

For additional information contact:

Suzanne Hammelman

The Hawthorn Group, L.C.

703.299.4499

shammelman@hawthorngroup.com

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HAWTHORN CHAIRMAN AND CEO JOHN ASHFORD SPEAKS TO THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF SANITATION AGENCIES

Washington, DC – Calling the Democratic Presidential nomination race “Bernie’s to lose,” Hawthorn Chairman John Ashford addressed the audience at the annual Forum of the California Association of Sanitation Agencies in Washington, D.C.

Diving deep into the current state of the Presidential elections, Ashford offered his unique perspective on what to expect in the months ahead. Focusing on two key questions: 1) Can anything during the rest of the primary process happen that will change the current rankings that Sanders leads? 2) Can the Democrats do anything to prevent a second Trump term?

Ashford, a Missouri native and veteran political prognosticator said “We are no longer talking about IF Trump can win based on his historically high negatives, it’s more about if there is anything at all Democrats can do to defeat him come November.”

Ashford said his bets, if the convention and election were held today, would be Sanders as the Democratic nominee losing to Trump in November. But he said, “All bets today are bad bets. Until we see the South Carolina debate tonight, the South Carolina vote Saturday, and the outcome for Mike Bloomberg in his enormous investment in Super Tuesday, we don’t know – at least not with any confidence – who the nominee will be.”

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But Ashford discounted Biden’s getting a “bump” in South Carolina. “Even though the most recent polls shows African American voters moving back to Biden from Steyer – something Congressman Clyburn’s expected endorsement will only solidify – South Carolina cannot revive the Biden campaign. At worst, it will be fatal. At best it will keep his campaign on ‘life support.’ But it is only three days from South Carolina to Super Tuesday, and early voting in California started a month ago. This may not be the end of the Biden campaign, but it is surely coming, leaving only Bloomberg – if his advertising is more effective than his debate performance – to stand between Bernie and the nomination.”

Ashford said he questioned the “rush to judgement” that a Sanders nomination would be a disaster for “down ballot” Democrats, costing the party the chance at a Senate seats in Arizona, for instance. “While a socialist hardly appeals to the traditional Arizona voter, Sen. Sanders’ support from Latin voters in Nevada suggests he might bring a new base of voters to the polls in Arizona.”

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About John Ashford

Once a country and western disc jockey, John Ashford is now Chairman and CEO of The Hawthorn Group, L.C., the international public affairs and public relations firm he co-founded in 1992. Drawing on communications and public affairs experience gained in hundreds of successful political and corporate campaigns, Ashford now provides senior counsel to Hawthorn clients across the country and around the world.

Building on a career that started in Missouri politics in the 1970’s, Ashford has worked on more than 300 candidate and corporate campaigns around the world and pioneered the adaptation of political grassroots techniques to serve Fortune 500 companies.

About The Hawthorn Group

Based in Alexandria, Virginia, The Hawthorn Group is an international public affairs firm of senior corporate and political communications experts specializing in building grassroots and grasstops support for issues to achieve public policy objectives. With activities and projects in more than 33 states over the past two years alone, Hawthorn has built campaigns that engage and recruit both grassroots and opinion leader support on issues of broad public concern, including: energy and tax policy, infrastructure programs, business development and resource planning. Hawthorn finds and provides all appropriate means of persuasion, from industry coalitions to individual networking, from traditional advertising to community relations, from media relations to social media, blending all the available tools into the art of advocacy.

