

# OPINIONS

## 2020 PRESIDENTIAL RACE

# Veep Quiz — Test your Kamala-Q

Presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden made history Tuesday when he picked U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris of California as his running mate. If the Biden-Harris ticket wins, Harris will become the nation's first Black, female and Asian American vice president. With the presidential candidates the oldest in history — Biden is 77 and President Donald Trump, 74 — running mates are more important than ever. So, how well do you know the people who could be a heartbeat away from the top job next January?

Today, before the Democratic convention opens Monday, test your trivia of Harris. Next week, before the Republican convention opens Aug. 24, take our quiz about Republican Vice President Mike Pence.

### 1) What's the correct way to pronounce Kamala Harris' first name?

- A) Kuh-MAH-luh
- B) CAMEL-uh
- C) COMMA-luh
- D) I'm not sure

### 2) Kamala is the Sanskrit word for what?

- A) Leader
- B) Lotus flower
- C) Sunshine
- D) Fearless

### 3) Harris is the daughter of immigrants from which countries?

- A) India and Africa
- B) India and Ecuador
- C) India and Trinidad
- D) India and Jamaica

### 4) What were her parents' occupations?

- A) Mother a breast cancer researcher, father an economics professor
- B) Mother a housewife, father a translator at the United Nations
- C) Mother a politician, father a corporate exec
- D) Mother and father both nuclear engineers

### 5) In another first for someone on a major party's presidential ticket, Harris is a graduate of which historically black college or university?

- A) Morehouse College
- B) Howard University
- C) Spelman College
- D) Hampton University



Democratic presidential candidate and former Vice President Joe Biden looked to his running mate, U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., during a campaign event in Wilmington, Del., on Wednesday.

### 6) True or false: Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama and Kamala Harris all failed a bar exam.

- A) The gentlelady from California
- B) Momala
- C) Madame Vice President
- D) None of these

### 7) How old was Harris when Joe Biden first was elected to the U.S. Senate?

- A) 4
- B) 6
- C) 8
- D) 10

### 8) Which title did Harris say means the most to her?

- A) The gentlelady from California
- B) Momala
- C) Madame Vice President
- D) None of these

### 9) What is the name of Harris' husband?

- A) Douglas Emhoff
- B) David Englehoff
- C) Donald Epstein
- D) Daniel Ellsberg

### 10) Which of these did President Trump NOT say or tweet about

### Harris?

- A) She's "risky"
- B) She's "nasty"
- C) She's the "meanest" and "most horrible" senator
- D) She's "pretty cute"

### BONUS: How tall is Harris?

- ANSWERS
- 1) C. Harris put out a campaign ad when she ran for the U.S. Senate in 2016 with kids explaining how to pronounce it. <https://bit.ly/2F54y4a>
  - 2) B
  - 3) D
  - 4) A. Her parents divorced when Harris was a child.
  - 5) B. Class of 1986
  - 6) True. They all went on to pass bar exams later.
  - 7) C. She was born on Oct. 20, 1964. Biden first was elected to the U.S. Senate in November 1972.
  - 8) B. It's the name her two stepchildren came up with.
  - 9) A. They were married in 2014.
  - 10) D

Bonus: She's 5 feet, 2 inches tall  
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## VOLATILE POLITICS

# Democrats are waging war against tradition, Constitution

Several of the 2020 Democratic primary candidates favored the abolishment of the Electoral College. Or, as once-confident candidate Elizabeth Warren put it, "I plan to be the last American president to be elected by the Electoral College."



Victor Davis Hanson

Furor over the Electoral College among the left arose from the 2000 and 2016 elections. Al Gore and Hillary Clinton, respectively, won the popular votes. But, like three earlier presidents, they lost the Electoral College voting — and with it, the presidency.

The Founding Fathers saw a purpose in the Electoral College. It ensured that small, rural states would retain importance in national elections.

The Electoral College lessened the chance of voting fraud affecting the outcome of a national vote by compartmentalizing the outcome among the various states. It usually turns the presidential election into a contest between two major parties that alone have the resources to campaign nationwide.

The college is antithetical to the parliamentary systems of Europe. There, a multiplicity of small extremist parties form and break coalitions to select heads of state, often without transparency.

Yet to change the U.S. Constitution is hard — and by intent.

Historically, an amendment has required a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress and an additional ratification by three-fourths of the states through votes of their legislatures.

There is a chance that some states could render void the Electoral College without formally amending the Constitution.

To circumvent the Constitution, Democrats have pushed "The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact," an agreement among a group of states that would force state electors to vote in accordance with the national popular vote and ignore their own state tallies. Already, 15 states totaling 73% of the 270 electoral votes necessary to win the presidency have joined.

Liberal academics have an array of proposed constitu-



In December 2016, people protested President Donald Trump's election outside the Virginia State Capitol before the Commonwealth of Virginia 2016 Electoral College program.

tional changes. Why do two Wyoming senators each represent about 290,000 voters while each California senator represents 20 million?

Forget that the founders established a constitutional republic, not a radical democracy, in order to check and balance popular and often volatile public opinion. One way was by creating an upper-house Senate that would slow down the pulse of the more populist House of Representatives.

Nevertheless, there is an ongoing effort to dream up ways to create more, and apparently liberal, senators — to change the rules rather than the hearts and minds of the voters.

In his recent eulogy at John Lewis' funeral, former President Barack Obama proposed giving statehood to liberal Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. That instantly would give Democrats four additional senators.

Others want senators allotted by population. That was the argument in a recent Atlantic article titled "The path to give California 12 senators, and Vermont just one."

There is nothing in the Constitution that specifies the exact size and makeup of the Supreme Court. It only offers guidance on how justices are appointed and confirmed, and that there will be a chief justice. But since 1869, the Supreme Court has been fixed at eight associate justices and one chief justice.

Democratic primary candidates Pete Buttigieg, Kamala Harris, Beto O'Rourke and Elizabeth Warren said they would consider ending that 151-year tradition and "pack" the court with additional justices in the fashion of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's failed 1937 effort.

The left apparently is afraid of a second Donald Trump presidential term that might allow him four or five Supreme Court picks over eight years in office.

The effect of such appointments could be mitigated by expanding the court to 12 or more justices, along with altering the rules for selecting them.

In his eulogy for Lewis, Obama also called for an end to the Senate filibuster. He claimed it was a racist relic from the Jim Crow era used to stymie needed social change.

Given recent polling, Obama now apparently believes Trump will lose the election, and Congress with it. But he also seems to fear that fundamental progressive transformation could be checked by a filibuster-happy Republican Senate minority.

Democrats were perfectly happy with the filibuster — or the mere threat of the filibuster — from 2017 to 2019, when the Democratic Senate minority blocked much of the Trump agenda.

Efforts to change time-honored rules for short-term gain are becoming more common.

Sanctuary cities nullify federal immigration law to empower illegal immigration. The nonenforcement of laws against rioting and looting has become common in big cities. The First Amendment is inert on college campuses.

The left should beware. Politics are volatile and often change. When Democrats destroy longstanding rules for short-term advantage, they might regret it when they, too, are in need of sober traditions and the U.S. Constitution.

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## COVID-19 AND BUSINESSES

# Congress and Secretary Mnuchin must act on PPP reform

COVID-19 has ravaged the U.S. economy unlike any previous crisis our country has faced. The historic 32.9% gross domestic product contraction during the second quarter of this year illustrates just how dire the situation has been for the business community. That is why the passage of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) earlier this year was welcome news to businesses. PPP provided an essential backstop for employers, which avoided millions of U.S. citizens having to file for unemployment. Whereas the final tally on how many jobs were saved might take years to calculate, I unequivocally can say that PPP has been crucial for many business owners I know.



Gary Wallace

Despite that fact, and its rocky rollout, PPP carries with it a tremendous burden for many businesses that both Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Congress immediately must fix. Congress stipulated that the forgiveness of PPP loans would not be taxable. However, the IRS publicly has stated that even though these loans are forgivable if used for payroll, health insurance, retirement contributions, rent and other approved expenses, those expenses won't be deductible in businesses' 2020 tax filings. In other words, business owners will have to treat their PPP loans — even though they are forgivable if appropriately used — as taxable income. That will result in huge tax liabilities for business owners, which could be devastating.

As someone who has guided private companies through their financial decision-making processes for more than 30 years, I can assure you that businesses tirelessly work to provide their employees with competitive salaries and benefits. Not only does this help attract and retain employees, it also benefits the business when it comes to paying taxes. Due to the way the IRS has interpreted the PPP forgiveness, the business community will face significant cash flow constraints at tax time and will be penalized for using the funds as Congress intended — i.e., maintaining the economy.

For example, if a business owner in Richmond took a \$75,000 PPP loan and spent the entire proceeds on paying his or her employees while restaurants were closed, and received the appropriate forgiveness, that business would be taxed on that full amount of \$75,000. That was not the intent of Congress, and it is not fair nor is it right.

As Congress and the Trump administration debate a possible new stimulus package in the wake of COVID-19's continued devastation on the country, they must include PPP reform in any legislation. The National Federation of Independent Business, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Associated General Contractors of America and other large trade organizations already have sounded the alarm that small- and mid-sized business owners could face a crushing tax burden in 2021, which might result in declarations of bankruptcy or worse. Fortunately, several members of the Senate Finance Committee, including Sens. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and John Cornyn, R-Texas, have expressed their support for PPP reform. Traction also is gaining in the House of Representatives to allow the deductibility of approved expenses. However, disagreement on other key issues such as unemployment insurance, the eviction moratorium and others have delayed the passage of any legislation.

The business community cannot wait any longer. Once business owners receive the forgiveness acknowledgement, as things stand, they will need to make considerations on their next quarterly tax payments, if Congress does not come to a bipartisan agreement regarding the treatment of PPP forgiveness. Given that many businesses have lost an enormous percentage of their annual revenues due to the pandemic, those business owners might not have the cash readily available to do that.

COVID-19 has had a profound impact on all of us. It has upended our lives, forced millions of people into financial desperation and killed more than 166,000 fellow Americans. We need to do everything in our power to stop this virus so that we can get back to some sense of normalcy. One small piece of that equation is for Congress and the administration to do the right thing by allowing the deductibility of qualified PPP expenses. Our business community is going to be one of the most important leaders in helping us out of this crisis. We cannot turn our back now.

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