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VIRGINIA GOVERNOR'S RACE IS CLOSE

The gubernatorial race in Virginia appears to be quite tight as the campaign enters its final six weeks. Democrat Ralph Northam holds a very slim 44%-43% statewide lead over Republican Ed Gillespie, with 2% supporting Libertarian Cliff Hyra and 11% still undecided.

Northam is dominating in Northern Virginia, where he holds a commanding 57%-30% advantage, but Gillespie is off-setting that with a cumulative 54%-34% lead in the state's three primarily rural regions -- Central Virginia/Shenandoah (53%-36%), Lynchburg/Southside (52%-35%) and Roanoke/Southwest (57%-32%).

The race is closer in Hampton Roads, where Northam is ahead 45%-39%, and the Richmond Metro area which is essentially even -- Gillespie leading 45%-44%.

One factor that might give Northam an inside track is that there is a higher percentage of undecided black voters (18%) and those who identify themselves as Democrats (13%) -- voters who strongly support him -- than there are among undecided whites (9%) and Republicans (11%) -- groups who strongly support Gillespie.

As in all close races, the unpredictable variable is always who will actually turn out to vote. If African-American voters don't show up in large numbers, something that is not uncommon in off year elections, that would significantly help Gillespie's chances.

HOW THE POLL WAS CONDUCTED

This poll was conducted by Mason-Dixon Polling & Strategy, Inc. of Jacksonville, Florida from September 10 through September 15, 2017. A total of 625 registered Virginia voters were interviewed statewide by telephone. All stated they were likely to vote in the November general election.

Those interviewed were randomly selected from a phone-matched Virginia voter registration list that included both land-line and cell phone numbers. Quotas were assigned to reflect voter turnout by county.

The margin for error, according to standards customarily used by statisticians, is no more than ± 4 percentage points. This means that there is a 95 percent probability that the "true" figure would fall within that range if all voters were surveyed. The margin for error is higher for any subgroup, such as a gender or age grouping.

QUESTION: If the 2017 election for governor were held today, would you vote for Ralph Northam, the Democrat, Ed Gillespie, the Republican or Cliff Hyra, the Libertarian?

| | <u>NORTHAM</u> | <u>GILLESPIE</u> | <u>HYRA</u> | <u>UNDECIDED</u> |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
| STATE | 44% | 43% | 2% | 11% |

| <u>REGION</u> | <u>NORTHAM</u> | <u>GILLESPIE</u> | <u>HYRA</u> | <u>UNDECIDED</u> |
|---------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Northern Virginia | 57% | 30% | 3% | 10% |
| Shenandoah/Piedmont | 36% | 53% | 1% | 10% |
| Richmond Metro | 44% | 45% | 1% | 10% |
| Hampton Roads | 45% | 39% | 3% | 13% |
| Lynchburg/Southside | 35% | 52% | 1% | 12% |
| Roanoke/Southwest | 32% | 57% | - | 11% |

| <u>SEX</u> | <u>NORTHAM</u> | <u>GILLESPIE</u> | <u>HYRA</u> | <u>UNDECIDED</u> |
|------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Men | 41% | 45% | 3% | 11% |
| Women | 46% | 42% | 1% | 11% |

| <u>AGE</u> | <u>NORTHAM</u> | <u>GILLESPIE</u> | <u>HYRA</u> | <u>UNDECIDED</u> |
|------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
| <50 | 46% | 39% | 2% | 13% |
| 50+ | 43% | 46% | 2% | 9% |

| <u>RACE</u> | <u>NORTHAM</u> | <u>GILLESPIE</u> | <u>HYRA</u> | <u>UNDECIDED</u> |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
| White | 36% | 53% | 2% | 9% |
| Black | 75% | 6% | 1% | 18% |

| <u>PARTY ID</u> | <u>NORTHAM</u> | <u>GILLESPIE</u> | <u>HYRA</u> | <u>UNDECIDED</u> |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Democrat | 84% | 2% | 1% | 13% |
| Republican | 1% | 90% | 2% | 7% |
| Independent | 38% | 46% | 5% | 11% |

DEMOGRAPHICS

PARTY REGISTRATION:

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Democrat | 246 (39%) |
| Republican | 198 (32%) |
| Independent or Other | 181 (29%) |

AGE:

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 18-34 | 114 (18%) |
| 35-49 | 164 (26%) |
| 50-64 | 194 (31%) |
| 65+ | 147 (24%) |
| Refused | 6 (1%) |

RACE/ETHNICITY:

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| White/Caucasian | 435 (70%) |
| Black/African American | 117 (19%) |
| Hispanic | 35 (6%) |
| Other | 27 (3%) |
| Refused | 11 (2%) |

SEX:

| | |
|---------------|------------------|
| Male | 299 (48%) |
| Female | 326 (52%) |

REGION:

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Northern Virginia | 170 (27%) |
| Shenandoah/Piedmont | 95 (15%) |
| Richmond Metro | 90 (14%) |
| Hampton Roads/Tidewater | 125 (20%) |
| Lynchburg/Southside | 75 (12%) |
| Roanoke/Southwest | 70 (11%) |

VIRGINIA POLL REGIONS

NORTHERN VIRGINIA: Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties and the independent cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park.

CENTRAL/SHENANDOAH: Stafford, Spotsylvania, King George, Caroline, Louisa, Fluvanna, Albemarle, Nelson, Greene, Orange, Madison, Culpepper, Fauquier, Rappahannock, Clarke, Frederick, Warren, Shenandoah, Page, Rockingham, Augusta and Rockbridge counties and the independent cities of Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, Staunton, Harrisonburg, Winchester, Waynesboro, Staunton, Buena Vista and Lexington.

RICHMOND METRO: Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover, Powhatan, Goochland, New Kent and Charles City counties and the independent cities of Richmond and Colonial Heights.

TIDEWATER/HAMPTON ROADS: Accomack, Northampton, Northumberland, Westmoreland, Lancaster, Middlesex, Mathews, Richmond, Essex, King & Queen, King William, Gloucester, James City and York counties and the independent cities of Williamsburg, Newport News, Hampton, Poquoson, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, Chesapeake and Suffolk.

LYNCHBURG/SOUTHSIDE: Isle of Wight, Sussex, Surry, Southampton, Greensville, Dinwiddie, Prince George, Brunswick, Mecklenburg, Lunenburg, Nottoway, Amelia, Prince Edward, Cumberland, Buckingham, Appomattox, Amherst, Campbell, Charlotte, Halifax, Pittsylvania, Henry, Franklin and Bedford counties and the independent cities of Petersburg, Hopewell, Franklin, Emporia, Danville, Martinsville, Lynchburg and Bedford.

ROANOKE/SOUTHWEST: Highland, Bath, Alleghany, Botetourt, Roanoke, Craig, Montgomery, Floyd, Patrick, Giles, Pulaski, Carroll, Grayson, Wythe, Bland, Tazewell, Smyth, Washington, Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, Wise, Scott and Lee counties and the independent cities of Roanoke, Salem, Radford, Covington, Galax, Norton and Bristol.