**Martin O’Malley for President**

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At the dinner table, while listening to the Democratic debates earlier last month, I told my parents they should look out for O’Malley who, in my opinion, stood to gain the most in terms of name recognition. “Who is this again?” my dad would ask, every single time he came up to speak that night. I get the same reaction when I tell everyone I know that were he to be more popular, O’Malley would get my vote.

Today, we’ll find out who Martin O’Malley is, where he stands, and why he should win the Democratic Nomination.

Martin O’Malley is best known as the former Governor of Maryland and Mayor of Baltimore, and his achievements in those positions were nothing short of impressive. He began his tenure as mayor with a message and a goal to decrease violent crime in Baltimore’s poor urban neighborhoods. Conventional methods, he argued, were ineffective in achieving this – so, to better deal with the situation, O’Malley initiated a new, statistics and fact-based approach called CitiStat, a low-cost means to track and report data on crime and on the performance of other government bureaus in upholding their duties. This diagnosing and addressing problems approach was able to empirically reduce crime rates in Baltimore over O’Malley’s tenure, and was even adopted in other large cities (namely Washington, D.C.). O’Malley also set himself in favor of funding for K-12 education and school safety, both of which he was also able to improve. His policies as Governor didn’t waver a bit. In addition to implementing CitiStat across Maryland as a new system, StateStat, to improve government efficiency and target crime rates, O’Malley was also able to close a maximum-security prison in the state. As Governor, O’Malley was able to demonstrate himself to be accommodating towards undocumented immigrants, passing legislation to qualify many for in-state tuition at Maryland’s public colleges and speaking strongly against deportations and strong legal discrimination against undocumented immigrants. He also came out as a friend of research and scientific advancement, passing over $100 million in stem cell research over six years and boosting NIH funding by over 3%.

O’Malley’s stances, for the most part, are strongly liberal and democratic, to the left of Hillary Clinton and to the right of Bernie Sanders. So far, though, I’m sure you only see him as an average Democratic candidate. Let’s begin by stacking him against Hillary Clinton. Firstly, O’Malley is a much stronger opponent of corporate influence in government and corporate immunity from law, supporting measures like reinstating Glass-Steagall to separate commercial and investment banking and the prosecution of bankers responsible for the financial crisis. Clinton, however, is a recipient of major corporate donations from numerous financial giants not limited to Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan, Citigroup, and more, and fails to express the same rhetoric that O’Malley does in terms of regulating corporations that control a vast amount of American wealth. He is also an active member of the war on poverty, decrying economic injustice and touting welfare programs to grow and secure the middle class. O’Malley is also markedly less hawkish than Clinton, standing more in favor of a negotiated settlement between Israel and Palestine, the US and Iran, and seeking a more collaborative rather than empirically ineffective confrontational stance.

Strong as his views may be, they aren’t quite as strong as Sanders’. Sanders, as we all know, advocates even higher tax increases to pay for social programs including full college tuition, health care as a right for all Americans, breaking up the big banks, just to name a few of his stronger ideas. Though these ideas sound almost ideal to us, that idealism is the problem – even if these ideas are economically feasible, convincing a majority-Republican Congress (and especially the Freedom Caucus) to pass them or not to override a veto is nigh-impossible. A candidate like O’Malley, however, is a candidate that can compromise. On gun control, for example, O’Malley was able to pass a comprehensive bill to ban 45 different types of assault rifles and implement better identification, background checks, and safety training measures for gun owners, all while compromising with and winning over Maryland’s rural and Appalachian population. This was the same population O’Malley was able to expand healthcare coverage in and win over to pass the DREAM Act and be the first state to do so (relatedly, Sander’s voting record on immigration is liberal but mixed, while O’Malley was able to pass successful pro-immigration reforms in his state).

Martin O’Malley is a politician that can compromise with and win over those within his own party and across parties and succeed in passing the bills he sponsors, all while sticking to a firm set of Democratic values and never sacrificing the interests of the poor, rural, and underrepresented to do so.

That being said – if he continues not to poll so hot and lag in endorsements, Bernie’s getting my vote.