

October 7, 2024

# Harris Leads Trump by 11 points Among Virginia Likely Voters; Kaine Leads Cao by 20 points in U.S. Senate Contest

# Summary of Key Findings

- 1. Democrat Kamala Harris leads Republican Donald Trump by 11 points, 52% to 41% among Virginia likely voters; 4% remain undecided, while 3% say they will vote for someone else.
- 2. Harris' lead over Trump is built on an advantage among women (+20), Independents (+15), Black voters (+54) and college educated voters (+20); Trump receives support from Republican voters (94%), with a very narrow lead among white voters (48% to 47%).
- 3. In the U.S. Senate race, Democrat Tim Kaine leads Republican Hung Cao by 20 pints among Virginia likely voters, 55% to 35%; 8% say they are undecided and 2% say they will vote for someone else.
- 4. Top of mind issues for Virginia likely voters include inflation and the economy (29%), threats to democracy (18%), immigration (11%), and abortion (10%).
- 5. Virginia likely voters say Harris would do a better job than Trump handling an array of policy issues with a narrow lead on inflation and the economy (49% to 48%), a moderate advantage on threats to democracy (54% to 40%) and a large advantage on abortion (60% to 32%), racial inequality (61% to 31%) and climate change (61% to 29%); Trump has a narrow advantage over Harris on handling immigration (49% to 48%).

For further information, contact:		
<b>Dr. Rebecca Bromley-Trujillo</b> Research Director	rebecca.bromleytrujillo@cnu.edu @ profbromley_trujillo Threads	O: (757) 594-9140 M: (269) 598-5008
Cami Castleberry Director	cami.castleberry@cnu.edu	O: (757) 594-8033 M: (757) 897-4966

**Summary and Background**: Early voting is well underway in the Commonwealth of Virginia and Election Day is just a month away on Tuesday November 5<sup>th</sup>. We surveyed Virginia likely voters on vote choice for president and the U.S. Senate, in addition to policy issues. Among those surveyed, 14% have already cast their ballot, as early voting began on September 20<sup>th</sup> in the Commonwealth. While Virginia tends to be a two-party competitive state for state executive and legislative races, the Commonwealth has not voted for a Republican presidential candidate since George W. Bush won the state in 2004. Our survey suggests Virginia is likely to continue the trend of voting blue in presidential races.

**Enthusiasm and Early Vote:** Virginia likely voters are fairly enthusiastic to vote in the elections with 82% indicating they are either very enthusiastic (64%) or somewhat enthusiastic (18%). Democratic voters have an enthusiasm advantage with 75% indicating they are very enthusiastic compared to 68% of Republicans and 46% of Independents.

While most Virginia likely voters surveyed have yet to cast their ballots, a higher percentage of Democrats say they have voted when compared to Republicans and Independents (22% to 11% to 9%). In past elections Democrats have been more likely to early vote than Republicans, though Governor Youngkin made a push in the 2022 General Assembly elections for Republicans to vote early.

**Favorability ratings for President, Vice President, and U.S. Senate candidates:** We ask Virginia likely voters whether they have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the presidential candidates, their running mates, and the candidates running for U.S. Senate in Virginia.

Overall, Vice President Kamala Harris has a +9 favorability rating (51% to 42%) with 8% indicating they have no opinion/don't know. President Trump is underwater with a -22 favorability rating (36% to 58%); 6% say no opinion/don't know.

Harris' running-mate Governor Tim Walz has a +12 favorability rating (47% to 35%), with 19% indicating no opinion/don't know. Trump's running mate Senator J.D. Vance has a -16 favorability rating at 34 to 50% with 16% indicating no opinion/don't know.

Incumbent Senator Tim Kaine has a +23 favorability rating (53% to 30%) with 17% saying no opinion/don't know. Republican candidate Hung Cao has an even favorability rating (23% to 23%); however, he is less well known with a majority of likely voters indicating no opinion/don't know (54%).

**Presidential Vote Choice:** Among Virginia likely voters Harris leads Trump by 11 points, 52% to 41%, with 4% saying they are undecided and 3% indicating they will vote for someone else.

Harris' support is currently driven by Democratic voters (98%), Independents (49% to 34%), Black voters (70% to 16%), women (57% to 37%), voters aged 18-44 (52% to 38%), and voters with college degrees (57% to 37%).

Trump's support within his own party sits at 94% and he holds a narrow lead among white voters (48% to 47%).

**U.S. Senate Vote Choice** Incumbent Democratic Senator Tim Kaine enjoys a 20-point lead among Virginia likely voters against Republican Hung Cao (55% to 35%); 8% remain undecided, while 2% say they will vote for someone else.

Kaine has a fairly large advantage among Independents (+13), women (+30), Black voters (+69), and voters with a college degree (+28). Cao's support comes primarily from fellow Republicans at 72%, though 16% remain undecided and 11% say they will vote for Kaine.

**Key issues:** Virginia likely voters are asked which issue is top of mind when they think about voting in the fall elections. 29% say inflation and the economy, followed by 18% who say threats to democracy, 11% immigration, and 10% abortion.

Top of mind issues vary by party with a vast majority of Republicans coalescing around inflation and the economy (39%), followed by immigration (24%), and foreign policy (6%). Top issues among Democrats include threats to democracy (31%), followed by abortion (16%), and inflation and the economy (12%). A majority of Independents say inflation and the economy (37%), followed by threats to democracy (19%), with the remaining closely split between immigration (8%), healthcare (7%), abortion (6%), and foreign policy (6%).

Handling of key issues: We also ask Virginia likely voters whether they think Donald Trump or Kamala Harris would do a better job handling a series of issues. Harris comes out ahead of Trump on seven of the eight issues we surveyed on including very narrowly for inflation and the economy (49% to 48%), a moderate amount for threats to democracy (54% to 40%) and gun violence (53% to 39%), and larger amounts for health care (58% to 35%), abortion (60% to 32%), climate change (61% to 29%), and racial inequality (61% to 31%). Trump has a narrow advantage over Harris on immigration (49% to 48%).

Q1: How much thought, if any, have you given to the elections coming up this fall?

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non- College	College
A lot	77	74	76	81	74	78	81	66	65	84	75	78
Some	16	18	18	13	18	15	14	22	25	11	18	15
Not much	3	4	4	2	4	3	3	3	5	2	3	4
Not at all	3	3	1	3	3	3	2	5	3	2	3	2
Dk/ref (vol)	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	4	2	1	1	1

PLAN: Do you yourself plan to vote in the upcoming elections, have you ALREADY voted, or don't you plan to vote?

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non- College	College
Plan to vote	85	89	90	77	89	82	85	84	93	80	85	85
Already voted	14	11	9	22	11	18	15	16	7	19	14	14
Dk/ref (vol)	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1

ENTH: And how enthusiastic would you say you are about voting in the elections this fall? Would you say you are...

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45+	Non- College	College
Very Enthusiastic	64	68	46	75	61	66	69	57	47	74	64	63
Somewhat Enthusiastic	18	13	26	15	18	17	15	23	27	12	16	20
Less Enthusiastic	7	6	11	6	9	6	6	8	10	6	9	6
Not Enthusiastic	10	10	16	4	10	9	8	11	14	7	11	9
Dk/ref (vol)	2	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	3

Q4: Thinking about the presidential candidates and their running mates... As I read their names, 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 [INSERT NAME, RANDOMIZE].

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No Opinion	Don't Know
Kamala Harris	51	42	5	3
Donald Trump	36	58	3	3
Tim Walz	47	35	13	6
J.D. Vance	34	50	11	5

Q8: Thinking about the election for president... if the election were held TODAY would you vote for [INSERT NAME, RANDOMIZE]? [INTERVIEWER: IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE ("DON'T KNOW", "DEPENDS", "NOT SURE", ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH: Which one are you leaning toward right now?]

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45+	Non- College	College
Donald Trump, the Republican	41	94	34	0	45	37	48	16	38	43	46	37
Kamala Harris, the Democrat	52	3	49	98	46	57	47	70	52	51	47	57
Someone else (vol)	3	2	7	0	4	2	2	9	5	2	4	2
Undecided (vol)	3	0	7	1	4	2	2	4	4	2	3	3
Dk/Ref (vol.)	1	0	4	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2

[AMONG TRUMP VOTERS] Q9A: In thinking about your vote for president, would you say your vote is more a vote FOR Trump or more of a vote AGAINST Harris?

 1. For Trump [Skip to Q11]
 72

 2. Against Harris [Skip to Q11]
 22

 98. Dk/ref (vol) [Skip to Q11]
 6

[AMONG HARRIS VOTERS] Q9B: In thinking about your vote for president, would you say your vote is more a vote FOR Harris or more of a vote AGAINST Trump?

1. For Harris 70 2. Against Trump 27 98. Dk/ref (vol) 3

Q11: There are two candidates running for U.S. Senate in Virginia. As I read their names, 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 [INSERT NAME, RANDOMIZE A-B].

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No Opinion	Don't Know
Tim Kaine	53	30	10	7
Hung Cao	23	23	32	22

Q13: And thinking about the election for U.S. Senate... if the election were held TODAY would you vote for [INSERT NAME, RANDOMIZE 1-2]? [INTERVIEWER: IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE ("DON'T KNOW", "DEPENDS", "NOT SURE", ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH]: Which one are you leaning toward right now?

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non- College	College
Tim Kaine, the Democrat	55	11	50	99	51	60	49	80	55	56	50	60
Hung Cao, the Republican	35	72	37	0	40	30	43	11	29	38	38	32
Someone else (vol)	2	2	5	0	2	3	1	5	5	1	3	2
Undecided (vol)	5	9	6	0	5	5	5	3	8	3	6	4
Dk/Ref (vol.)	3	5	2	0	3	3	3	1	4	2	3	2

Q14: From the following list of issues, which is top of mind for you when you think about voting in the upcoming elections? [RANDOMIZE 1-11]

pcoming elections? [RANDC	71,11232						_				I _	
	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non- College	College
Inflation and the economy	29	39	37	12	34	24	29	31	31	28	33	26
Health care	6	2	7	8	5	6	5	7	7	5	5	7
Foreign policy	4	6	6	1	6	3	4	1	5	3	3	5
Immigration	11	24	8	1	10	12	13	2	7	14	12	9
Threats to Democracy	18	4	19	31	21	16	21	12	14	21	12	25
Crime	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Climate change	4	0	4	6	4	3	4	1	5	2	4	3
Gun policy	4	2	2	8	3	6	3	9	5	4	4	5
Abortion	10	5	6	16	5	14	10	10	10	9	10	9
Education	1	0	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	0	3
Racial inequality	2	0	2	3	2	2	1	6	1	3	3	1
Other (vol):	8	11	4	9	7	9	6	14	9	7	11	5
Don't know/ref (vol)	3	4	2	1	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3

Q15: Regardless of how you intend to vote, who do you think would do a better job handling each of the following issues: Do you think Donald Trump or Kamala Harris would do a better job handling...

## [RANDOMIZE A-H]

A.	Inflation	and	the	economy	V
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A. Inflation and the economy												
	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non- College	College
Donald Trump	48	96	51	3	55	42	54	28	49	48	54	43
Kamala Harris	49	3	45	95	42	57	45	67	48	50	44	54
Dk/Ref (vol.)	2	1	4	2	3	2	2	5	3	2	2	3

B. Climate Change

D. Chinave Change	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non- College	College
Donald Trump	29	67	26	0	33	26	34	13	25	32	34	25
Kamala Harris	61	19	61	97	57	65	56	78	65	58	54	67
Dk/Ref (vol.)	10	14	13	3	11	9	10	9	10	10	12	8

C. Immigration

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45+	Non- College	College
Donald Trump	49	93	56	5	56	42	54	27	51	48	53	46
Kamala Harris	48	7	38	94	41	55	44	68	46	49	44	51
Dk/Ref (vol.)	3	0	6	2	3	3	2	6	4	3	3	3

D. Threats to democracy

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non- College	College
Donald Trump	40	87	36	1	44	36	46	16	36	42	45	34
Kamala Harris	54	6	52	98	46	60	48	74	54	53	47	60
Dk/Ref (vol.)	7	8	12	1	10	4	7	10	11	5	8	6

### E. Gun violence

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45+	Non- College	College
Donald Trump	39	80	40	0	44	34	43	23	37	39	41	36
Kamala Harris	53	6	51	97	45	61	48	70	53	53	47	59
Dk/Ref (vol.)	8	14	9	2	12	6	9	8	10	8	12	5

### F. Abortion

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non- College	College
Donald Trump	32	73	28	1	35	30	37	14	26	37	36	29
Kamala Harris	60	17	63	98	56	65	55	80	67	56	56	64
Dk/Ref (vol.)	7	10	9	2	9	5	8	6	7	7	8	7

# G. Health care

	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45 +	Non- College	College
Donald Trump	35	78	31	0	38	32	41	14	30	39	37	33
Kamala Harris	58	11	61	98	55	61	52	81	62	56	55	61
Dk/Ref (vol.)	7	12	8	1	7	7	7	4	8	6	7	6

H. Racial inequality

n. Raciai inequality												
	All	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	White	Black	18-44	45+	Non- College	College
Donald Trump	31	73	25	0	34	28	37	11	26	34	35	27
Kamala Harris	61	17	65	98	57	65	56	82	66	58	57	65
Dk/Ref (vol.)	8	11	10	2	9	7	8	7	8	8	8	8

#### **Demographics Full Survey n=800**

EDUC: Could you tell me the highest level of school or college you had the opportunity to complete:

High school or less 49 College or more 51

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

Yes 4 No 93 DK/ref 2

RACE: Do you consider yourself to be:

White 69
Black or African American 20
Other 11

RELIG: What is your religious preference, are you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, another religion, or no religion?

28 Protestant Christian (non-specific) 16 Catholic 11 Jewish 3 0 Muslim Other 18 None 21 Dk/ref (vol) 3

IDEOL: When it comes to your ideology, would you consider yourself to be a...

Very liberal 6 Liberal 20 Moderate 36 Conservative 24 Very Conservative 11 Dk/ref(vol) 3

PARTY: In politics today, do you generally consider yourself to be a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?

Republican 31
Democrat 36
Independent 31
No Preference (vol) 1
Dk/Ref (vol) 0

#### **PARTYLN**

Lean Republican15Lean Democrat15Independent2Dk/ref (vol)0

AGE: (Recorded as exact year of birth)

18-24 7 25-34 9 35-44 23 45-54 12 55 & older 49

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

Under \$25,000	3
\$25-\$49,999	9
\$50-\$74,999	16
\$75-\$99,999	16
\$100,000-\$149,999	18
Over \$150,000	26
Dk/ref (vol)	12

SEX:

Male 49 Female 51

#### CELL/LANDLINE

Cell 74 Landline 26

#### REGION

Northern 33 Richmond-Central 21 Hampton Roads-East 21 South/Southwest/West 25

#### How the survey was conducted:

The results of this poll are based on 800 interviews of registered Virginia voters who are likely general election voters, including 211 on landline and 589 on cell phone, conducted Sept. 28 to Oct. 4, 2024. A likely general election voter is one who has voted in at least two of the last four general elections or is newly registered in the last 12 months and indicates they are enthusiastic and plan to vote in the upcoming November 5 elections. The margin of error for the whole survey is +/-4.4% at the 95% level of confidence. This means that if 50% of respondents indicate a topline view on an issue, we can be 95% confident that the population's view on that issue is somewhere between 45.6% and 54.4%. The margin of error for subgroups may be higher. All error margins have been adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, which is 1.6 in this survey. The design effect is a factor representing the survey's deviation from a simple random sample and takes into account decreases in precision due to sample design and weighting procedures. In addition to sampling error, the other potential sources of error include non-response, question wording, and interviewer error. Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding. Five callbacks were employed in the fielding process. Live calling was conducted by Dynata interviewers. The data reported here are weighted using an iterative weighting process on region, age, race, sex, and education to reflect as closely as possible the population of the Virginia November 5, 2024 electorate. Parameters for the weights used in this survey come from the 2020 Census, the 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, and 2016 and 2020 exit polls.