader

Gerson Smoger

Trial Lawyer of the Year. Environmental, consumer human rights advocate. 30 amicus briefs for the U.S. Supreme Court and U.S. Courtsof Appeal.

Shannon Stagman

Co-lead Organizer, Empire State Indivisible.

Tom Sullivan

Blogger. Field organizer. Author of *For the Win*.

Evan Sutton

Founder, Firekit Campaigns. Veteran Labor Communications Strategist.

Jennifer Taub

Professor of Law, Vermont Law School.

Laurence Tribe

Professor of Constitutional Law at Harvard Law. Most recent book, *To End a Presidency: The Power of Impeachment*.

David Turnbull

Strategic Communications Director, Oil Change U.S. Board Member, U.S. Climate Action Network.

Merici Vinton

Co-Founder and CEO of Ada's List. CFPB alum.

Harry Waisbren

CEO, act.tv

Evan Weber

Co-founder & Political director, Sunrise Movement.

Lawrence Wilkerson

Professor of government, William & Mary, Col. (Ret.). Chief of staff, Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Dr. Katharine Wilkinson

Climate Author & nonprofit leader.

Lauren Windsor

Senior staff, Steyer campaign. Executive Director, American Family Values.

William Winters III

Consultant. Activist. Coach.

Brandon Wolf

Pulse Nightclub shooting survivor. LGBTQ, civil rights & gun violence prevention advocate.

Winnie Wong

Founder, Once Again PAC. Ex- Senior Advisor, Bernie Sanders for President.

Tim Wu

Professor at Columbia Law School. Contributing opinion writer at NYTimes. Author of The Curse of Bigness.

Murshed Zaheed

Senior Leadership aide to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, Managing Partner. Megaphone Strategies