



Memorandum

To: Interested parties

From: Future Majority

Subject: This week in the states

Three things to know this week that happened outside the Beltway:

- **Ohio's** last car plant closes as GM's last Chevy Cruze rolled off the assembly line in Lordstown (Trumbull County) on Wednesday bringing an end to the plant that had been fueling the local economy since 1966 and costing seventeen hundred hourly workers their jobs. Workers, retirees, families and community members gathered outside the plant for an impromptu and emotional gathering in below freezing weather as the assembly line stopped for the final time. ([link](#)) ([link](#)) ([link](#))

In response to Wednesday's GM plant closing, both Ohio Senators Sherrod Brown (D) and Rob Portman (R) expressed frustration with GM. Sen. Portman said *"For the first time in nearly 100 years, GM will not have an assembly plant in Ohio... "I remain incredibly frustrated and disappointed with GM's decision, but I'm not giving up on this plant and these workers. GM says it will produce new 20 new electric vehicles by 2023 and, at the very least, one of those should be in Lordstown. I will continue to press GM executives to recommit to Lordstown, do the right thing by these workers who have given so much to this company, and bring new production to this plant."*

And Sen. Brown reintroduced his "American Cars, American Jobs" Act, saying:

"We know how devastating that is for the workers, for their families, for local businesses, for the entire community. We also know it doesn't have to be this way. We need to overhaul our trade and tax policy, and end this corporate business model where companies like GM close American plants, collect a tax break to move overseas, only to sell those cars back into the U.S. That's why I'm reintroducing the American Cars, American Jobs Act." ([link](#))

- Some Democratic leaders in **Pennsylvania** fret that the leftward lurch the national Democratic conversation ahead of 2020 might halt the success Democrats have had in recent elections and make the state more difficult to win back presidentially in 2020. Democrats like Conor Lamb have demonstrated an ability to win back Trump voters and political strategists and experts believe a more moderate presidential candidate will help resurrect the "blue wall" of PA, MI & WI that Trump demolished en route to the White House. Former Gov. Ed Rendell told the New York Times, *"The more we have presidential candidates or newly elected congresspeople talking about the Green New*



Deal, talking about 'Medicare for all,' talking about socialism, the more that plays into the Trump campaign's hands." ([link](#))

- A new poll shows that Trump may be in trouble in **Florida**, a state critical to his re-election. According to a Bendixen & Amadi International [poll](#), only 40 percent of Florida voters said they believed the president should be reelected, while 53 percent were opposed to a second Trump term including 23 percent of Republicans, indicating Trump's Florida problem starts with his base. Among 2020 Democrats, the poll shows Joe Biden as the front runner with 26% followed by Bernie Sanders at 11, and Kamala Harris at 9%.

Most other Democrats barely registered in the poll and it found 46 percent undecided. The pollsters say their findings question talk of Florida being out of reach for Democrats. ([link](#))

Elsewhere in the states:

- **Michigan** Democratic Governor Gretchen Whitmer unveiled her first state budget this week and plans a statewide tour to sell the \$60.2 billion plan. The hallmarks of the budget reflect the Governor's campaign promises -- a 45 cent fuel tax to "fix the damn roads", big increase in education spending, and the repeal of an unpopular pension tax implemented by her predecessor. ([link](#)) ([link](#))
- **Ohio** Republican Governor Mike DeWine's new state budget calls for doubling state aid for family and children services from \$74 million a year to \$151 million a year. According to the Columbus Dispatch, "Ohio ranks last in the nation for support of local children's services. Only 51 of Ohio's 88 counties have levies to generate local funding for services. In counties without them, services are limited or simply unavailable. And in recent years, thousands more children are in need of services in large part because of the state's opioid crisis."

"This is a dramatic increase but what we have to keep in mind is that Ohio has not been doing its fair share at all in regard to these children. Ohio has historically left the counties to fend for themselves and we have some very poor counties which simply do not have the resources." ([link](#))

- The **Ohio** House this week passed a 10.7 cent gas tax with broad bipartisan support. If passed by the Senate, it will represent the first hike in the state's gas tax in 14 years. Their current 28 cent gas tax is lower than other surrounding states with the exception of Kentucky. ([link](#))

2020 Presidential Battleground State Travels & News:



- **Ohio** Democratic Senator Sherrod Brown said Thursday that he'll not seek the 2020 Democratic nomination for president but will instead remain in the U.S. Senate seat to which he was just reelected last November.

"The best place for me to continue fighting for Ohio and for the dignity of workers across the country — all workers — is to stay in the U.S. Senate. You've heard me say many times that when you love this country, you fight for the people who make it work. I fight best when I bring joy to the battle, and I find that joy fighting for Ohio in the Senate," Brown said. ([link](#))

- Speaker Pelosi this week said that "**Texas** is ground zero for us in the next election" and results of a new University of Texas/Texas Tribune poll suggest she could be right. According to the poll, which surveyed 1,200 registered voters online Feb. 15-24, only 39% of poll respondents said they would "definitely vote to re-election Donald Trump" if the election were held now, and 45% said they would "definitely vote for someone else". Another 10% said they would "probably vote to re-elect Donald Trump," and 6% said they would "probably vote for someone else". ([link](#))

2019 Elections

- There's a critical Supreme Court Election upcoming on April 2 in **Wisconsin** - (Democrat backed) Lisa Neubauer faces fellow State Appeals Court Judge Brian Hagedorn in the election to replace retiring liberal Justice Shirley Abrahamson. The court is controlled 4-3 by conservatives. A Neubauer win, coupled with a win by a liberal candidate next year, would flip control of the court.

Tell us what's happening in your state. Email us at political@futuremajority.org.