



NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll: Obama and Romney Deadlocked in Virginia

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This NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll Reports:

As the presidential campaign enters its final hours, President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden -- 48% -- and Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan -- 47% -- are still neck and neck among likely voters in Virginia, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early. One percent is for another candidate, and 3% are undecided.

“Obama and Romney are closely matched in the battle for Virginia’s 13 electoral votes, and both candidates are viewed more positively by more voters than not,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “Voters are also evenly divided about who can better handle the economy.”

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question in its October 11th survey, Romney and Ryan had 48% to 47% for Obama and Biden among Virginia likely voters, including those who were undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted absentee. One percent backed another candidate, and 4%, at that time, were undecided.

Key points:

- **Party ID.** Among Democrats who are likely to vote, 95% support Obama. The same proportion of Republicans who are likely to cast a ballot -- 95% -- is behind Romney. Among independent likely voters, 48% support Romney compared with 43% for Obama.
- **Enthusiasm.** 71% of Virginia likely voters are very enthusiastic to vote. Looking at each candidate’s supporters, 75% of Obama’s supporters express a high degree of enthusiasm compared with 73% of those who back Romney and are likely to vote. Enthusiasm has grown in the state. In NBC News/WSJ/Marist’s previous survey, 64% of Virginia likely voters were very enthusiastic about casting their ballot. At that

time, 66% of Obama's supporters had a high degree of enthusiasm about going to the polls while 65% of Romney's backers said the same.

- **Intensity of support.** 89% of likely voters in Virginia who have a candidate preference are strongly committed to their choice. Nine percent are somewhat behind their selection, and 1% might vote differently. One percent is unsure. 90% of Obama's supporters are securely in his camp compared with 88% of Romney's backers who say the same.
- **Gender.** A gender gap exists, but has narrowed. 51% of women who are likely to cast a ballot now support Obama while 45% are for Romney. In a similar poll conducted last month, 54% of women likely to vote supported Obama, and 42% backed Romney. In the current survey, among men who are likely to vote, 50% back Romney compared with 45% for Obama. In the earlier poll, 55% of men likely to vote sided with Romney, and 40% were behind Obama.
- **Age.** Among likely voters under the age of 30, Obama leads Romney, 60% to 34%. 52% of likely voters 30 to 44 are for Obama compared with 43% for Romney. Romney -- 51% -- has the advantage over Obama -- 43% -- among likely voters 45 to 59. Among those 60 and older, Romney -- 52% -- is ahead of Obama -- 45%.
- **Early voters.** 15% of registered voters in Virginia say they have already voted or plan to do so early. Among likely voters, Obama -- 59% -- leads Romney -- 38%. However, Romney -- 51% -- is ahead of Obama -- 45% -- among likely voters who plan to go to the polls on Tuesday.

Among registered voters in Virginia, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, Obama receives 48% to 46% for Romney. Two percent support another candidate, and 4% are undecided.

Majority with Favorable Impression of Obama...Romney Favorability at 50%

51% of likely voters in Virginia have a favorable opinion of President Obama. 45% do not, and 3% are unsure.

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question, the same proportions held these views. 51% of Virginia likely voters thought well of Obama while 45% had an unfavorable view of him. Three percent, at that time, were unsure.

When it comes to Romney, 50% have a favorable impression of him. 45%, however, have an unfavorable one, and 6% are unsure.

In mid-October, 49% of likely voters had a positive opinion of the candidate while 44% did not. Seven percent, at that time, were unsure.

Voters Divide about the Candidate Who Will Better Handle Economy...Obama Bests Romney on Foreign Policy

Which candidate do registered voters in Virginia think will better handle the nation's economy? 47% think Romney is the stronger candidate while 46% believe Obama is the man for the job. Seven percent are unsure. Likely voters in Virginia agree. 48% of these voters say Romney will turn the country's economy around while 46% believe Obama will get the economy back on track. Six percent are unsure.

Previously, 47% of registered voters had more confidence in Romney to improve the U.S. economy while 45% believed Obama was more capable on the issue. Eight percent were unsure.

When it comes to foreign policy, Obama -- 50% -- tops Romney -- 42% -- among registered voters in Virginia. Eight percent are unsure. Among likely voters statewide, 50% think Obama is the foreign policy candidate while 44% have this impression of Romney. Seven percent are unsure.

In mid-October, Obama -- 49% -- topped Romney -- 43% -- on the issue of foreign policy among Virginia registered voters. Eight percent, at that time, were unsure.

Voters Divide Over President's Job Performance...Kudos for Handling of Hurricane

49% of registered voters in Virginia approve of the job Obama is doing in office. 47% disapprove, and 5% are unsure.

Previously, 48% of Virginia registered voters gave the president high marks while 46% thought he missed the mark. Six percent, then, were unsure.

How do registered voters in Virginia think the president is handling Hurricane Sandy? 71% approve of his actions while 14% do not. 15% are unsure. Looking at party, 95% of Democrats approve of Obama's response. 50% of Republicans agree. Among independents, 68% think well of how the president has been handling the situation.

Likely voters in Virginia agree. 71% of likely voters statewide approve of how the president has been handling the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. 15% do not, and 14% are unsure.

Almost Half Think the Country is on Wrong Track

Looking at the direction of the nation, 49% of registered voters in Virginia believe it is off the rails. 46% say it is on the right path, and 4% are unsure.

In NBC News/WSJ/Marist's previous survey, 53% of registered voters statewide said the country was moving in the wrong direction. 43% thought it was moving in the right one, and 4% were unsure.

Kaine and Allen in Close Contest in U.S. Senate Race in Virginia

Among likely voters in Virginia, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, 49% support Democrat Tim Kaine while 46% are for Republican George Allen. Less than 1% backs another candidate, and 4% are undecided.

In mid-October, Kaine -- 47% -- and Allen -- 46% -- were in a competitive contest among likely voters in Virginia, including those who were undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted absentee. Seven percent were undecided.

Among registered voters in Virginia, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, 49% are behind Kaine while 46% are for Allen. One percent supports another candidate, and 5% are undecided.