

CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY'S  
 JUDY FORD WASON  
 CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

*January 23, 2013*

*Virginia Survey: 2013 Governor's Race*

***2013 election hangs on whether turnout is like 2009 or 2012***

Summary of Key Findings

1. McAuliffe and Cuccinelli in statistical tie
2. 2009-like turnout gives Cuccinelli small win
3. Bolling entry likely hurts McAuliffe more than Cuccinelli
4. Obama and McDonnell both enjoy 51% approval
5. Cuccinelli has highest favorable and unfavorable ratings of anyone running for governor

---

**For Further Information Contact:**

**Dr. Quentin Kidd**  
Director  
Wason Center for Public Policy

McMurrin Hall 264  
Christopher Newport University  
Newport News, VA 23606

Office (757) 594-8499  
Mobile (757) 775-6932  
e-mail [qkidd@cnu.edu](mailto:qkidd@cnu.edu)  
<http://cpp.cnu.edu>

---

## Analysis

Whether the turnout in the 2013 race for governor looks more like 2009 or 2012 will make all the difference, and Bill Bolling's possible entry takes voters away from both Terry McAuliffe and Ken Cuccinelli, according to a Wason Center for Public Policy poll released today.

If the 2013 election were held today, McAuliffe, the former Democratic National Committee chairman, would squeak out a narrow 1% point win, according to the poll of registered voters. But that outcome changes when the turnout is weighted to reflect the voters in 2009 versus 2012. If this year's electorate looks like it did in 2009 (older and more white), when Bob McDonnell defeated Creigh Deeds for governor, then Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli would pull out a 3% win. If the electorate this November looks like it did in 2012 (younger and less white), when Barack Obama defeated Mitt Romney in the presidential race in Virginia, McAuliffe would beat Cuccinelli by a narrow 1%.

If current Republican Lt. Governor Bill Bolling decides to run as an independent, he takes voters away from both Cuccinelli and McAuliffe. If the election were held today with Bolling in, Cuccinelli and McAuliffe are tied at 27% each, with Bolling picking up 9% of the vote. However, if the electorate looks like it did in 2009 and Bolling is in, Cuccinelli wins by 4%. If the electorate looks like it did in 2012 and Bolling is in, Cuccinelli and McAuliffe are tied.

However, the race remains wide open. In every scenario, as many or more voters are undecided as are committed to either Cuccinelli or McAuliffe.

Of the Virginia registered voters polled in the survey, 48% say they think the Commonwealth of Virginia is moving in the right direction, while 30% say they think it is moving in the wrong direction. Only 35% say the country is moving in the right direction, while 52% say the country is moving in the wrong direction.

Both President Obama and Governor Bob McDonnell receive approval ratings of 51%. While 43% say they disapprove of President Obama, only 24% disapprove of McDonnell.

Of the four people either announced or considering running for governor, Cuccinelli has both the highest favorable and unfavorable ratings at 24% and 25% respectively. McAuliffe has an 18% favorable rating and a 15% unfavorable rating. Nearly half (49%) have no opinion of McAuliffe.

"These results point to a very tight race for governor, and the question is whether the turnout shapes up as it did for Bob McDonnell or for Barack Obama," said Quentin Kidd, Director of the Wason Center for Public Policy. "Bill Bolling could play the spoiler if he enters the race, but it isn't clear that he could beat either Cuccinelli or McAuliffe at this point."

The Wason Center for Public Policy surveyed 1015 registered Virginia voters from January 14-20. The margin of error is +/- 3.1%. See full methodology statement below.

**TOPLINES**

Q1: [READ] Overall, would you say things in the COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA are heading more in the right direction or the wrong direction?

Right	48%
Mixed (vol.)	17%
Wrong	30%
Don't know/refused (vol.)	5%

Q2: [READ] How about the country...overall, would you say things in the UNITED STATES are heading more in the right direction or the wrong direction?

Right	35%
Mixed (vol.)	11%
Wrong	52%
Don't know/refused (vol.)	1%

[READ] Thinking about public officials...

Q3: [READ] Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama 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 Barack Obama is handling his job as President? IF STILL UNSURE ENTER AS DON’T KNOW]**

Approve	51%
Disapprove	43%
Don't know/refused (vol.)	5%

Q4: [READ] Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bob McDonnell 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 Bob McDonnell is handling his job as Governor? IF STILL UNSURE ENTER AS DON’T KNOW]**

Approve	51%
Disapprove	24%
Don't know/refused (vol.)	25%

[READ] Ok, thanks. I'd like to get your opinion of some people who have either announced they are running for governor or are considering running for governor in 2013. As I read each name, 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.

Q5: [READ] First, **[INSERT NAME; RANDOMIZE]**, would you say your overall opinion of **[REPEAT NAME]** is favorable or unfavorable?

How about **[NEXT NAME]**...?

<u>(Vol)</u>	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No opinion</u>	<u>Dk/refused</u>
a. Ken Cuccinelli	24%	25%	40%	11%
b. Terry McAuliffe	18%	15%	49%	18%
c. Tareq Salahi	1%	17%	50%	32%
d. Bill Bolling	17%	6%	52%	26%

Q9: [READ] Thinking about the 2013 election for governor... if the election were held TODAY and the candidates were [RANDOMIZE: "Ken Cuccinelli the Republican" and "Terry McAuliffe the Democrat"], for whom would you vote?

[IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE ("DON'T KNOW", "DEPENDS", "NOT SURE", ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH: Which one are you leaning toward right now?]

	Current Registered Voter Weight	2009 Exit Poll Weight	2012 Exit Poll Weight
Cuccinelli	30%	33%	30%
McAuliffe	31%	30%	31%
Neither/Other (vol.)	6%	7%	7%
Don't know/refused (vol.)	33%	30%	32%

Q10: [READ] Still thinking about the 2013 election for governor... if the election were held TODAY and the candidates were [RANDOMIZE: "Ken Cuccinelli the Republican", "Terry McAuliffe the Democrat" and "Bill Bolling an Independent"], for whom would you vote?

[IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE ("DON'T KNOW", "DEPENDS", "NOT SURE", ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH: Which one are you leaning toward right now?]

	Current Registered Voter Weight	2009 Exit Poll Weight	2012 Exit Poll Weight
Cuccinelli	27%	30%	27%
McAuliffe	27%	26%	27%
Bolling	9%	9%	9%
Neither/Other (vol.)	3%	3%	3%
Don't know/refused (vol.)	34%	32%	34%

**Questions 11 through 26 held for later release**

**Demographics**

EDUC: [READ] What is the last grade of school or college you had the opportunity to complete?

High school or less	23%
Some college	24%
Vocational or technical training	6%
College graduate	30%
Graduate study or more	16%

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

Yes	4%
No	96%

RACE: [READ] Do you consider yourself to be:

White	73%
Black or African American	19%
Other (vol.)	8%

PARTYID: [READ] In politics today, do you generally consider yourself to be a Democrat, Republican, or Independent?

Democrat	33%
Republican	27%
Independent	36%
Other party (vol.)	2%
Don't know/refused (vol.)	3%

AGE: [READ] In which of the following categories does your current age fall?

18-24	12%
25-34	19%
35-44	18%
45-54	20%
55 and older	31%

TEAPARTY: [READ] Do you consider yourself to be a supporter of the Tea Party movement?

Yes	20%
No	79%
Dk/refused (vol.)	2%

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

Under \$25,000	8%
\$25-\$35,000	11%
\$35-\$50,000	11%
\$50-\$75,000	13%
\$75-\$100,000	8%
Over \$100,000	18%
Dk/refused (vol.)	32%

[READ] Thank you very much for your help with this survey.

SEX:

Male	47%
Female	53%

REGION:

Northern	32%
Richmond/Central	21%
Hampton Roads	23%
West/SWest/SSide	24%

**Methodology Statement:**

The results of this poll are based on 1015 interviews, of which 784 were landline telephone and 231 were cell phone (including 112 who had no landline telephone) conducted January 14-20, 2013 of registered voters in Virginia. The margin of error for the whole survey is +/- 3.1% at the 95% level of confidence. In addition to sampling error, the other potential sources of error include non-response, question wording, and interviewer error. The response rate (AAPOR RRI Standard Definition) for the survey was 12%. The data reported here are weighted using an iterative weighting process on sex, age, race and region of residence to reflect as closely as possible the demographic composition of registered voters in Virginia. Live interviewing was conducted by the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion. Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding. The poll was designed and analyzed by Dr. Quentin Kidd of the Wason Center for Public Policy at Christopher Newport University.