Twitter Thread by Tim Wise



Tim Wise
@timjacobwise



1/ Some people on the left have this magical thinking problem when it comes to why our ideas don't often carry the day within the Dem Party. We act like it's all "big Pharma money" etc. And yes, that money is corrupting. But it's not magic...

2/ If a Rep knew the majority of THEIR constituents (not Dem voters from other parts of the country but THEIR constituents) supported more left policies *and would actually show up & vote against them if they didn't vote for those policies* they would vote for them, obviously.

3/ A major goal of a Rep is to keep being one, so no one would go against the wishes of the majority of their constituents just to get contributions, if that would cost them the job. But it WON'T. Either bc the folks who could punish them don't bother to vote, or, more likely...

4/ bc most voters are savvy enough to care about more than one issue, so even if a Rep doesn't fight for M4A, they might be good on other things voters care about and much better than the GOP alternative. Now, if these are progressive districts where the D is sure to win..

5/ ...it's different. THERE it makes sense to push hard for those Reps to do the left thing. But that means running good candidates in primaries, so those Reps feel the heat. Twitter shaming them or forcing floor votes to "expose" people means nothing w/o a viable alternative...

6/ ...and if that shaming also ends up hurting Dems in districts where they don't have the luxury of just relying on solid Dem votes and progressive leaning voters (and that's a lot of districts btw), then the outcome is nothing changes but some folks on Twitter feel righteous...

7/ So far, in most races where left candidates have challenged more establishment Dems, the left candidates have lost. We can't just say "oh it's the power of money" bc there are examples where insurgents ousted establishment candidates despite that...

8/ It's bc the message (or messenger) simply did not resonate with enough people in that district. We tend to point to national polls of Dems to show how popular and left most Dem voters are, but that is aggregate data, which is meaningless at the district level in most cases...

9/ ...and which ignores how many independents (who are not as progressive/left) and even soft republicans many D reps have to win just to keep an actual R from winning the seat. Please note: I hate that this is the reality, but it is...

10/ It is a function of how gerrymandering has worked to skew democracy, among other things, but it's also a function of most people really not being as left as I would like them to be -- at least not so consistently so as to have that determine voting choices...

11/ Most Americans are decidedly non ideological, so even if they believe in one or two things that are strongly progressive in orientation they believe in other things that are not, and thus it's hard to know which thing(s) will be most important to getting them to vote...

12/ Simplistic opinion surveys on single issues, worded in such a way as to almost ensure a certain outcome, are pretty shitty proxies for where people really are politically, and certainly on Election Day...

13/ If we want people to embrace left politics we have to inculcate those through time consuming grass roots organizing & education efforts. But some people find that work too...I dunno, work-like, I guess. Performative shaming of Reps and yelling on YouTube is more fun