

POLL REPORT



SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Virginia Statewide Poll 2009 Elections

September 2009



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Survey Methodology

- Sample = 600 registered voters statewide in Virginia.
- The survey was conducted via telephone by live interviewers September 10-14, 2009. Respondents were selected using a random digit dialing method.
- Margin of error = +/- 4 percent.
- This survey was not sponsored or paid for by, in whole or in part, an outside client. Clarus conducted this survey for its own use.
- Questions presented in this report appear exactly as they were worded, and in the same sequence, as they were asked in the survey.

Clarus Research Group is a full-service, nonpartisan, survey research firm based in Washington, D.C. that provides market insights and practical analysis for corporate, association, nonprofit and advocacy clients. More information on Clarus clients and service offerings may be found on the Web at www.ClarusRG.com.

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General Conclusions

Republicans currently lead in all three statewide races, governor, Lt. governor, and attorney general, and all by similar margins.

McDonnell has a 5-point lead over Deeds in the gubernatorial election. That's less than it was in other publicly reported polls conducted between the first week of August and the first week of September, when McDonnell's average lead was 10.2%.

The McDonnell thesis story/attack has not – so far – damaged McDonnell as badly as Democrats had hoped, but it hasn't left him unscathed the way many Republicans had hoped. The story's major impact has been to solidify the Democratic base for Deeds. It has had less impact on independents – McDonnell beats Deeds by 7 points among independents.

The electorate is highly polarized along partisan and racial lines. McDonnell defeats Deeds by 24 points among whites and Deeds defeats McDonnell by 77 points among African Americans. Neither Deeds nor McDonnell get more than 5% cross-over votes from the other candidate's party.

Good news for McDonnell: Despite the thesis story and related attacks, he remains the frontrunner with a lead beyond the poll's margin of error.

Good news for Deeds: The thesis story has taken a toll on McDonnell and may have opened a window of opportunity for Deeds to make this a competitive race.

Bad news for McDonnell: Despite his 5-point lead, he polls well under 50%. There remains a high percentage of undecided independent voters who will determine the winner. Twice as many independents are undecided than are Democrats and Republicans.

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General Conclusions

Bad news for Deeds: 83% of independent voters are white; at this point, Deeds is only polling 28% of the vote among all white voters statewide.

A major factor in this election will be Election Day turnout, especially by region and race. If African American turnout approaches the 2008 presidential election percentages, it would be a boost to Deeds' chances.

Gov. Kaine does well enough in job approval to make it difficult for the Republicans to run against his Administration. However, Tim Kaine's positives are low enough to make it difficult for Deeds to ride in on the incumbent's coattails the way Kaine, himself, did four years ago when Mark Warner was the highly popular incumbent governor.

Key Findings

- In the 2008 presidential election, Obama won 52.6% of Virginia's vote. His job approval is now almost 5 points lower than his actual vote was in his match-up against McCain.
- There is significant partisan and racial polarization in these numbers. Independents tilt slightly against Obama.
- It is notable that there is little difference between men and women.



Public Official Job Approval Ratings: President Barack Obama

| | All | Male | Female | White | Black | Other |
|-------------------|-----|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| <i>Approve</i> | 48% | 48% | 49% | 37% | 99% | 54% |
| <i>Disapprove</i> | 43 | 45 | 41 | 52 | -- | 41 |
| <i>NO/NS/NA*</i> | 9 | 7 | 10 | 11 | 1 | 5 |

| | N | SE/C | SW/West | Dem | Rep | Ind |
|-------------------|-----|------|---------|-----|-----|-----|
| <i>Approve</i> | 54% | 52% | 37% | 91% | 13% | 42% |
| <i>Disapprove</i> | 39 | 42 | 48 | 5 | 78 | 46 |
| <i>NO/NS/NA*</i> | 7 | 6 | 15 | 4 | 9 | 12 |

* No opinion, not sure, no answer

Key Findings

- Kaine's job approval is above 50% with positive ratings much higher than his negative ratings.
- Kaine's ratings are net positive in every major demographic group except among Republicans and in the southwest/western part of the state.



Public Official Job Approval Ratings: Governor Tim Kaine

| | All | Male | Female | White | Black | Other |
|-------------------|-----|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| <i>Approve</i> | 53% | 52% | 54% | 45% | 88% | 60% |
| <i>Disapprove</i> | 31 | 33 | 29 | 37 | 3 | 28 |
| <i>NO/NS/NA</i> | 16 | 15 | 17 | 18 | 9 | 12 |

| | N | SE/C | SW/West | Dem | Rep | Ind |
|-------------------|-----|------|---------|-----|-----|-----|
| <i>Approve</i> | 56% | 59% | 40% | 81% | 26% | 48% |
| <i>Disapprove</i> | 27 | 28 | 41 | 7 | 54 | 32 |
| <i>NO/NS/NA</i> | 17 | 14 | 19 | 11 | 21 | 20 |

Key Findings

- *Webb's job approval falls below 50%, which is always a danger sign for an incumbent. (Webb does not have to seek re-election until 2012).*
- *However, Webb's negatives are fairly low, his positive-to-negative ration is over two-to-one.*
- *Webb's numbers evidence less partisan polarization than do others.*



Public Official Job Approval Ratings: Senator Jim Webb

| | All | Male | Female | White | Black | Other |
|-------------------|-----|------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| <i>Approve</i> | 47% | 51% | 43% | 44% | 67% | 40% |
| <i>Disapprove</i> | 23 | 24 | 23 | 28 | 6 | 18 |
| <i>NO/NS/NA</i> | 30 | 25 | 34 | 29 | 28 | 42 |
| | N | SE/C | SW/West | Dem | Rep | Ind |
| <i>Approve</i> | 53% | 51% | 35% | 64% | 30% | 45% |
| <i>Disapprove</i> | 20 | 22 | 29 | 7 | 40 | 24 |
| <i>NO/NS/NA</i> | 28 | 27 | 36 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

Key Findings

- Warner has the best numbers of any statewide official tested, the only one to break 60% approval.
- Warner's strength among whites, independents and even among many Republicans sets him apart. Warner also has healthy ratings in every one of the three region's analyzed here, even in the GOP-tilted southwest/west.



2009 Public Official Job Approval Ratings: Senator Mark Warner

| | All | Male | Female | White | Black | Other |
|-------------------|-----|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| <i>Approve</i> | 61% | 58% | 64% | 59% | 78% | 50% |
| <i>Disapprove</i> | 21 | 24 | 19 | 23 | 11 | 22 |
| <i>NO/NS/NA</i> | 18 | 19 | 17 | 18 | 11 | 28 |

| | N | SE/C | SW/West | Dem | Rep | Ind |
|-------------------|-----|------|---------|-----|-----|-----|
| <i>Approve</i> | 67% | 60% | 57% | 78% | 40% | 69% |
| <i>Disapprove</i> | 15 | 24 | 21 | 5 | 35 | 21 |
| <i>NO/NS/NA</i> | 17 | 16 | 22 | 17 | 25 | 11 |

Key Findings

- *McDonnell leads Deeds by 5 points statewide.*
- *Since this is the first survey Clarus has conducted on the 2009 Virginia elections, we have no internal baseline to measure a trend. However, other publicly reported polls showed McDonnell leading Deeds by an average of 10.2 points in five surveys taken between August 3 and September 3.*
- *Deeds only leads one region, Northern Virginia.*



2009 General Election Trial Heat: Governor

| | All | Male | Female | White | Black | Other |
|------------------|-----|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| <i>Deeds</i> | 37% | 35% | 40% | 28% | 81% | 38% |
| <i>McDonnell</i> | 42 | 44 | 40 | 52 | 4 | 28 |
| <i>Undecided</i> | 20 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 15 | 34 |

| | N | SE/C | SW/West | Dem | Rep | Ind |
|------------------|-----|------|---------|-----|-----|-----|
| <i>Deeds</i> | 45% | 36% | 33% | 82% | 5% | 30% |
| <i>McDonnell</i> | 40 | 41 | 48 | 5 | 81 | 37 |
| <i>Undecided</i> | 15 | 23 | 19 | 13 | 14 | 33 |

Key Findings

- Republican Bill Bolling posts a 6-point lead over Wagner statewide.
- Democrat Jody Wagner leads Bolling among African Americans, “other” races, Northern Virginia, and Democrats.
- Bolling has a 4-point lead among the crucial independent vote.

2009 General Election Trial Heat: Lt. Governor

| | All | Male | Female | White | Black | Other |
|------------------|-----|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| <i>Bolling</i> | 38% | 40% | 35% | 47% | 6% | 19% |
| <i>Wagner</i> | 32 | 28 | 35 | 24 | 67 | 35 |
| <i>Undecided</i> | 31 | 32 | 30 | 30 | 27 | 46 |

| | N | SE/C | SW/West | Dem | Rep | Ind |
|------------------|-----|------|---------|-----|-----|-----|
| <i>Bolling</i> | 31% | 39% | 42% | 7% | 76% | 29% |
| <i>Wagner</i> | 41 | 29 | 27 | 71 | 4 | 25 |
| <i>Undecided</i> | 28 | 33 | 32 | 22 | 20 | 47 |

Key Findings

- *Republican Ken Cuccinelli posts a 5-point lead over Democrat Steve Shannon.*

- *This race has a high 35% undecided vote, which indicates lack of statewide recognition on the part of both candidates.*

- *The candidates are nearly tied among independents, with a high level of polarization among partisans. This indicates that the party labels in this race trump candidate-centered loyalty among many voters who know little or nothing about either candidate.*

2009 General Election Trial Heat: Attorney General

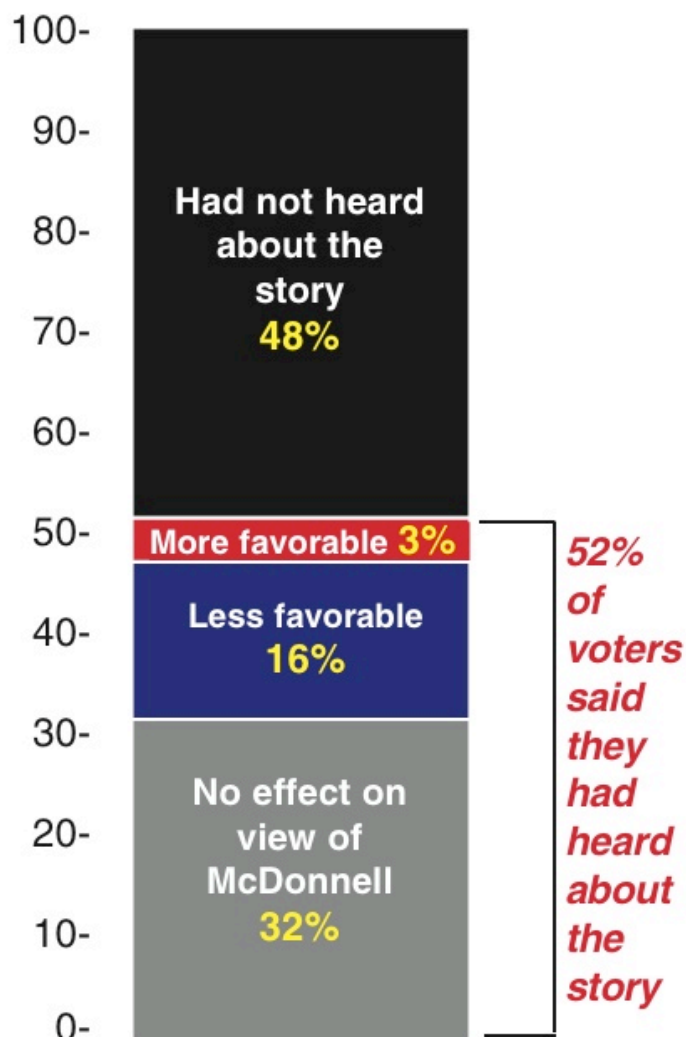
| | All | Male | Female | White | Black | Other |
|-------------------|-----|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| <i>Cuccinelli</i> | 35% | 38% | 33% | 41% | 8% | 30% |
| <i>Shannon</i> | 30 | 28 | 33 | 23 | 66 | 32 |
| <i>Undecided</i> | 35 | 35 | 35 | 36 | 27 | 39 |

| | N | SE/C | SW/West | Dem | Rep | Ind |
|-------------------|-----|------|---------|-----|-----|-----|
| <i>Cuccinelli</i> | 34% | 35% | 36% | 5% | 74% | 25% |
| <i>Shannon</i> | 35 | 27 | 32 | 70 | 3 | 24 |
| <i>Undecided</i> | 32 | 38 | 33 | 25 | 23 | 51 |

Key Findings

- 52% of all voters said they had heard about the McDonnell thesis story. Among them, 5% said the story made them feel more favorable toward McDonnell, 31% said it may them feel less favorable, and 63% said it had no effect.
- Of those who had heard about the thesis story and said it made them feel LESS favorable about McDonnell: 76% were Democrats, 8% were Republicans and 16% were independents.
- Of those who had heard about the thesis story and said it had no effect on how they feel about McDonnell: 29% were Democrats, 46% were Republicans and 34% were independents.

Impact of “Thesis Story” on Bob McDonnell....



QUESTION ASKED OF ALL VOTERS:

Recently, there have been news reports about a thesis paper written by Bob McDonnell in 1989 on a number of social issues including the role of women in society. Have you seen, read or heard anything about this?

IF ANSWERED YES, FOLLOW UP:

Have the news reports about Bob McDonnell's thesis paper made you feel more favorable toward him, has it made you feel less favorable toward him, or has it not had any effect on how you feel toward him?

Note: These questions were asked AFTER the election trial heats.

Survey Demographics

Gender:

Female (53%)

Male (47%)

Age:

18-29 (15%)

30-44 (29%)

45-64 (40%)

65 and Older (14%)

Race:

White (74%)

African-American (16%)

Hispanic/Latino (4%)

Other (3%)

Refused (3%)

Party:

Democrat (27%)

Republican (29%)

Independent (24%)

Independent leans Democrat (7%)

Independent leans Republican (8%)

Other (1%)

Won't answer (4%)

Region:

Northern (27%)

Southeast/Central (45%)

West (28%)