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

March 3, 2014

Clinton leads all Republican challengers in 2016 presidential matchups in battleground Virginia; GOP voters divided, but Christie, Bush top pack

Summary of Key Findings

1. Hillary Clinton has more than a friend in the Virginia Governor's Mansion: Virginia voters like her, too. In head-to-head matchups with a list of potential Republican challengers, Clinton beats them all.

2. Virginia Republican voters are very divided, but Christie and Bush get the most support in a hypothetical 2016 Republican primary.

3. Virginia Democrats strongly prefer Clinton over Biden and Warren.

4. President Obama's approval is underwater in Virginia at 46% to 48%, but only 10% of voters approve of the job Congress is doing.

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Analysis

The State of Things: Virginians are not happy with the direction of the country, with 57% saying things in the United States are mostly going in the wrong direction. President Barack Obama's job approval among registered Virginia voters stands at 46%, with 48% disapproving and 6% not sure. Mirroring views nationally, only 10% of Virginia voters approve of the job Congress is doing, while 80% say they disapprove and 10% aren't sure.

Overall, would you say things in the United States are heading more in the _____ direction?	Right	35
	Mixed (vol)	8
	Wrong	57

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?	Approve	46
	Not sure (vol)	6
	Disapprove	48

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is doing its job?	Approve	10
	Not sure (vol)	10
	Disapprove	80

Clinton and Christie viewed most favorably: Among the early contenders for President in 2016, two stand out with strong favorable views among registered Virginia voters: Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and New Jersey Governor Chris Christie. Only Clinton's favorability tops the 50% mark but Christie's approaches it at 46%. Vice President Joe Biden, former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, Senator Marco Rubio, Congressman Paul Ryan, former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee and Senator Rand Paul are favored by between one-third and one-fourth of registered Virginia voters. Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, Senator Elizabeth Warren, and Senator Ted Cruz are favored by less than 20% of Virginia voters.

	Favorable	Unfavorable	Don't know	Refused (vol)
Hillary Clinton	51	42	7	
Chris Christie	46	30	24	
Joe Biden	33	56	11	
Jeb Bush	30	42	28	
Marco Rubio	29	27	44	
Paul Ryan	29	38	32	1
Mike Huckabee	28	44	28	
Rand Paul	25	40	35	
Scott Walker	19	19	63	
Elizabeth Warren	18	25	57	
Ted Cruz	16	34	49	1

Clinton has strong lead among Democrats: In a hypothetical 2016 Democratic primary election, Hillary Clinton would cruise to a commanding victory with 66% of Democrats and independent-leaning Democrats saying they would vote for her rather than Joe Biden or Elizabeth Warren.

If the 2016 Democratic Presidential Primary in Virginia were held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, Joe Biden, or Elizabeth Warren], for whom would you vote?	
Hillary Clinton	66
Joe Biden	19
Elizabeth Warren	7
Undecided	9

No clear front-runner in Republican field: There is no clear leader in a hypothetical 2016 Republican primary election, with Chris Christie and Jeb Bush sharing the lead among Republicans and independent-leaning Republicans, with 19% and 18% of the vote, respectively, followed by Mike Huckabee and Paul Ryan at 13%. Tea Party favorites Ted Cruz and Rand Paul poll in the single digits at 9% and 7%, respectively.

If the 2016 Republican Presidential Primary in Virginia were held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Chris Christie, Mike Huckabee, Paul Ryan, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, Rand Paul, Marco Rubio or Scott Walker], for whom would you vote?	
Chris Christie	19
Jeb Bush	18
Mike Huckabee	13
Paul Ryan	13
Ted Cruz	9
Rand Paul	7
Marco Rubio	4
Scott Walker	3
Undecided	13

Hillary Clinton beats all comers if 2016 election were held today: Hillary Clinton not only has a friend in the Virginia Governor's Mansion in Terry McAuliffe, but she also has friends among Virginia voters. In hypothetical 2016 head-to-head matchups with a list of potential Republican challengers, Clinton beats them all. The closest matchup pits Clinton against New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, where Clinton wins by only 2 points, 43% to 41%. Christie is the only Republican who keeps Clinton's vote among women below 50%.Two other Republicans, Marco Rubio and Rand Paul, hold Clinton to single-digit wins (8% and 7%, respectively), but the former Secretary of State and First Lady beats all other challengers by double digits. Rubio and Paul are the only candidates who draw significant numbers of Virginia Democrats from Clinton.

"While 2016 seems like a lifetime in terms of electoral politics, Hillary Clinton has a clear and commanding lead in the battleground state of Virginia if she decides to run for president," said Dr. Quentin Kidd, director of the Wason Center for Public Policy. "While no Republican has as dominant a position as Clinton does right now, Chris Christie is the most formidable opponent to Clinton, and it is significant that he is able to keep Clinton's support amongst women below 50 percent."

If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Chris Christie, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

	All	Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 <
Clinton	**43**	84	11	36	40	45	44	43	38	41	47
Christie	**41**	2	82	42	44	38	35	28	46	47	41
Undecided (vol.)	**16**	14	7	22	16	17	21	29	16	13	12

If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Mike Huckabee, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

	All	Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 <
Clinton	**52**	98	11	44	42	60	54	66	47	46	50
Huckabee	**37**		85	36	40	34	19	17	47	45	41
Undecided (vol.)	**11**	2	4	20	18	7	27	17	7	10	9

If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Paul Ryan, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

	All	Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 <
Clinton	**52**	86	9	53	51	54	81	54	43	49	51
Ryan	**37**		84	36	42	33	19	21	45	44	40
Undecided (vol.)	**11**	14	6	11	7	13		25	12	7	9

If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Ted Cruz, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

	All	Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 <
Clinton	**47**	81	12	44	42	51	46	47	44	49	51
Cruz	**37**	5	77	37	42	33	28	23	46	42	35
Undecided (vol.)	**16**	14	11	19	16	16	27	25	9	9	14

If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Jeb Bush, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

	All	Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 <
Clinton	**51**	98	9	43	43	58	54	73	39	46	47
Bush	**38**	1	88	36	42	35	19	17	49	45	44
Undecided (vol.)	**11**	1	3	21	15	7	27	10	11	9	9

If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Rand Paul, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

	All	Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 <
Clinton	**47**	80	10	47	42	52	38	54	43	47	48
Paul	**40**	7	84	37	46	33	35	21	46	49	40
Undecided (vol.)	**13**	14	6	16	12	15	27	25	11	4	12

If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Marco Rubio, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

	All	Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 <
Clinton	**48**	81	12	46	43	52	38	55	44	48	49
Rubio	**40**	17	82	34	42	38	35	35	44	45	38
Undecided (vol.)	**12**	2	6	20	15	10	27	10	11	7	13

If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Scott Walker, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

	All	Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 <
Clinton	**46**	86	11	41	42	50	54	47	38	46	48
Walker	**35**		81	33	49	31	19	23	42	43	35
Undecided (vol.)	**19**	14	8	26	19	19	27	29	20	11	17

Full Toplines

Q1: Overall, would you say things in the UNITED STATES are heading more in the right direction or the wrong direction?

Right	35
Mixed (vol)	8
Wrong	57

Q2: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? **[INTERVIEWER: 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	46
Not sure (vol)	6
Disapprove	48

Q3: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is doing its job? **[INTERVIEWER: IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE ("DON'T KNOW", "DEPENDS", "NOT SURE", ETC.) PROBE ONCE WITH:** OVERALL do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is doing its job? **IF STILL UNSURE ENTER AS DON'T KNOW]**

Approve	10
Not sure (vol)	10
Disapprove	80

Q4. I'm going to read the names of some people in the news who have been mentioned as possible candidates for president in 2016. For each one, please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable view of them, or if you don't know enough about them to have an opinion either way. Ok, here is the first one… [**Name Rotated**]

	Favorable	Unfavorable	Don't know	Refused (vol)
Hillary Clinton	51	42	7	
Chris Christie	46	30	24	
Joe Biden	33	56	11	
Jeb Bush	30	42	28	
Marco Rubio	29	27	44	
Paul Ryan	29	38	32	1
Mike Huckabee	28	44	28	
Rand Paul	25	40	35	
Scott Walker	19	19	63	
Elizabeth Warren	18	25	57	
Ted Cruz	16	34	49	1

PARTYID: In politics today, do you generally consider yourself to be a Republican, an Independent who leans Republican, an Independent that doesn't lean Republican or Democratic, an Independent who leans Democratic, or a Democrat?

Republican	21
Independent lean Republican	17
Independent	16
Independent lean Democrat	17
Democrat	27
Other/no preference (vol.)	3

No Q5-14

Q15. [**Ask of Republican / Independent lean Republican only – n=338 / MofE +/- 5.3%**]
If the 2016 Republican Presidential Primary in Virginia were held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Chris Christie, Mike Huckabee, Paul Ryan, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, Rand Paul, Marco Rubio or Scott Walker], for whom would you vote?

Chris Christie	19
Jeb Bush	18
Mike Huckabee	13
Paul Ryan	13
Ted Cruz	9
Rand Paul	7
Marco Rubio	4
Scott Walker	3
Undecided (vol)	13

Q16. [**Ask of Democrat / Independent lean Democrat only – n=391 / MofE +/- 5.0**]
If the 2016 Democratic Presidential Primary in Virginia were held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, Joe Biden, or Elizabeth Warren], for whom would you vote?

Hillary Clinton	66
Joe Biden	19
Elizabeth Warren	7
Undecided (vol)	9

Q17. [**Ask All**] If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Chris Christie, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

Clinton	43
Christie	41
Undecided (vol)	16

Q18. [**Ask All**] If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Mike Huckabee, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

Clinton	52
Huckabee	37
Undecided (vol)	11

Q19. [**Ask All**] If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Paul Ryan, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

Clinton	52
Ryan	37
Undecided (vol)	11

Q20. [**Ask All**] If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Ted Cruz, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

Clinton	47
Cruz	37
Undecided (vol)	16

Q21. [**Ask All**] If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Jeb Bush, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

Clinton	51
Bush	38
Undecided (vol)	11

Q22. [**Ask All**] If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Rand Paul, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

Clinton	47
Paul	40
Undecided (vol)	13

Q23. [**Ask All**] If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Marco Rubio, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

Clinton	48
Rubio	40
Undecided (vol)	12

Q24. [**Ask All**] If the 2016 presidential elections were being held today and the candidates were [**Rotate**: Hillary Clinton, the Democrat or Scott Walker, the Republican], for whom would you vote?

Clinton	46
Walker	35
Undecided (vol)	19

Demographics

EDUC

High school or less	16
Some college	27
Vocational or technical training	1
College graduate	31
Graduate study or more	24

HISPANIC

Yes	4
No	96

RACE

White	73
Black or African American	18
Other	9

AGE

18-24	11
25-34	17
35-44	17
45-54	21
55 & older	34

IDEOL

Strong liberal	7
Liberal	13
Moderate, leaning liberal	23
Moderate	6
Moderate, leaning conservative	18
Conservative	19
Strong Conservative	14

TEAPARTY

Support	22
No view	47
Oppose	28
Dk/refused (vol.)	2

SEX

Male	47
Female	53

INCOME

Under $25,000	6
$25-$35,000	4
$35-$50,000	8
$50-$75,000	12
$75-$100,000	20
Over $100,000	32
Refused (vol)	18

How the survey was conducted:

The results of this poll are based on 901 interviews of registered Virginia voters, conducted Feb. 23-28, 2014. Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding. The margin of error for the whole survey is +/- 3.3% at the 95% level of confidence. The Margin of Error for Republican/Independent lean Republican (n=338) is +/- 5.3% at the 95% level of confidence. The Margin of Error for Democrat/Independent lean Democrat (n=391) is +/- 5.0% 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 20%. Three callbacks were employed in the fielding process. Live calling was conducted by trained interviewers at the Wason Center for Public Policy Survey Research Lab at Christopher Newport University. 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. The survey was designed by Dr. Quentin Kidd of the Wason Center for Public Policy at Christopher Newport University.