



VCU L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs Center for Public Policy

Winter 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

FOR RELEASE: 9am, December 20, 2019

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Virginians' motivation to vote in next election grows amid impeachment proceedings, VCU poll finds

Against the backdrop of last month's election that gave Democrats control of Virginia's General Assembly and amid the ongoing process of impeaching President Donald Trump, Virginians are increasingly motivated to vote, according to statewide poll conducted by the Center for Public Policy at the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University.

The poll also provides a snapshot of potential 2020 presidential election matchups in Virginia, as well as other issues, including whether Virginians support the idea of forming a congressional commission to study reparations for the descendants of slaves in the United States.

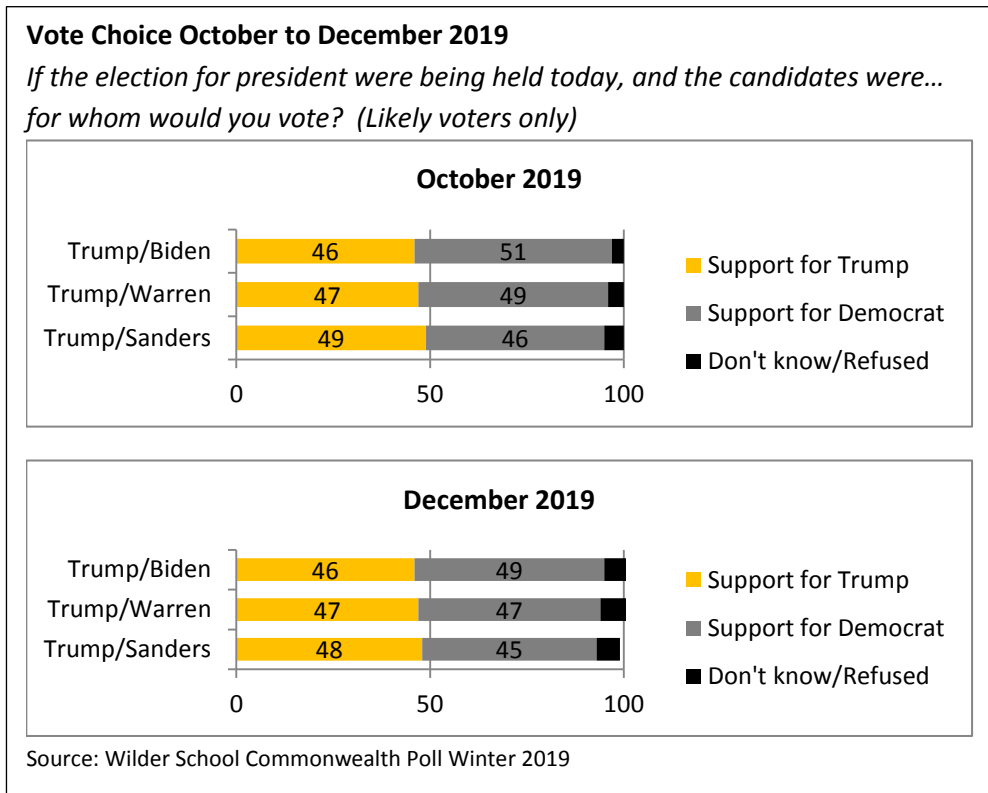
The telephone survey of 818 adults living in Virginia was conducted between Dec. 2 and Dec. 13. It has an estimated margin of error for likely voters of ± 5.13 percentage points.

Among the poll's key findings:

- **There was an increase in those who reported they would definitely vote in the next election.** While it is normal for the percentage of those who say they will vote to be inflated because of the social desirability of voting, 83% of respondents in our current poll said they would definitely vote, compared to only 73% of those polled in October, for an increase of 10%.
- **Overall, the Democratic hopefuls have lost support since our last poll in October with likely voters.** Biden is still ahead of Trump by 3% (49% versus 46%). Warren is evenly split, with both receiving 47%. And Trump is ahead of Sanders by 3% (48% versus 45%).
- **Republicans have moved away from Trump, while Independents have increased their support.** In our October reporting each party's support for their own candidates was over 90%. Now Republican support has dipped, while Democrat support for each of the hopefuls remains basically the same. Republican support for Trump decreased by 8% against Biden (to 86%), and by 10% against Warren and Sanders (to 86% and 87%, respectively). Meanwhile, Independents

have shifted from each of the Democratic candidates to Trump. Trump support from Independents increased 10% against Biden (to 48%) and Sanders (to 54%). And Independent support increased by 13% against Warren (to 51%).

- A third of respondents strongly or somewhat favor a congressional commission to study how reparations could work, while 59% strongly or somewhat oppose.** This finding matches national level polling on the issue. Age played a significant factor in opinion with those under the age of 45 being more likely to support strongly or somewhat (52% of 18-34 year olds and 42% of 35-44 year olds). Minorities and Democrats were more likely to be supportive of the measure (61% of Democrats and 54% of minorities).



If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were... for whom would you vote? (Likely voters only)

	Fall 2019			Winter 2019-20		
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Dem	Rep	Ind
Trump	1%	94%	38%	4%	86%	48%
Biden	98%	3%	56%	95%	9%	42%
DK/Refused	1%	2%	6%	1%	5%	10%
Trump	2%	96%	38%	3%	86%	51%
Warren	96%	3%	54%	94%	9%	38%
DK/Refused	1%	1%	8%	3%	5%	11%
Trump	3%	97%	44%	5%	87%	54%
Sanders	92%	2%	49%	91%	10%	36%
DK/Refused	5%	1%	7%	4%	3%	10%

Source: Wilder School Commonwealth Poll Winter 2019

Methodology

The Commonwealth Poll Winter 2019, sponsored by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), obtained telephone interviews with a representative sample of 818 adults, age 18 or older, living in Virginia. Telephone interviews were conducted by landline (408) and cell phone (410, including 222 without a landline). The data collection was conducted by Responsive Management from December 2-13, 2019.

Statistical results are 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 (ACS) data. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data is ± 4.80 percentage points. The estimated margin of error for registered voters (n=770) is ± 5.12 percentage points; the estimated margin of error for likely voters (n=728) is ± 5.13 percentage points.

The sample consisted of a combination of listed landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) 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 RDD 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 cell phone number. Calls were made at different times of the day and on different days of the week to maximize the chance of contacting potential respondents. Response rates are computed according to American Association for Public Opinion Research standards.¹ The response rate for the landline sample was 8.2 percent. The response rate for the cellular sample was 8.2 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 Winter 2019
State-wide survey of Virginians²
December 2-13 , 2019
Number of Respondents: 818

NO QUESTION 1 OR 2
QUESTIONS 3 THROUGH 10 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

Q11. Do you favor or oppose Congress creating a commission to study how reparations could work to address the lingering effects of slavery? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat? (INTERVIEWER NOTE: Reparations are some form of compensation provided to the descendants of former slaves.)

	2019
	%
Strongly favor	20
Somewhat favor	13
Somewhat oppose	13
Strongly oppose	46
Don't Know/Refused	8

NO QUESTION 12
QUESTION 13 AND 13A HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

Q14. 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	Likely (Fall 2019)³
	%	%	%	%
Trump	44	46	46	46
Biden	48	47	49	51
Don't Know/Refused	8	7	6	3

Q15. 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	Likely (Fall 2019)
	%	%	%	%
Trump	47	48	47	47
Warren	44	44	47	49
Don't Know/Refused	9	9	7	4

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%.

³ Wilder School Commonwealth Poll Fall 2019, September 23- October 4, 2019, n=645, margin of error for likely voters is ±5.03 percentage points.

Q16. 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	Likely (Fall 2019)
	%	%	%	%
Trump	46	47	48	49
Sanders	46	45	45	46
Don't Know/Refused	9	8	6	5

Tables for subgroup analysis⁴

Q11. Do you favor or oppose Congress creating a commission to study how reparations could work to address the lingering effects of slavery? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

		Strongly favor	Somewhat favor	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	DK/Refused	Number of cases
All Adults		20%	13%	13%	46%	8%	818
VA Region	Northwest	8%	9%	16%	57%	9%	111
	NOVA	27%	17%	15%	33%	7%	255
	West	9%	9%	12%	59%	10%	129
	South Central	19%	16%	12%	50%	4%	140
	Tidewater	24%	12%	11%	43%	10%	183
Gender	Male	14%	13%	13%	53%	7%	443
	Female	25%	14%	13%	38%	9%	375
Age	18-34	26%	26%	14%	23%	11%	92
	35-44	27%	15%	19%	37%	3%	92
	45-64	19%	7%	12%	53%	8%	269
	65 and over	12%	10%	12%	59%	7%	334
Education	High school grad or less	18%	14%	12%	45%	10%	151
	Some college	15%	12%	18%	49%	6%	212
	College graduate or more	24%	14%	12%	43%	8%	438
Family Income	Under \$50,000	23%	15%	17%	38%	8%	178
	50K to under \$100,000	13%	11%	10%	56%	10%	221
	\$100,000 or more	23%	15%	14%	40%	7%	279
Race	White	10%	13%	14%	54%	9%	605
	Minority	39%	15%	13%	27%	7%	191
Party ID	Democrat	41%	20%	13%	19%	7%	222
	Republican	8%	4%	17%	65%	6%	219
	Independent	13%	15%	11%	52%	10%	364

Q14. If the election for president were being held today, and the

⁴ Cells with 0% may have observations but are less than 1%. Cells may add to 99% or 101% due to rounding.

candidates were Trump and Biden, for whom would you vote?

		Trump	Biden	DK/ Refused	Number of Cases
All Adults		44%	48%	8%	818
VA Region	Northwest	68%	28%	4%	111
	NOVA	35%	61%	4%	255
	West	56%	31%	13%	129
	South Central	45%	42%	12%	140
	Tidewater	32%	58%	10%	183
Gender	Male	50%	44%	6%	443
	Female	38%	52%	10%	375
Age	18-34	43%	50%	7%	92
	35-44	23%	67%	10%	92
	45-64	48%	45%	8%	269
	65 and over	47%	44%	9%	334
Education	High school grad or less	50%	41%	9%	151
	Some college	48%	42%	10%	212
	College graduate or more	36%	59%	5%	438
Family Income	Under \$50,000	38%	53%	9%	178
	50K to under \$100,000	52%	43%	5%	221
	\$100,000 or more	37%	57%	6%	279
Race	White	56%	36%	8%	605
	Minority	22%	71%	8%	191
Party ID	Democrat	4%	92%	4%	222
	Republican	86%	9%	5%	219
	Independent	45%	43%	12%	364

Q15. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were Trump and Warren, for whom would you vote?

		Trump	Warren	DK/Refused	Number of cases
All Adults		47%	44%	9%	818
VA Region	Northwest	70%	23%	7%	111
	NOVA	39%	56%	4%	255
	West	59%	26%	15%	129
	South Central	45%	41%	14%	140
	Tidewater	35%	55%	9%	183
Gender	Male	56%	37%	7%	443
	Female	37%	51%	11%	375
Age	18-34	46%	48%	6%	92
	35-44	31%	51%	18%	92
	45-64	49%	42%	9%	269
	65 and over	49%	43%	7%	334
Education	High school grad or less	55%	38%	7%	151
	Some college	49%	38%	13%	212
	College graduate or more	38%	55%	7%	438
Family Income	Under \$50,000	38%	52%	9%	178
	50K to under \$100,000	57%	35%	8%	221
	\$100,000 or more	40%	53%	7%	279
Race	White	59%	33%	9%	605
	Minority	23%	67%	10%	191
Party ID	Democrat	3%	91%	6%	222
	Republican	87%	9%	4%	219
	Independent	51%	35%	14%	364

Q16. If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were Trump and Sanders, for whom would you vote?

		Trump	Sanders	DK/Refused	Number of cases
All Adults		46%	46%	9%	818
VA Region	Northwest	68%	26%	6%	111
	NOVA	39%	55%	6%	255
	West	58%	28%	14%	129
	South Central	50%	42%	9%	140
	Tidewater	31%	59%	10%	183
Gender	Male	52%	41%	7%	443
	Female	39%	50%	10%	375
Age	18-34	43%	51%	6%	92
	35-44	23%	58%	19%	92
	45-64	51%	42%	7%	269
	65 and over	50%	41%	9%	334
Education	High school grad or less	50%	43%	8%	151
	Some college	51%	40%	9%	212
	College graduate or more	39%	53%	8%	438
Family Income	Under \$50,000	38%	54%	8%	178
	50K to under \$100,000	54%	41%	5%	221
	\$100,000 or more	41%	52%	6%	279
Race	White	57%	34%	9%	605
	Minority	24%	68%	8%	191
Party ID	Democrat	4%	89%	7%	222
	Republican	85%	12%	3%	219
	Independent	50%	38%	12%	364

Demographics of all adults

VA Region	Northwest	13%
	NOVA	31%
	West	16%
	South Central	17%
	Tidewater	22%
Gender	Male	49%
	Female	51%
Age	18-34	27%
	35-44	12%
	45-64	37%
	65 and over	21%
	DK/Refused (vol)	4%
Education	High school grad or less	33%
	Some college	25%
	College graduate or more	40%
	DK/Refused (vol)	2%
Family Income	Under \$50,000	27%
	50K to under \$100,000	26%
	\$100,000 or more	30%
	DK/Refused (vol)	17%
Race	White	64%
	Minority	34%
	DK/Refused (vol)	2%
Party ID	Democrat	30%
	Republican	29%
	Independent	38%
	Something else	2%
	DK/Refused (vol)	1%
Registered voter	Yes	91%
	No	8%
	DK/Refused (vol)	1%
Likely voter	Definitely WILL	83%
	Probably WILL	8%
	Probably will NOT	4%
	Definitely will NOT	4%
	DK/Refused (vol)	1%
