To: Interested Parties  
From: Jack Rosen, President, American Jewish Congress  
       Joel Rubin, Executive Director, American Jewish Congress  
Date: November 4, 2021  
Re: Virginia’s Jewish Vote in the Governor’s Race

**Background**

The American Jewish Congress, an independent voice fighting for Jewish rights, interests, and values, conducted an extensive flash exit poll of Virginia’s Jewish voters to determine how they voted in the state’s November 2nd gubernatorial race and what motivated them to do so.

This poll is part of our ongoing efforts to analyze and explain the Jewish vote in America through our *Jewish Political Guide*, the nation’s preeminent source of information about the issues that concern Jewish voters.

**Bottom Line**

63% of Virginia’s Jewish voters voted for McAuliffe (D) and 37% for Youngkin (R). This means that Virginia’s Jewish vote for Democrats dropped 10% from 2020 levels, when compared to the roughly 73% national Jewish vote\(^1\) (when combining the multiple polls taken) that Joe Biden received in 2020. These results have garnered national coverage\(^2\) and online debate\(^3\).

**Key Takeaways:**

1. Virginia's Jewish voters placed little weight on Donald Trump in this election;
2. Jewish Republicans prioritized Israeli peace & security over Democrats; and
3. Jewish Democrats placed greater importance on the 1/6 insurrection than Republicans.

**Noteworthy Highlights:**

- 48% of those who voted for McAuliffe said his level of support for President Biden had some impact on their support for him.
- In contrast, only 36% of those who voted for Youngkin said his level of support for President Trump had any impact on their support for him.
- The most important issue was education and schools (17%), with jobs & the economy as their second highest priority (16%), and Covid-19 and health care (13%) scoring third.
- Other important issues were climate change (12%), antisemitism (11%), the January 6th insurrection (11%), Israeli peace and security (10%), and racial justice (10%).

\(^1\) [https://www.timesofisrael.com/how-did-us-jews-vote-polls-offer-imperfect-take-though-big-picture-is-clear/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/how-did-us-jews-vote-polls-offer-imperfect-take-though-big-picture-is-clear/)
\(^2\) [https://www.jweekly.com/2020/11/06/trump-or-biden-how-did-jewish-voters-line-up-this-year-its-complicated/](https://www.jweekly.com/2020/11/06/trump-or-biden-how-did-jewish-voters-line-up-this-year-its-complicated/)
\(^4\) [https://twitter.com/HotlineJosh/status/1455972874108424192?s=20](https://twitter.com/HotlineJosh/status/1455972874108424192?s=20)
Exit Poll Methodology

To conduct the poll, we texted 31,000 self-identified Jewish voters of the roughly 77,000 Jewish voters in the state, requesting that they respond to an exit poll about their vote. Of these, 409 individuals responded to the text request and completed a brief questionnaire on our website. Importantly, our texts reached roughly 40% of all Jewish voters in the state.

The questionnaire consisted of one core question: Did you vote for McAuliffe or Youngkin, leading to a second question that gauged their level of support for Biden or Trump, respectively, in terms of influencing their voting decision. It then asked the respondent to rank order eight issues by order of importance to their voting decision.

This exit poll provides a real-time snapshot of actual Jewish voters in Virginia and the reasons why they voted as they did. It was not intended to be a poll of Jewish views on issues; that’s for future research. For the purposes of this poll, the intent was to obtain the rawest, most real-time views of Jewish voters to help understand their political motivations right now.

Why This Matters

The Jewish vote in Virginia mattered to the margin of Youngkin’s victory, as there are roughly 77,000 registered Jewish voters in Virginia and Youngkin’s victory margin was just under 70,000. While we saw a decline in Jewish voter support for Democrats from the 2020 election by roughly 10%, a convincing majority still voted for the Democrat.

We also saw that core issues of importance to the Jewish community, like antisemitism and support for Israel mattered, but as is typical, American Jews voted like Americans - on education, the economy, and health care first.

It's worth noting that Republican voters placed a greater weight on support for Israel and antisemitism, and that Democratic voters placed a greater weight on dealing with the January 6th insurrection. It's likely that these issues will continue to dominate the Jewish political debate.

The results of this flash exit poll provide a unique view on the key features of the Jewish vote and are indicative in many ways of the general results in Tuesday’s gubernatorial race.

Charts and Tables

The following pages provide the data results of our poll, focusing on (1) the highest priority issues overall and within each party; (2) how Jewish Republican and Jewish Democratic voters ranked the importance of the issues; and the impact of (3) Former President Trump and (4) President Biden on their vote.

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4 Total voters based on national rate of voters/population: https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jewish-population-in-the-united-states-by-state
(1) The highest priority issues overall and within each party was education and schools (17%). Jewish voters listed jobs and the economy as their second highest priority (16%), followed by COVID-19 and health care (13%), climate change (12%), antisemitism and the January 6th insurrection (11% each), and racial justice and Israeli peace and security (10% each).

(2) Jewish Republican voters had more cohesion around their priorities with greater priority given to education and schools, jobs and the economy, Israeli peace and security, and antisemitism. Climate change, racial justice and the 1/6 insurrection were low priority issues for Republicans. Jewish Democratic voters were more diverse in their priorities, leading most issues to receive a similar weighted score. There were no clearly agreed top priority issues, though antisemitism and Israeli peace and security were clear low priority issues.
Regarding Former President Trump, only 36% of those who voted for Glenn Youngkin said his level of support for Trump had any impact on their support for him (24% said it had a lot of influence, 12% said it had a little influence, 64% said it had no influence).

![Importance of McAuliffe’s Support for Biden](image)

Regarding President Biden, 48% of those who voted for McAuliffe said his level of support for President Biden had some impact on their support for him (27% said it had a lot of influence, 21% said it had little influence, 52% said it had no influence).

![Importance of Youngkin’s Support for Trump](image)