



Fall 2019 Commonwealth Poll

A survey of Virginians conducted by the Center for Public Policy at VCU’s L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

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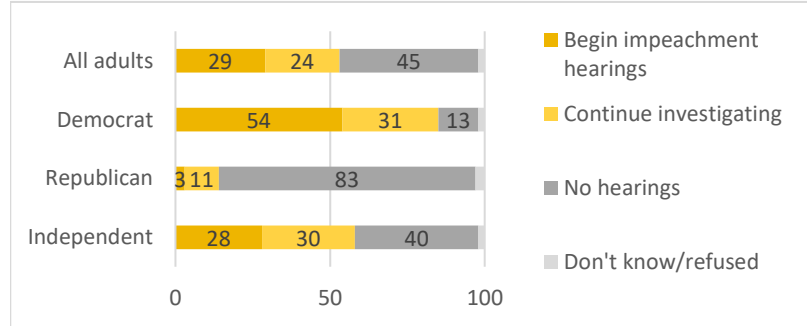
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A majority of Virginians believe Congress should begin impeachment hearings or continue investigation of President Donald Trump

A majority of Virginians (53%) believe that there is enough evidence to begin impeachment hearings (29%) or that Congress should continue investigating the issue (24%), according to a new Wilder School Commonwealth Poll released on Tuesday. Forty-five percent say that Congress should not hold impeachment hearings. These findings fall in line with other recent national polling that indicates the public shifting toward support for impeachment since the release of phone transcripts between the president and Ukrainian officials. This poll is the first in Virginia to be fielded since the opening of an impeachment inquiry in the House in response to the recent developments regarding the Ukraine.

Should Congress begin impeachment hearings?

There has been some discussion about Congress holding hearings to consider impeaching and removing President Trump from office. Which of the following best describes what you think?



Source: Fall 2019 Wilder School Commonwealth Poll

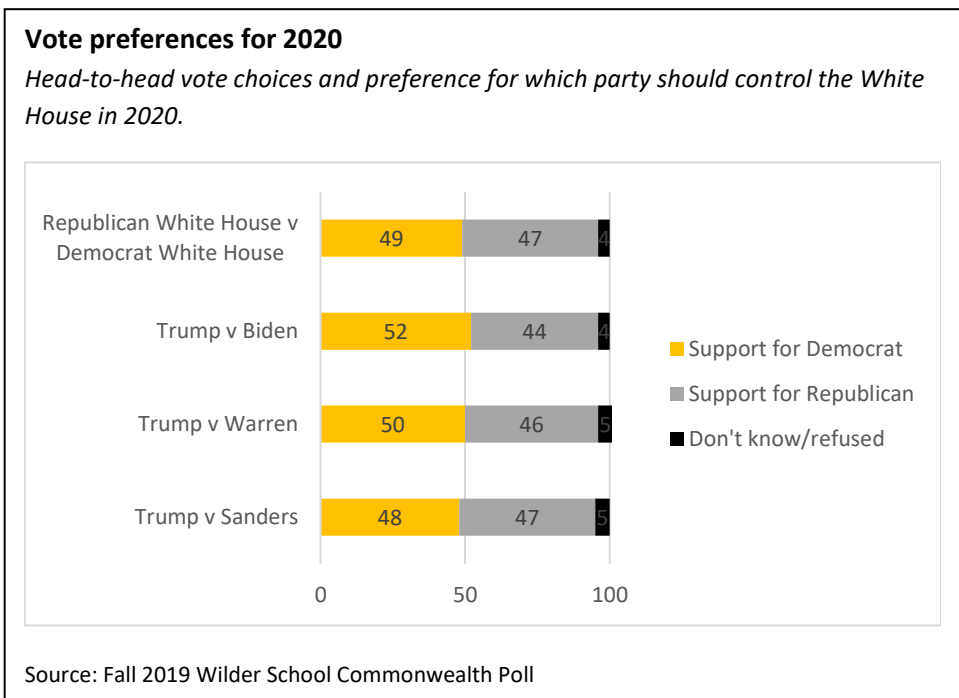
The issue clearly shows a partisan divide. More than 8-in-10 Democrats (85%) think Congress should act, with 54% saying that impeachment hearings should start now and 31% saying that investigations should continue. Conversely, more than 8-in-10 Republicans (83%) believe there should be no hearings and only 14% favored congressional action. Respondents identifying as independents were more likely to support the move toward impeachment with 58% saying Congress should either begin the hearings (28%) or continue investigating (30%). Those with a college degree or more, females, minorities and those under 45 years old were more likely to support impeachment or continuing the investigation. Regionally,

Tidewater (36%) and Northern Virginia (33%) were more likely to support starting impeachment hearings, the South Central area was slightly more likely to support continuing the investigation (30%) and majorities in the West (60%) and Northwest (57%) opposed the idea of impeachment hearings (see attached tables).

“It is clear that the people want to know what is happening in our government,” said Governor L. Douglas Wilder, “If there has been wrongdoing, they want to know and by whom. The poll responses indicate a deep divide between the political parties. Getting the facts underlying the call for impeachment hearings or impeachment itself is the most important issue to have come from this poll.”

More Virginians plan to vote for the Democratic candidate over Trump

Democratic candidates still have a greater level of support over Trump for the 2020 election. Respondents who are registered to vote were asked about their choice against specific Democratic hopefuls. Joe Biden enjoyed the greatest level of support, beating Trump by 8 points (52% to 44%), followed by Elizabeth Warren with a 4-point lead (50% to 46%). Bernie Sanders had only a 1 point lead, with 48% compared to 47% for Trump. Likewise, when respondents were asked generically which party they would prefer to have control of the White House after the next election, the Democrats only had a 2-point lead, with 49% saying Democratic control and 47% saying Republican control.



“The almost even results as to which party should have control of the White House after the next election, was almost a dead heat tie - Democrats, 49%, Republicans, 47%; well within the margin of error,” said Wilder, “There is a great deal of uncertainty that continues, and the candidates must make their case; their respective political parties can’t do it for them.”

Biden over-performed against the generic Republican ballot and Warren and Sanders performed closer to the generic ballot. A main driver of the difference in support between Biden and Warren and Sanders and party control of the White House is the opinion of independent voters. Independents chose Biden and Warren by a much larger spread, 17 points for Biden and 14 for Warren. However, that margin

closed considerably when respondents were asked about Sanders or party control (without naming Trump) with only 7 percentage points in the Democrats' favor.

“Vote preference at this stage does not seem to be based on particular issues,” said Wilder, “but more on favorability, personality, (e.g. Who might be best to beat Donald Trump), and age and health.”

Registered independents only - vote preference			
	Support for Democrat	Support for Republican	Spread
	%	%	
Trump v Biden	55	38	+17 Dem
Trump v Warren	53	39	+14 Dem
Trump v Sanders	50	43	+7 Dem
Republican White House v Democrat White House	50	43	+7 Dem

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About the Wilder School and the Center for Public Policy

The L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, named for the nation's first African American elected governor, is a top-50 nationally ranked public affairs school. Located blocks from the state Capitol in Richmond, the school enrolls about 1,000 undergraduates and 400 graduate students in eight academic programs. The Wilder School's 10,000-plus alumni work across the public, private and nonprofit sectors. Drawing on the wide-ranging expertise of Wilder School faculty, the Center for Public Policy's programs provide diverse public-facing services including leadership development and training, economic and policy impact analysis, survey insights and program evaluation to clients in state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses and the general public across Virginia and beyond. For more, please visit wilder.vcu.edu/center-for-public-policy/.

About VCU and VCU Health

Virginia Commonwealth University is a major, urban public research university with national and international rankings in sponsored research. Located in downtown Richmond, VCU enrolls more than 31,000 students in 217 degree and certificate programs in the arts, sciences and humanities. Thirty-eight of the programs are unique in Virginia, many of them crossing the disciplines of VCU's 11 schools and three colleges. The VCU Health brand represents the VCU health sciences academic programs, the VCU Massey Cancer Center and the VCU Health System, which comprises VCU Medical Center, Community Memorial Hospital, Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU, MCV Physicians and Virginia Premier Health Plan. For more, please visit vcu.edu and vcuhealth.org.

Methodology

The Commonwealth Poll 2019, sponsored by Virginia Commonwealth University, obtained telephone interviews with a representative sample of 800 adults, ages 18 or older, living in Virginia. Telephone interviews were conducted by landline (404) and cellphone (397, including 216 without a landline). The data collection was conducted by Responsive Management from Sept. 23 to Oct. 4.

Statistical results were weighted to correct for known demographic discrepancies. A two-stage weighting procedure was used to weight this dual-frame sample by the demographic characteristics of sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region using the geographic and demographic weighting parameters from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 American Community Survey data. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data is plus or minus 4.08 percentage points. The estimated margin of error for registered voters is plus or minus 4.52 percentage points; the estimated margin of error for likely voters is plus or minus 5.03 percentage points.

The sample consisted of a combination of listed landline and cellular random digit dial samples. The overall sample was representative of the adult general population of Virginia who have access to either a listed landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Marketing Systems Group, a leader in providing research-based statistical samples. The cellular sample was prescreened for disconnected numbers.

As many as seven attempts were made to contact each landline telephone number, and as many as five attempts were made to contact each cellphone number. Calls were made at different times of day and on different days of the week to maximize the chance of contacting potential respondents. Response rates were computed according to American Association for Public Opinion Research standards.¹ The response rate for the landline sample was 8.1 percent. The response rate for the cellular sample was 8.6 percent.

¹ The American Association for Public Opinion Research. 2016. *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys, 9th Edition*. AAPOR.

Wilder School Commonwealth Poll Fall 2019

Statewide survey of Virginians²

Sept. 23-Oct. 4, 2019

Number of Respondents: 801

QUESTION 1 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

Q2. What is your preference for the outcome of next year's presidential election [READ AND RANDOMIZE]:
A White House controlled by Republicans or a White House controlled by Democrats?

	2019	Registered	Likely
	%	%	%
Democratic White House	49	49	49
Republican White House	47	47	48
Don't Know/Refused	4	4	3

QUESTION 3 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

Q4. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were [READ AND RANDOMIZE]
Joe Biden the Democrat and Donald Trump the Republican, for whom would you vote?

	2019	Registered	Likely
	%	%	%
Trump	44	44	46
Biden	52	52	51
Don't Know/Refused	5	4	3

Q5. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were [READ AND RANDOMIZE]
Elizabeth Warren the Democrat and Donald Trump the Republican, for whom would you vote?

	2019	Registered	Likely
	%	%	%
Trump	44	46	47
Warren	51	50	49
Don't Know/Refused	5	5	4

Q6. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were [READ AND RANDOMIZE]
Bernie Sanders the Democrat and Donald Trump the Republican, for whom would you vote?

	2019	Registered	Likely
	%	%	%
Trump	46	47	49
Sanders	49	48	46
Don't Know/Refused	5	5	5

QUESTIONS 7 THROUGH 13 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

² Percentages may add to 99 or 101 due to rounding. Cells that are blank contain no cases. Cells with a zero percent entry contain cases, but the percentage is less than 0.5%.

Q14. There has been some discussion about Congress holding hearings to consider impeaching and removing President Trump from office. Which of the following best describes what you think? [READ AND RANDOMIZE]

There is enough evidence for Congress to begin impeachment hearings now.

Congress should continue investigating to see if there is enough evidence to hold impeachment hearings in the future.

Congress should not hold impeachment hearings and Donald Trump should finish his term as president.

	2019	NBC/WSJ 2019³
	%	%
Begin impeachment hearings	29	21
Continue investigating	24	27
No hearings	45	50
Don't Know/Refused	2	2

REGISTER. Some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you registered to vote in Virginia at your current address?

	2019	N
	%	
Yes	88	731
No	11	66
Don't Know/Refused	1	4

LIKELY. Now thinking about the election this November... As of today, would you say that you will definitely vote, probably vote, probably will NOT vote, or definitely will NOT vote this November?

	2019	N
	%	
Definitely WILL	73	645
Probably WILL	16	96
Probably will NOT	5	24
Definitely will NOT	5	31
Don't Know/Refused	1	5

³ NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll conducted by Hart Research Associates (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R). July 7-9, 2019. N=800 registered voters nationwide. Margin of error \pm 3.5.

Tables for subgroup analysis

		Q2. What is your preference for the outcome of next year's presidential election: Democratic White House or Republican White House?			
		Democratic White House	Republican White House	Don't know/Refused	Number of cases
All adults		49%	47%	4%	801
VA Region	Northwest	37%	61%	3%	110
	NOVA	61%	36%	3%	244
	West	32%	61%	7%	135
	South Central	45%	51%	4%	136
	Tidewater	57%	38%	4%	176
Gender	Male	41%	55%	4%	388
	Female	58%	39%	4%	413
Age	18-34	59%	37%	3%	122
	35-44	56%	38%	6%	75
	45-64	41%	55%	4%	281
	65 and over	50%	47%	4%	323
Education	High school grad or less	42%	53%	5%	172
	Some college	44%	55%	1%	200
	College graduate or more	59%	36%	5%	429
Family Income	Under \$50,000	58%	37%	5%	190
	50K to under \$100,000	45%	54%	1%	234
	\$100,000 or more	52%	44%	4%	261
Race	White	35%	61%	4%	598
	Minority	75%	21%	4%	203
Party ID	Democrat	92%	5%	3%	255
	Republican	5%	94%	1%	250
	Independent	51%	42%	7%	292

		Q4. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were Trump and Biden for whom would you vote?			
		Trump	Biden	Don't know/Refused	Number of cases
All adults		44%	52%	5%	801
VA Region	Northwest	59%	36%	5%	110
	NOVA	32%	64%	3%	244
	West	63%	32%	5%	135
	South Central	46%	53%	2%	136
	Tidewater	32%	59%	8%	176
Gender	Male	51%	44%	5%	388
	Female	36%	59%	4%	413
Age	18-34	35%	60%	5%	122
	35-44	30%	62%	8%	75
	45-64	50%	45%	5%	281
	65 and over	49%	49%	3%	323
Education	High school grad or less	52%	43%	4%	172
	Some college	50%	44%	6%	200
	College graduate or more	32%	64%	4%	429
Family Income	Under \$50,000	36%	57%	7%	190
	50K to under \$100,000	49%	48%	2%	234
	\$100,000 or more	42%	55%	3%	261
Party ID	Democrat	4%	93%	3%	255
	Republican	91%	5%	4%	250
	Independent	37%	56%	6%	292
Race	White	58%	38%	4%	598
	Minority	18%	77%	5%	203

Q5. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were Trump and Warren for whom would you vote?

		Trump	Warren	Don't know/Refused	Number of cases
All adults		44%	52%	5%	801
VA Region	Northwest	58%	35%	7%	110
	NOVA	37%	59%	4%	244
	West	58%	35%	6%	135
	South Central	47%	50%	3%	136
	Tidewater	32%	63%	4%	176
Gender	Male	53%	43%	4%	388
	Female	36%	59%	5%	413
Age	18-34	36%	62%	2%	122
	35-44	32%	58%	10%	75
	45-64	51%	44%	5%	281
	65 and over	49%	45%	6%	323
Education	High school grad or less	53%	43%	3%	172
	Some college	50%	46%	4%	200
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Family Income	Under \$50,000	35%	61%	4%	190
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Party ID	Democrat	5%	94%	1%	255
	Republican	93%	4%	3%	250
	Independent	37%	55%	8%	292
Race	White	58%	37%	6%	598
	Minority	20%	77%	3%	203

Q6. If the election for president were being held today,
and the candidates were Trump and Sanders for whom
would you vote?

		Trump	Sanders	Don't know/Refused	Number of cases
All adults		46%	49%	5%	801
VA Region	Northwest	65%	30%	5%	110
	NOVA	37%	58%	5%	244
	West	63%	29%	8%	135
	South Central	47%	50%	3%	136
	Tidewater	35%	62%	4%	176
Gender	Male	54%	40%	6%	388
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	50K to under \$100,000	55%	42%	3%	234
	\$100,000 or more	47%	47%	6%	261
Race	White	60%	35%	5%	598
	Minority	21%	73%	5%	203
Party ID	Democrat	5%	90%	5%	255
	Republican	94%	3%	3%	250
	Independent	42%	51%	7%	292

Q14. There has been some discussion about Congress holding hearings to consider impeaching and removing President Trump from office.
Which of the following best describes what you think?

		Begin impeachment hearings	Continue investigating	No hearings	Don't know/Refused	Number of cases
All adults		29%	24%	45%	2%	801
VA Region Northwest		23%	18%	57%	2%	110
	NOVA	33%	26%	37%	4%	244
	West	18%	20%	60%	2%	135
	South Central	25%	30%	43%	1%	136
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	\$100,000 or more	32%	23%	44%	1%	261
Race White		22%	21%	56%	1%	598
	Minority	40%	31%	26%	4%	203
Party ID Democrat		54%	31%	13%	2%	255
	Republican	3%	11%	83%	2%	250
	Independent	28%	30%	40%	2%	292

		Registered voters only		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent
Q4. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were Trump and Biden for whom would you vote?	Trump	1%	92%	38%
	Biden	98%	5%	55%
	Don't know/Refused	1%	3%	7%
Q5. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were Trump and Warren for whom would you vote?	Trump	2%	94%	39%
	Warren	96%	3%	53%
	Don't know/Refused	1%	3%	8%
Q6. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were Trump and Sanders for whom would you vote?	Trump	3%	95%	43%
	Sanders	93%	3%	50%
	Don't know/Refused	4%	2%	7%
Q2. What is your preference for the outcome of next year's presidential election: Democratic White House or Republican White House?	Democratic White House	94%	5%	50%
	Republican White House	3%	94%	43%
	Don't know/Refused	3%	1%	7%