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Local Super Tuesday voters share polling booth thoughts

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by Angela Yang

Sen. Elizabeth Warren returned home to Cambridge to cast her vote for president on a balmy Super Tuesday morning. Across the river in Boston, citizens filed into their local polling stations to do the same.

Throughout the day, Massachusetts residents voted along with 13 other states across the nation that held primary elections and caucuses.

Allston resident Leslie Sterling, 62, said those who wield the right to vote “have to” do so on Super Tuesday, as this set of elections is often a turning point in the primary season: it’s when the largest number of delegates will be apportioned. Results can redirect the trajectory of many still in the field.

But exercising one’s suffrage is important in general, Sterling said, for several reasons.

“For so long, Black people were not allowed to vote,” Sterling said. “Many people protested and died so that I could have the right to vote as a Black person, and then there were women who protested and died so that I as a woman could have the right to vote.”

2020 will be the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which enfranchised women in August 1920. Sterling, who voted



*A polling station at Jackson/Mann K-8 School in Allston. Massachusetts was one of 14 states that voted on Super Tuesday.
SOPHIE PARK/ DAILY FREE PRESS STAFF*

for Warren, said the symbolic occasion further incentivized her to turn out this year.

“I thought it was symbolic to be able to vote for a woman on the 100th anniversary of women voting,” Sterling said. “I would be happy with any Democrat, but I like her. I know that she’s good. I know she’s smart. I know she’s competent. I know that she can get things done.”

Ashley Schwartzman, 33, of Allston said she chose to vote because it is important to take part in democracy. She said she casted her ballot for Sen. Bernie Sanders because of his plans to distribute wealth for the benefit of the majority rather than a few.

Schwartzman said although Warren shares many of the same progressive values as the Vermont senator, Sanders holds a longer track record of consistency.

“I have followed Bernie Sanders since the 2016 elections, and a lot of his things that he stood for, he has stood for that for a very long time,” Schwartzman said. “And some of the things that Warren is standing for has been since the 2016 elections.”

Another Sanders voter, 26-year-old Skylar Schuman of Allston, said this same tenacity was part of what impressed her.

“I feel like we’re not going to come across another Bernie Sanders ever again, who has this long of a track record of just fighting for everyone,” Schuman said. “And I think he’s going to continue his fight throughout his presidency if he gets elected.”

Schuman said Sanders also advocates for ideas that align with her beliefs on social justice issues.

“A lot of the Democratic nominees do,” Schuman said. “But I think that he has the passion and drive throughout his entire career to prove that he’s going to continue working for the people.”

Allston voter Josh Witkowski, 43, said he although he believes in many of Sanders’s views, he ultimately leaned toward Warren partly because he feels she is best qualified to realize concrete action upon taking the Oval Office.

“I feel like Warren is more prepared to play the game in Washington,” Witkowski said. “And I feel like she probably is a little more willing to work within the system. I feel like [Sanders] might be less willing to reach across to the other party in the way that Elizabeth Warren probably will.”

Among voters polled during the day in Boston’s Ward 21, which encompasses Boston University, Warren and Sanders emerged as top contenders for most popular. Several also expressed support for former Vice President Joe Biden, who came in first in Massachusetts.

One 20-year-old voter, Shweta Shreyarathi of Fenway, was drawn toward Biden based on name recognition.

“I voted for Biden just because he was the candidate I knew the most about,” Shreyarathi said. “And I went to Syracuse and

he’s an alumni and did a bunch of stuff while I was a student there.”

Kathleen Sum, 47, of Allston said she voted for Biden because he has established himself as a national frontrunner and is already familiar with the workings of the White House.

“It’s where my heart went,” Sum said. “He has momentum, he’s got past experience.”

Former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, meanwhile, rolled into fourth place in the state.

Fenway resident Allison Brown, 33, said pitting a billionaire president against another billionaire candidate might be the most effective way to replace him.

“I voted for Michael Bloomberg,” Brown said, “because I feel like he’s the only one who can maybe beat Trump.”

Inyeong Kim and Emma Lindsey contributed to the reporting of this article.



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