

NEWS STORY

Warren is no stranger to voters or the Democratic party, but can she move past her DNA?

Boston, MA – Elizabeth Warren was one of the first 2020 hopefuls to declare her candidacy for President of the United States and sign up for the chance to defeat Donald Trump in the general election. Senator Warren has long been an obvious choice and a favorite for the 2020 election, often trailing just behind characters like Joe Biden and Beto O'Rourke, neither of whom have announced their official candidacies. But ever since her 2020 Senate run, there has been a cloud over Warren's otherwise spotless political reputation.

"I think there's a lot of anger among Democrats about her handling of the Native American controversy," said Jacob Potts, a junior at the University of Vermont, a lifelong resident of Cape Cod, Massachusetts and a long-time supporter of Senator Warren. Potts has not decided which Democrat he'll be supporting in the 2020 primary. "They thought that releasing the DNA results was a misstep and the fact that she listed herself as Native American in any capacity, they saw as problematic."

Republicans have long accused Warren of claiming Native American ancestry and claiming to be a person of color, despite the fact that she's white. This has garnered widespread criticism from both sides of the aisle. Despite a thorough investigation by the Boston Globe last year and Warren releasing DNA results that prove that she does in fact have just as much Native heritage as she ever claimed to have, the issue seems to have branded her for life.

So far in this campaign cycle, Warren has made sweeping claims about refusing to take money from big donors and has unveiled major plans for a Universal Child Health Care system. Are these policies a genuine reflection of Warren's candidacy or just a way to get voters to stop talking about her DNA?

Though these policies are popular among her supporters in Massachusetts, Warren's Senate wins in 2012 and again in 2018 aren't necessarily a good metric to predict how she will do come 2020. Warren has only ever had to win over a majority blue state whose residents share similar ideologies. 2020 will require Senator Warren to appeal to moderate voters in Midwest swing states. This will likely not happen if Warren continues down her incendiary path, stirring up controversy within both parties.

"In Massachusetts, she has a great deal of support, there are a lot of people in Massachusetts that really admire her," said Potts. "Outside of Mass, I think she's a lot less popular with people who are not super far-left. I think most everywhere; moderate Democrats are not huge fans of hers."

Senator Warren is not entering the 2020 field as a stranger to the voters. In her campaign, she'll have to appeal to moderates, while also getting more progressive Dems back on her side after the DNA scandal. Can she do all this while distinguishing herself ideologically from all the other candidates in the running?