

**From:** [Deepak Pateriya-C4](#)

**Subject:** It's closer than it looks—4 things to watch in the final days

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Dear Friends:

If you're the person refreshing FiveThirtyEight or the US Elections Project website as a replacement for a stress ball—this is for you. I've talked to our team in 8 swing states, and here's our take: Turnout is very high, as you've no doubt been reading. Both bases are motivated. Independents seem to be leaning our way.

**BUT, the races are closer than polls show.** We must keep working to turn out every single one of our voters.

For a deep dive check out [my colleague's latest insider state of the race memo here](#)—for the TL;DR version, keep reading.

#### 4 Things to Watch this Weekend and Election Day

1. Polls in **Florida and North Carolina** are among the earliest to close on Election evening, and both states are expected to quickly count ballots. So they could serve as good early indicators. In North Carolina, if results by 11 PM ET point to a Biden win, we'll be feeling very confident. If it goes to Trump, the polls likely were off by 2-3 points again and we're in for a tighter race.

Florida has been the closest state over the last two decades with an average margin of 1.2%. Our Win Justice collaborative program has already resulted in over 715,500 conversations this year with Florida voters! Based on conversations with voters and our staff, local leaders, and partners, we think polls showing Biden up by 2 points are probably closer to right. If this state is called for Biden/Harris before midnight ET it shuts off most of Trump's paths to victory. If Florida stays too close to call all evening, things get more interesting.

Three Florida counties to keep in mind: (1) Duval County, home to Jacksonville, which has been trending blue. (2) Miami-Dade County which typically provides Democrats an advantage but has been very hard to pin down this year. (3) Sumter County, home to "The Villages" retirement community, where the GOP runs up the score and you'll find the nation's oldest median age.

2. **Georgia and South Carolina** will close polling locations at 7 PM ET, but voters will very likely be still casting ballots for hours due to the horrific, racialized voter suppression. How widespread the problems, and how long the lines are in these two key southern states, may determine control of the U.S. Senate, since three seats are up for grabs in these two states.

Still, the difference between 2016 and 2020 is substantial in Georgia. Working with New Georgia Project Action Fund, we are building on the largest increase in turnout of any state in 2018. Keep your eyes on: (1) Fulton County in the Atlanta metro. (2) Bibb County in the middle of the crucial "Black Belt." (3) Pickens County, where the much-examined

demographic of white voters without a college education turned out in historic numbers for Republicans in 2016 and 2018.

3. Can the “Blue Wall” be rebuilt in **Wisconsin, Michigan, and Pennsylvania**? Will **Minnesota** join? Our answer is a definite maybe. This is where results may take days as a Republican lead could slowly give way to Democrats on mailed ballots.

In key areas of Eastern Pennsylvania our partners CASA in Action and Make The Road Action Pennsylvania have made more than 1.5 million calls and sent 1.2 million text messages. Counties to watch: (1) Luzerne where Trump made huge inroads in 2016. (2) Lackawanna, home to Joe Biden’s beloved Scranton. (3) Alleghany, home to Pittsburgh. (4) Montgomery, as a weather vane of how the middle of the state will vote.

4. In the west the fight for the U.S. Senate takes final shape as polls close at 9 PM ET in both **Arizona and Colorado**. Arizona is a likely flip and we’re hoping the U.S. Senate race will be called by 1 AM ET for Mark Kelly. The battle for the presidency might be harder and take longer to call. With our partner LUCHA, we are shoring up our work in Coconino County (Flagstaff) to increase turnout in this key district. In Colorado, Biden should win the state and we’re optimistic that incumbent Republican Senator Cory Gardner will be defeated by former Governor John Hickenlooper.

One other thing we’re looking at: How do these state chambers shape out? In Arizona, Democrats are trying to flip the state Senate and make inroads into the state House. In Colorado, we’re looking to expand the majority to pass progressive legislation.

Are you dizzy yet? I know I am. Still, what keeps me rooted in the frenzy of 2020 is the power that I know fundamentally lives in our democracy, our people, our right to vote. [As our own Dorian Warren shared this week in The Nation](#):

*“The struggle against the racist structures that prevented—and still prevent—Black people from voting is fundamental to the question of who we are as a people. Voting is not merely one right among many, an act reducible to pulling a lever. It is an identity that is a marker of full citizenship. This is why....my organization calls on people not merely to vote but to be voters.”*

Thanks for all you are doing. As always, please feel free to reach out.

Yours in the fight,

Deepak

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