



September 18, 2025

In the Race for Governor Spanberger Leads Earle Sears by 12 Points Among Virginia Likely Voters; Hashmi Leads Reid by 11 points in Lt. Governor Contest; Jones Leads Miyares by 7 Points in Attorney General Race

Summary of Key Findings

- 1. Democrat Abigail Spanberger leads Republican Winsome Earle Sears by 12 points, 52% to 40% among Virginia likely voters; 8% remain undecided or don't know.**
- 2. In the Lieutenant Governor race, Democrat Ghazala Hashmi leads Republican John Reid by 11 points among Virginia likely voters, 48% to 37%; 15% say they are undecided or don't know.**
- 3. In the race for Attorney General, Incumbent Jason Miyares trails Jay Jones by 7 points among Virginia likely voters, 48% to 41%; 12% say they are undecided or don't know.**
- 4. Top of mind issues for Virginia likely voters include inflation/cost of living (21%), threats to democracy (18%), K-12 education (9%), immigration (9%), and crime (9%).**
- 5. 48% of Virginia likely voters approve of Governor Youngkin's job performance while 42% disapprove; 9% say they don't know. Just 39% of Virginia likely voters approve of President Trump's job performance while 58% disapprove; 3% say they don't know.**

For further information, contact:

Dr. Rebecca Bromley-Trujillo
Research Director

rebecca.bromleytrujillo@cnu.edu
@ profbromley_trujillo Threads

O: (757) 594-9140
M: (269) 598-5008

Cami Castleberry
Director

cami.castleberry@cnu.edu

O: (757) 594-8033
M: (757) 897-4966

Summary and Background: Early voting begins Friday, September 19th in the Commonwealth of Virginia and Election Day is nearly 7 weeks out, on Tuesday November 4th. We surveyed Virginia likely voters on their vote choice for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, and a generic ballot for the VA House of Delegates, in addition to policy issues. Virginia tends to vote against the party in power in the White House, having reliably done so in all gubernatorial races since the 1970s with one exception, Terry McAuliffe in 2013. Our results suggest Virginia may continue this trend; however, meaningful shifts may still occur in the coming weeks as voters get to know the candidates and as the state and national context shifts. The Wason Center will survey these races two additional times before Election Day to capture those potential shifts.

Enthusiasm: Virginia likely voters are enthusiastic to vote in the upcoming elections with 87% indicating they are either very enthusiastic (56%) or somewhat enthusiastic (31%). Democratic voters have an enthusiasm advantage with 69% indicating they are very enthusiastic compared to 56% of Republicans and 42% of Independents.

Favorability ratings for candidates running for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Attorney General: We ask Virginia likely voters whether they have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the respective candidates running for statewide office in Virginia.

Looking to the candidates for Virginia governor, overall, Democratic candidate and former Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger has a +10 favorability rating (43% favorable to 33% unfavorable) with 26% indicating they have no opinion/don't know. Current Lieutenant Governor and Republican Winsome Earle Sears has a -3 favorability rating (34% favorable to 37% unfavorable); 29% say no opinion/don't know.

Candidates for Lieutenant Governor are not particularly well-known among Virginia likely voters. Republican candidate John Reid has a +2 favorability rating (13% favorable to 11% unfavorable), though a large percentage (75%) say they do not know enough about him to have an opinion. State Sen. Ghazala Hashmi also has a +2 favorability rating (15% favorable to 13% unfavorable), though she is also relatively unknown to Virginia likely voters with 73% saying no opinion/don't know.

Incumbent Attorney General Jason Miyares has a +8 favorability rating (26% favorable to 18% unfavorable) with 56% saying no opinion/don't know. Democratic candidate Jay Jones has a +4 favorability rating (23% favorable to 19% unfavorable); he is slightly less well known than Miyares with 58% indicating no opinion/don't know.

Gubernatorial Vote Choice: Among Virginia likely voters Spanberger leads Earle Sears by 12 points, 52% to 40%, with 8% saying they are undecided/don't know.

Spanberger's support is currently driven by Democratic voters (95%), Independents (55% to 32%), Black voters (85% to 6%), women (58% to 33%), voters aged 18-44 (56% to 36%), and voters with college degrees (60% to 30%).

Earle Sears' support within her own party sits at 91% and she holds a lead among white voters (50% to 44%) and male voters (48% to 44%).

Lieutenant Governor Vote Choice Virginia State Sen. Ghazala Hashmi holds an 11-point lead among Virginia likely voters against Republican John Reid (48% to 37%); 15% remain undecided/don't know, while 1% say they will vote for someone else.

Hashmi has an advantage among Independents (+14), women (+26), Black voters (+73), and voters with a college degree (+28). Reid's support comes primarily from fellow Republicans at 83%, white voters (+5), and male voters (+6).

Attorney General Vote Choice Democrat Jay Jones holds a 7-point lead over Incumbent Attorney General Jason Miyares among Virginia likely voters (48% to 41%); 12% remain undecided/don't know, while 1% say they will vote for someone else.

Jones' lead is bolstered by support from Democrats (91%), Independents (51% to 33%), women voters (54% to 35%), Black voters (84% to 8%), younger voters (53% to 35%), and voters with college degrees (56% to 31%). Miyares has support among Republicans (90%), Male voters (47% to 41%), and white voters (50% to 39%).

Key issues: Virginia likely voters are asked which issue is top of mind when they think about voting in the upcoming elections. 21% say inflation/cost of living, followed by 18% who say threats to democracy. The next three top issues are evenly split between K-12 education (9%), immigration (9%), and crime (9%).

Top of mind issues vary by party with Republicans fairly split between inflation/cost of living (19%), immigration (18%) and crime (18%). Top issues among Democrats include threats to democracy (32%), inflation/cost of living (20%), and an even split between K-12 education (12%) and healthcare (12%). Most Independents say inflation/cost of living (25%), followed by threats to democracy (17%), and an even split between K-12 education (10%) and crime (10%).

Presidential and Gubernatorial Approval:

Governor Youngkin's job approval among Virginia likely voters is a net +6 with 48% saying they approve of his job performance while 42% disapprove; 9% say they don't know.

Gubernatorial approval falls largely along partisan lines, with 92% of Republicans saying they approve of Governor Youngkin's job performance, while 77% of Democrats disapprove; 45% of Independents say they approve relative to 44% who disapprove.

President Trump's approval rating is underwater (-19) with just 39% saying they approve of the way he is handling his job as President compared to 58% who disapprove; 3% say they don't know. The nationalization of state elections makes President Trump's approval rating particularly relevant to Virginia elections, which provides a downward pull for Republican candidates and a boost for Democrats.

ENTH: And how enthusiastic would you say you are about voting in the elections this fall? Would you say you are...

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non-College	College
Very Enthusiastic	56	56	42	69	53	59	56	54	49	58	52	60
Somewhat Enthusiastic	31	32	38	23	33	29	30	32	33	30	33	28
Less Enthusiastic	7	6	13	4	8	7	8	6	11	6	7	7
Not Enthusiastic	5	3	5	3	5	4	4	6	4	5	5	4
Dk/ref (vol)	2	3	3	0	2	2	2	1	4	1	2	1

Q4: Two candidates are running for governor of Virginia. As I read their names, please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of them, or if you don't know enough about them to have an opinion [ROTATE A-B].

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No Opinion	Don't Know
Winsome Earle-Sears	34	37	19	10
Abigail Spanberger	43	33	19	7

Q6: Thinking about the election for governor ... if the election were held TODAY would you vote for [INSERT NAME, RANDOMIZE]? [INTERVIEWER: IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE ("DON'T KNOW", "DEPENDS", "NOT SURE", ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH: Which one are you leaning toward right now?]

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non-College	College
Winsome Earle-Sears, the Republican	40	91	32	1	48	33	50	6	36	42	49	30
Abigail Spanberger, the Democrat	52	6	55	95	44	58	44	85	56	50	44	60
Someone else (vol)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Undecided (vol)	5	3	2	2	4	5	3	5	3	5	4	5
Dk/Ref (vol.)	3	0	1	1	2	4	2	4	6	3	3	4

Q7: Two candidates are running for Lieutenant Governor of Virginia. As I read their names, please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of them, or if you don't know enough about them to have an opinion [ROTATE A-B].

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No Opinion	Don't Know
John Reid	13	11	44	31
Ghazala Hashmi	15	13	41	32

Q9: Thinking about the election for lieutenant governor ... if the election were held TODAY would you vote for [INSERT NAME, RANDOMIZE 1-2]? [INTERVIEWER: IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE (“DON’T KNOW”, “DEPENDS”, “NOT SURE”, ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH]: Which one are you leaning toward right now?

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non-College	College
John Reid, the Republican	37	83	32	1	46	29	45	8	27	40	46	27
Ghazala Hashmi, the Democrat	48	4	46	93	40	55	40	81	55	46	41	55
Someone else (vol)	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	1
Undecided (vol)	7	6	12	2	6	8	7	5	3	8	6	8
Don’t know/refuse (vol)	8	7	9	4	7	8	8	6	13	6	7	9

Q10: Two candidates are running for Attorney General of Virginia. As I read their names, please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of them, or if you don’t know enough about them to have an opinion [ROTATE A-B].

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No Opinion	Don’t Know
Jason Miyares	26	18	36	20
Jay Jones	23	19	39	19

Q12: Thinking about the election for attorney general ... if the election were held TODAY would you vote for [INSERT NAME, RANDOMIZE 1-2]? [INTERVIEWER: IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE (“DON’T KNOW”, “DEPENDS”, “NOT SURE”, ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH]: Which one are you leaning toward right now?

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non-College	College
Jason Miyares, the Republican	41	90	33	2	47	35	50	8	35	43	50	31
Jay Jones, the Democrat	48	2	51	91	41	54	39	84	53	46	40	56
Someone else (vol)	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1
Undecided (vol)	7	5	10	5	7	7	6	6	6	7	6	8
Don’t know/refuse	5	4	4	3	4	5	5	2	6	4	5	4

Q13: As you may know, all of Virginia’s House of Delegates seats are up for election this fall. If the election were held TODAY, which party's candidate are you more likely to vote for in your district [ROTATE 1 and 2]?

The Republican Party’s candidate	43
The Democratic Party’s candidate	51
Other (vol)	1
Don’t know/refuse (vol)	6

Q14: From the following list of issues, which is top of mind for you when you think about voting in the upcoming elections? [RANDOMIZE 1-11]

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non-College	College
Cost of living/Inflation	21	19	25	20	20	22	19	30	23	20	25	25
Health care	7	4	5	12	7	8	8	4	4	8	7	7
K-12 Education	9	7	10	12	6	12	6	17	13	8	8	8
Immigration	9	18	7	2	14	4	11	2	5	10	11	11
Crime	9	18	10	1	10	8	11	2	11	9	12	12
Climate change	2	0	1	4	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	1
Gun policy	4	5	4	3	6	3	4	4	7	3	5	5
Reproductive rights	4	3	5	3	3	4	4	2	5	3	4	4
Threats to democracy	18	5	17	32	16	20	17	22	15	19	11	11
Taxes	7	12	8	1	9	5	8	4	7	7	7	7
Federal workforce reductions	2	0	3	4	1	3	2	4	0	3	1	1
Other (vol): _____	6	5	4	6	6	6	6	6	3	7	7	7
Don't know/ref (vol)	3	5	1	1	3	3	3	0	5	2	3	3

Q15: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Glenn Youngkin is handling his job as Governor of Virginia? [IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE (“DON’T KNOW”, “DEPENDS”, “NOT SURE”, ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH: OVERALL do you approve or disapprove of the way Glenn Youngkin is handling his job as Governor? IF STILL UNSURE ENTER AS DON’T KNOW]

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non-College	College
Approve	48	92	45	12	53	45	56	19	38	52	55	41
Disapprove	42	6	44	77	41	44	38	65	45	41	35	50
Don't know/refused (vol)	9	2	11	11	7	12	7	16	17	7	11	8

Q16: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President? [IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE (“DON’T KNOW”, “DEPENDS”, “NOT SURE”, ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH: OVERALL do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President? IF STILL UNSURE ENTER AS DON’T KNOW]

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non-College	College
Approve	39	89	2	28	43	34	47	6	29	42	48	28
Disapprove	58	10	97	67	54	62	50	90	67	55	50	67
Don't know/refused (vol)	3	1	1	5	3	4	2	4	4	3	2	5

Demographics Full Survey n= 808

EDUC: Could you tell me the highest level of school or college you had the opportunity to complete:

High school or less	52
College or more	48

HISPANIC: Do you consider yourself to be Hispanic or Latino?

Yes	3
No	94
DK/ref	3

RACE: Do you consider yourself to be:

White	73
Black or African American	18
Other	9

RELIG: What is your religious preference, are you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, another religion, or no religion?

Protestant	33
Christian (non-specific)	21
Catholic	11
Jewish	2
Muslim	2
Other	4
None	21
Dk/ref (vol)	7

IDEOL: When it comes to your ideology, would you consider yourself to be a...

Very liberal	7
Liberal	17
Moderate	34
Conservative	26
Very Conservative	10
Dk/ref(vol)	7

PARTY: In politics today, do you generally consider yourself to be a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?

Republican	33
Democrat	35
Independent	29
Other Party	1
No Preference (vol)	2
Dk/ref (vol)	1

PARTYLN

Lean Republican	11
Lean Democrat	15
Independent	5
Dk/ref (vol)	2

AGE: (Recorded as exact year of birth)

18-44	25
45+	75

INCOME: And, just for statistical purposes, in which of the following categories does your family income fall?

Under \$25,000	4
\$25-\$49,999	8
\$50-\$74,999	13
\$75-\$99,999	14
\$100,000-\$149,999	21
Over \$150,000	26
Dk/ref (vol)	15

SEX:

Male	47
Female	53

CELL/LANDLINE

Cell	82
Landline	18

REGION

Northern	28
Richmond-Central	22
Hampton Roads-East	22
South/Southwest/West	28

How the survey was conducted

The results of this poll are based on 808 interviews of registered Virginia voters who are likely general election voters, including 142 on landline and 662 on cell phone, conducted Sept. 8 to Sept. 14, 2025. A likely general election voter is one who has voted in at least two of the last four general elections and indicates they plan to vote in the upcoming elections. The margin of error for the whole survey is $\pm 3.9\%$ at the 95% level of confidence. This means that if 50% of respondents indicate a topline view on an issue, we can be 95% confident that the population's view on that issue is somewhere between 46.1% and 53.9%. The margin of error for subgroups may be higher. All error margins have been adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, which is 1.3 in this survey. The design effect is a factor representing the survey's deviation from a simple random sample and takes into account decreases in precision due to sample design and weighting procedures. In addition to sampling error, the other potential sources of error include non-response, question wording, and interviewer error. Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding. Five callbacks were employed in the fielding process. Live calling was conducted by Dynata interviewers. The data reported here are weighted using an iterative (raked) weighting process on region, age, race, sex, and education to reflect as closely as possible the expected makeup of the November 4, 2025 Virginia electorate. Parameters for the weights used in this survey come from the 2020 Census, the 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, and the last two gubernatorial-year exit polls.