

October 3, 2013 PRESS RELEASE 617-824-3491 www.emersoncollegepollingsociety.com FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EMERSON COLLEGE POLL: MCAULIFFE LEAD SHRINKS TO 5 POINTS OVER CUCCINELLI IN VIRGINIA GOVERNOR RACE

BOSTON (10/3/2013) - According to a new poll, the Virginia governor's race is tightening, with Atty. General Ken Cuccinelli (R) cutting Terry McAuliffe (D) once 10 point advantage in late August down to 5 points 43% to 38%. Libertarian candidate, Robert Sarvis held steady at 11 percent and 8 percent of the sample are undecided. The Emerson College Polling Society (ECPS) survey was conducted September 26th through the 30th, with 519 registered voters at a 4.25% margin of error.

However, McAuliffe continues to be the favorite to win the election with 50% of voters, regardless of who they support, saying McAuliffe would win while only 32% said Cuccinelli. In the August ECPS poll on the race, 46 percent believed McAuliffe would be elected and 30 percent said Cuccinelli.

The attack ads between the campaigns continue to lower the public's attitudes about the candidates with both holding unusually high unfavorable opinions with McAuliffe's at 47 percent (+3 since August), and Cuccinelli's at 58 percent (+5). About half of the independent voters had a negative opinion towards both McAuliffe and Cuccinelli (50% and 54% respectively) and 62% of African-Americans had an unfavorable opinion of Cuccinelli.

"Cuccinelli has a 28 percent unfavorable opinion among his own party while McAuliffe has a 15% unfavorable opinion among Democrats. These numbers suggest that Cuccinelli needs to sure up his base if he is going to be able to win in November," said analyst Caitlin Duffy.

The independents' vote has shifted away from McAuliffe over the last month from 42 percent down to 30 percent while Cuccinelli now has 36 percent of the independent vote.

Virginia is a "purple" state categorized by its concentration of liberal voters in the northern region of the state, and its traditionally conservative areas in the south. Unsurprisingly, Cuccinelli has the most support in the southeast and southwest parts of the state (40 % in both), and McAuliffe has 54 percent of the vote in the north. Sarvis has higher popularity in the south of the state, getting 11 percent in the southeast and 13 percent in the southwest.

Both candidates have support from 18-34 year olds (44 percent for McAuliffe and 37 percent for Cuccinelli) but Cuccinelli is leading among 75 and older voters 48%-40%. McAuliffe is winning the minority vote among African-American 66 percent to 23 percent.

Data was collected on September 26- 30, 2013 using an automated data collections system. The Virginia sample consisted of 519 registered voters with a margin of error of +/- 4.25% at a 95% confident level. The full survey and results are available at the ECPS's website. www.emersoncollegepollingsociety.com

The last ECPS poll on the VA Governor race will be November 1, 2013.

About Emerson College Polling Society

Emerson College Polling Society is a student organization at Emerson College dedicated to formulating, administering, and analyzing public opinion polls. The results and analysis of this release are the sole views of Emerson College Polling Society and do not reflect the views of Emerson College as a whole.

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