

VIRGINIA 2017

ELECTION EVE POLL BRIEFING

African American Research Collaborative
Understanding and Communicating Black Political Action

Latino  **Decisions**

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November 16, 2017

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Overview

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- Impact of African American voters
- Impact of campaign racialization on Black voters
- Issue awareness and backlash
- What did we learn about Black voters for 2018?
- 2018 races where similar dynamics could impact the outcome

Virginia 2017 Election Polls

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- Poll 1 (Oct. 6-13): Samples of African Americans (n=400), Whites (n=400), Latinos (n=400), Asian Americans (n=400)
- Poll 2 (Nov. 2-6): Statewide poll of likely voters who already voted or planned to vote in the 2017 election
 - Samples of Latinos (n=431), Asian Americans (n=404), African Americans (n=403), Whites (n=497)
 - Our poll accurately predicted Northam's 9 point victory over Gillespie (54% to 45%). The consensus (based on averaging across different polls) was that Northam would win by 3 points.

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African American Voter Impact

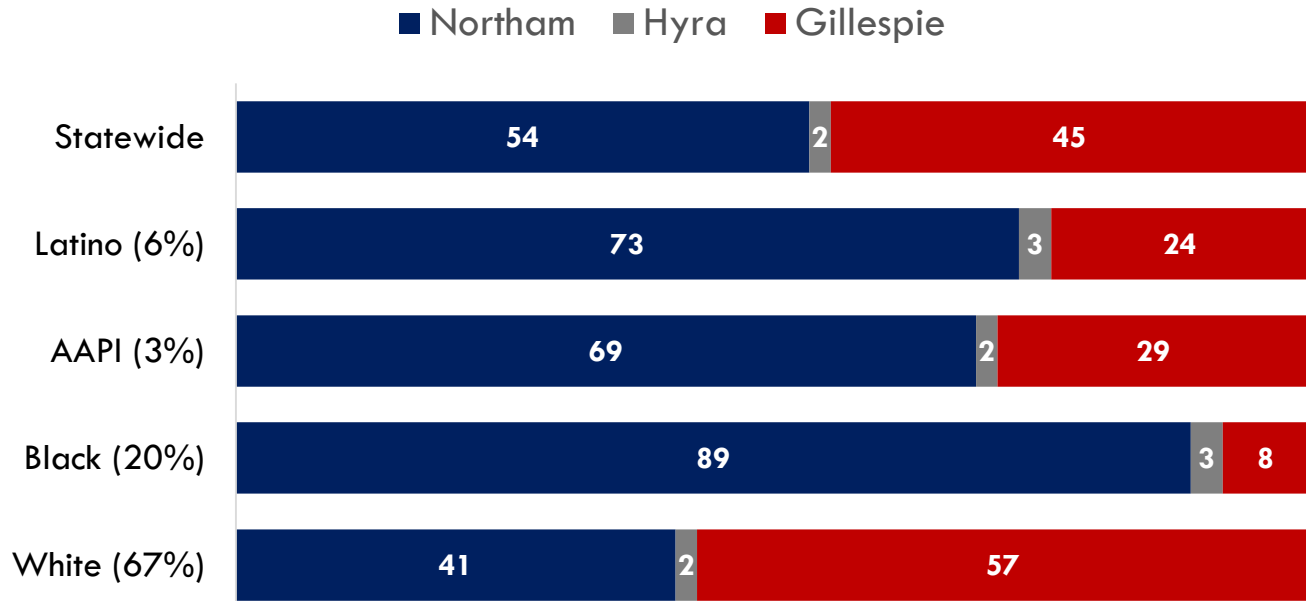
Political recruitment, Trump support, and candidate preference

Voting, by race and ethnicity

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In the election for Governor of Virginia, [did you/will you] vote for

[ROTATE:
Republican Ed Gillespie /
Democrat Ralph Northam]
or
Libertarian Cliff Hyra?

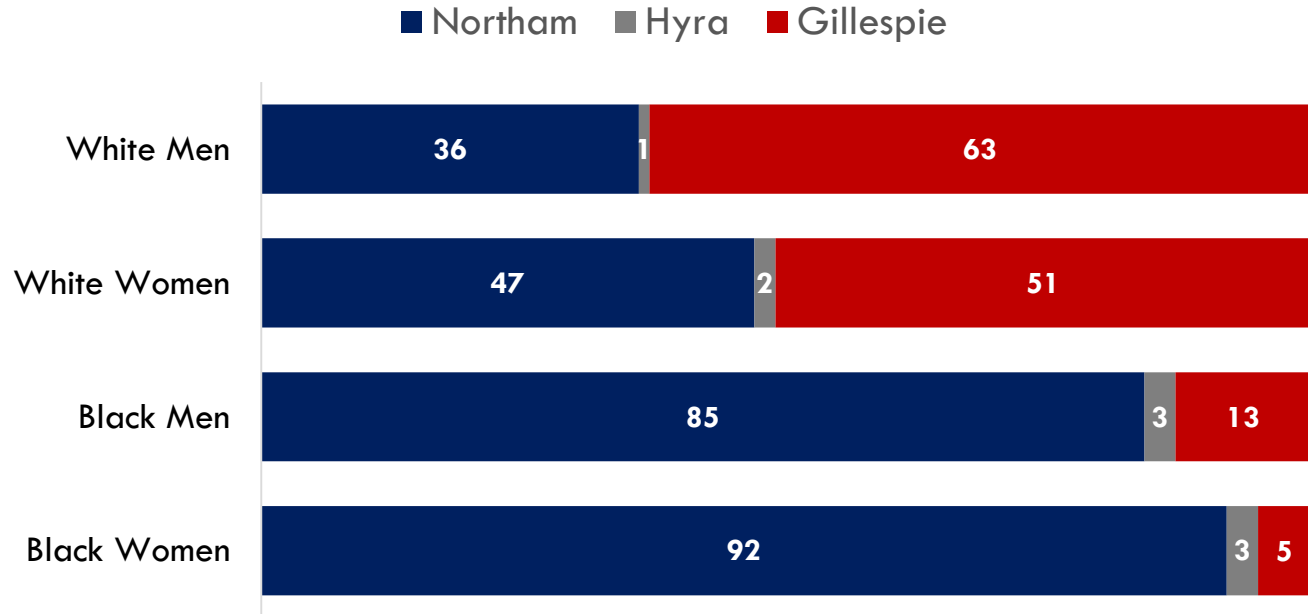


Voting, by race and gender

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In the election for Governor of Virginia, [did you/will you] vote for

[ROTATE:
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Democrat Ralph
Northam] or
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Hyra?



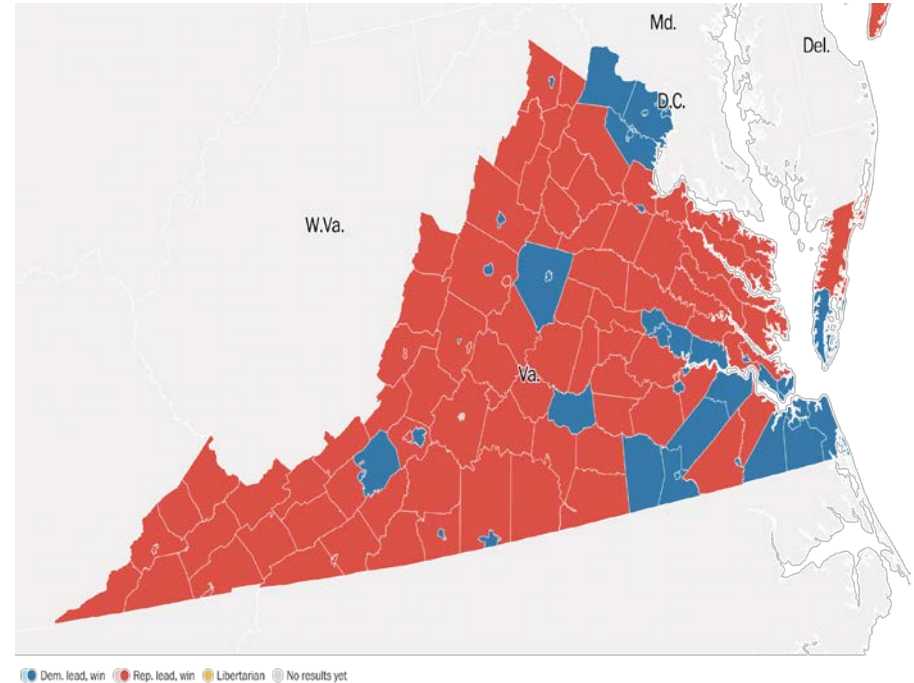
Voting, by county

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Northam won big in counties with large African American populations

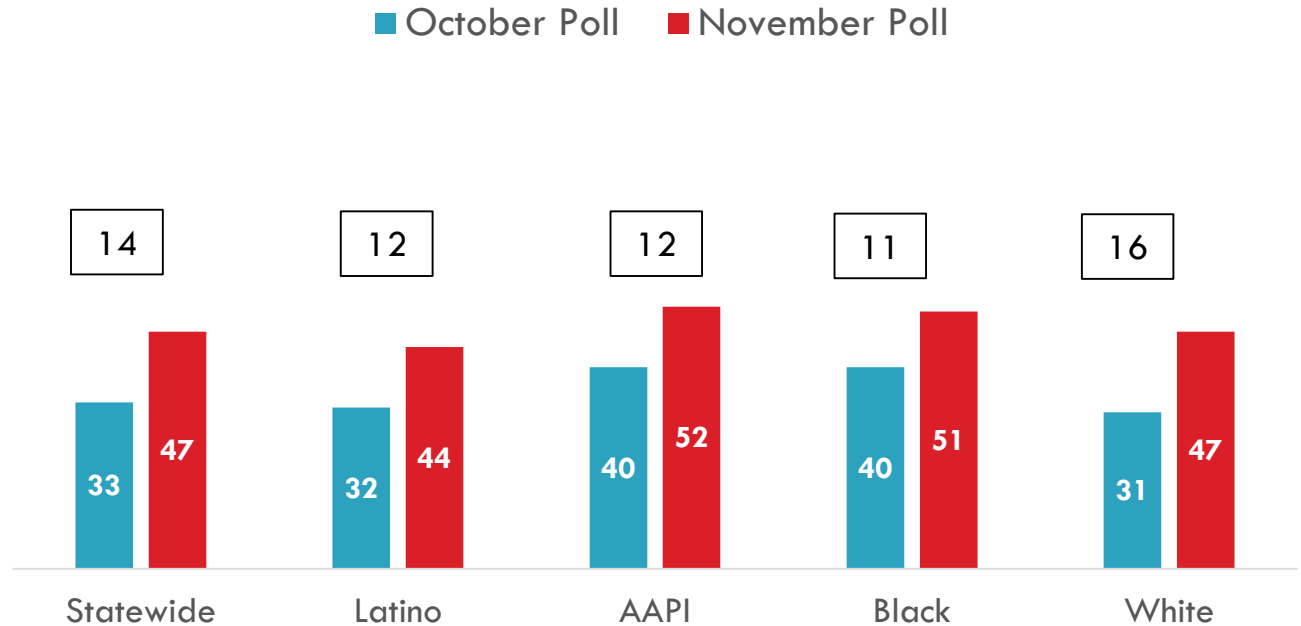
- Petersburg (72%)
- Emporia (63%)
- Greenville (60%)
- Sussex (58%)
- Brunswick (57%)
- Portsmouth (53%)
- Richmond (51%)

Percent Black, based on 2010 Census



Recruitment, by race and ethnicity

Over the past few months, did anyone from a campaign, political party, or community organization ask you to vote, or register you to vote for this election?

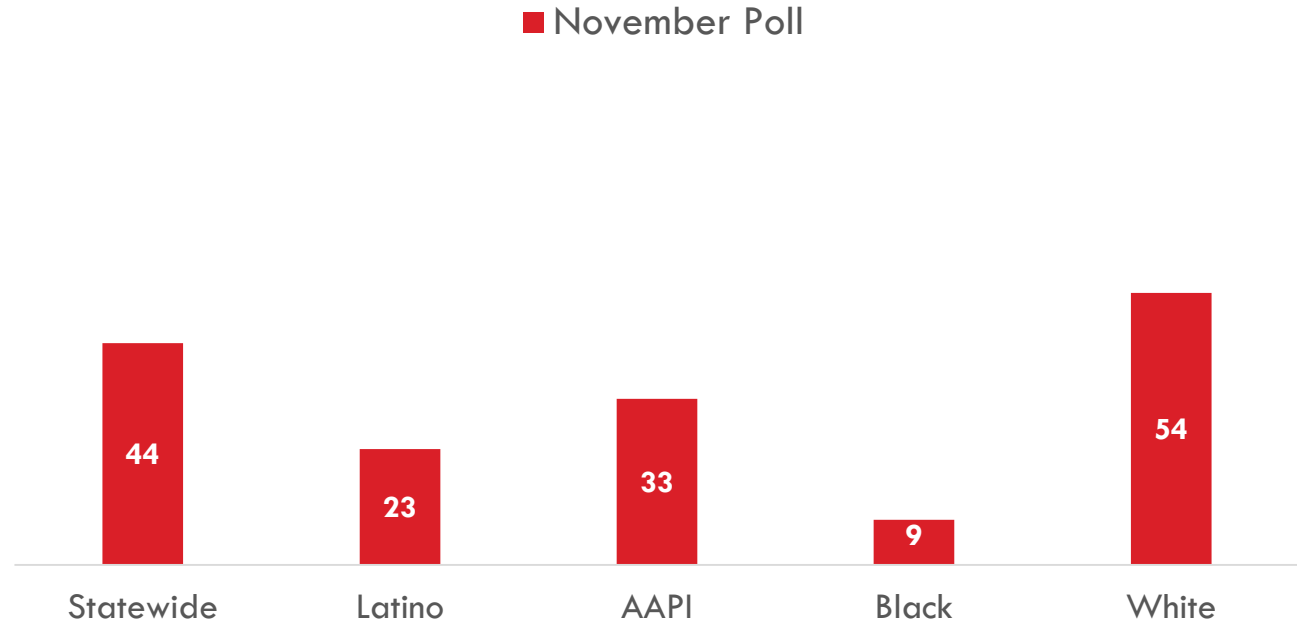


Trump support, by race and ethnicity

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Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the job Donald Trump is doing as President?

(% “somewhat + “strongly” approve)

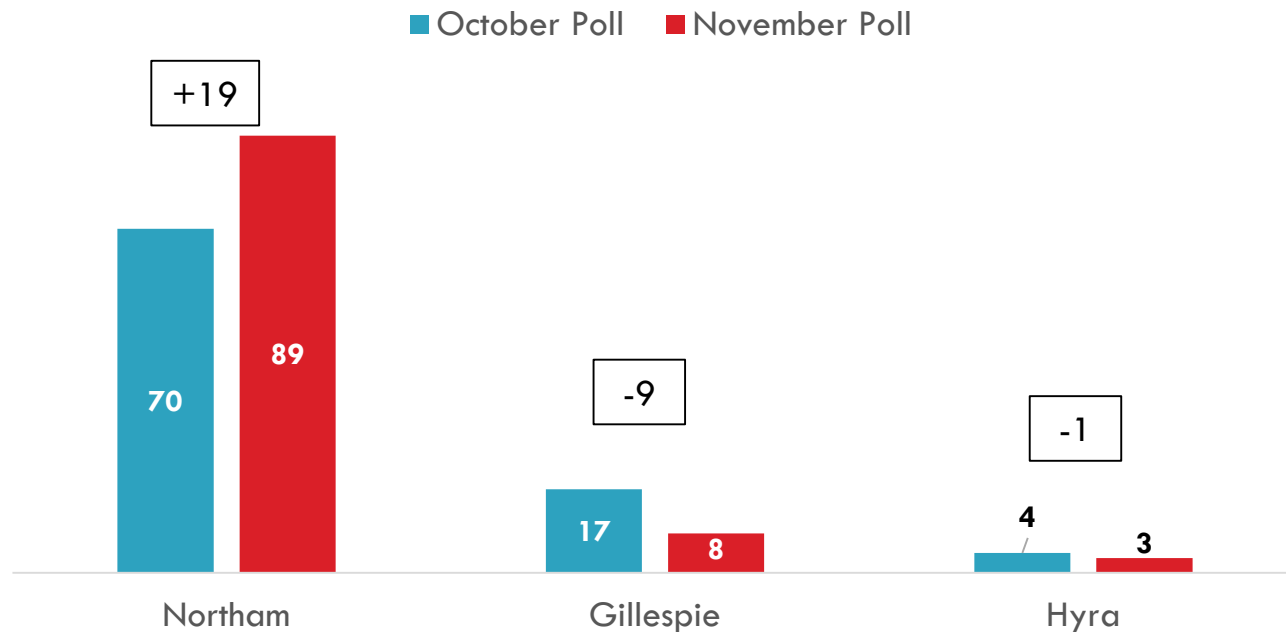


Change in support for Northam/Gillespie

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In the election for Governor of Virginia, [did you/will you] vote for

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Impact of campaign racialization

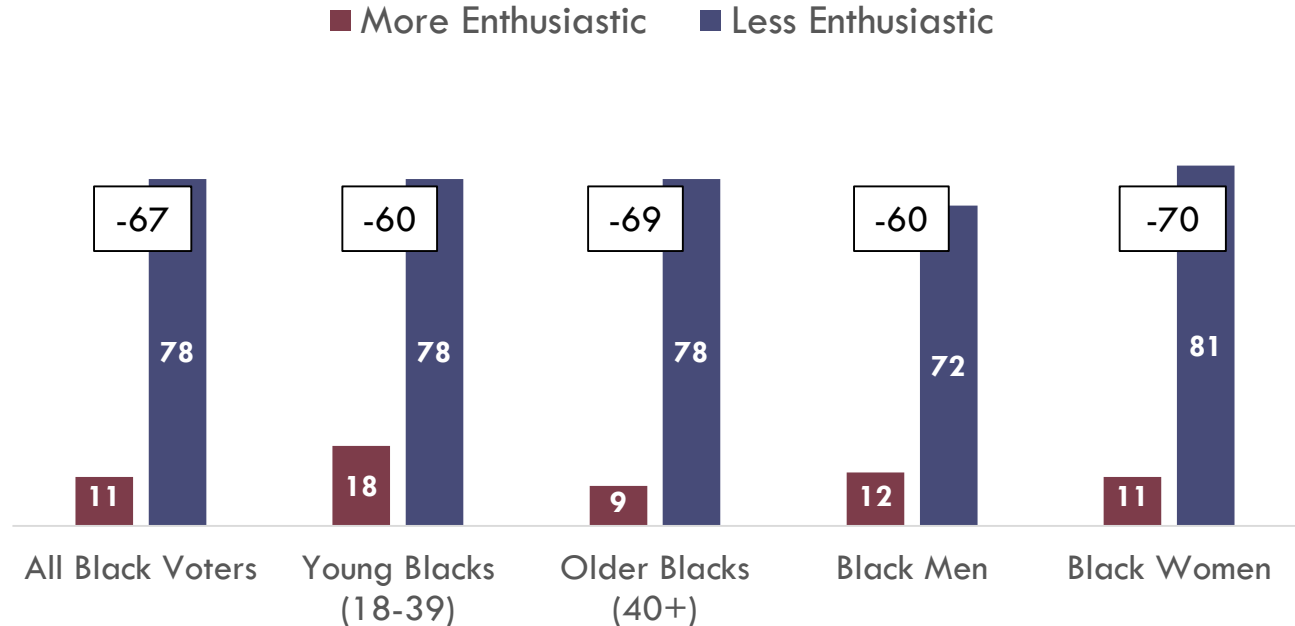
Confederate monuments, Charlottesville protests, MS-13 gangs, and felon disenfranchisement

Overall views re: confederate monuments

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Today, some people argue that we should not have statues honoring people who were racists and were in favor of slavery. Republican candidate Ed Gillespie said he wants Virginia to keep their Confederate Monuments and Statues to honor the Southern Generals in the Civil War.

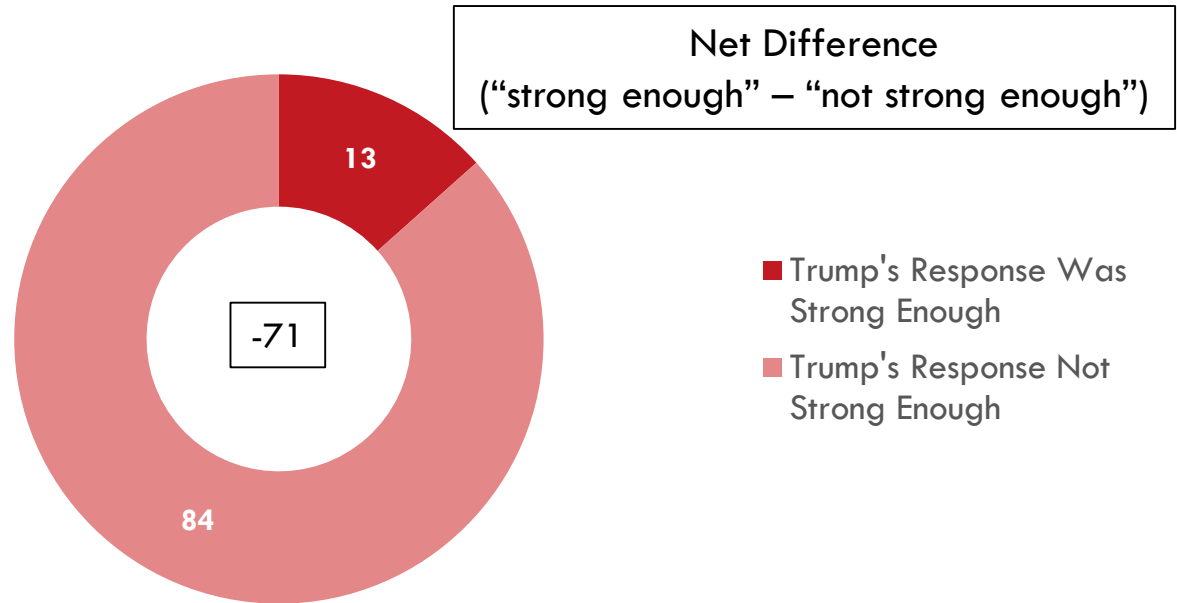
Did these statements make you feel more enthusiastic about Gillespie or less enthusiastic about Gillespie?



Trump's response to Charlottesville (Black Voters)

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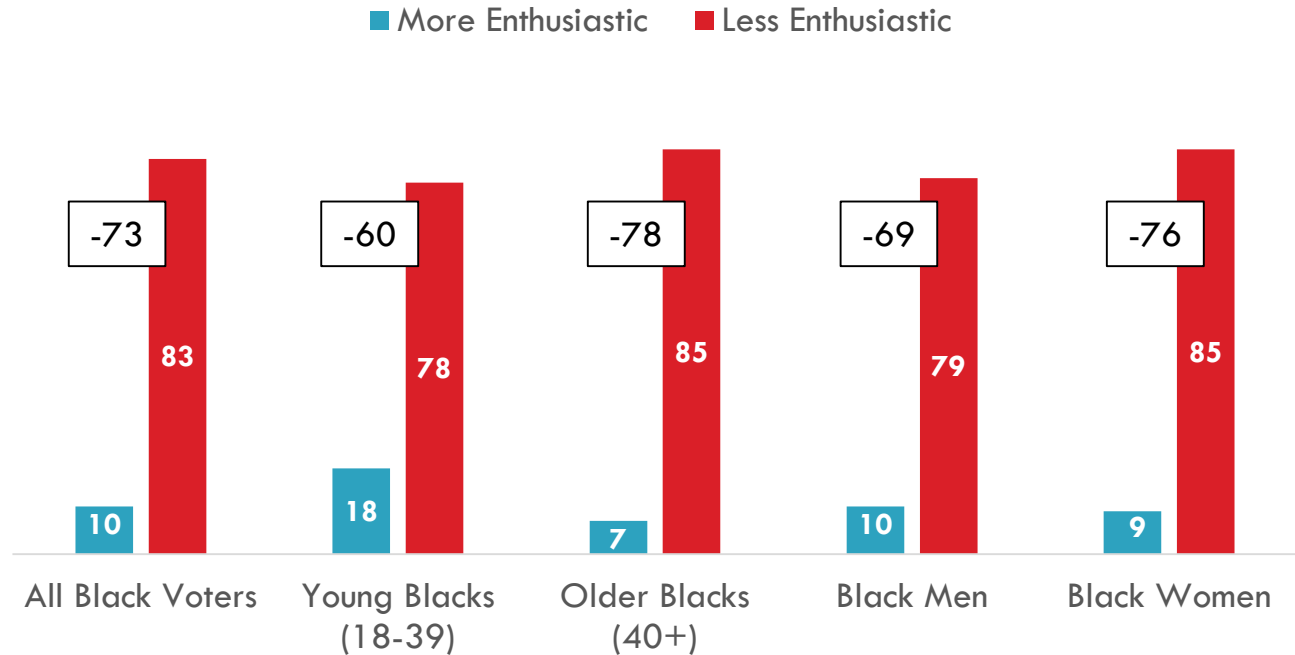
From October poll: From what you have heard about the protests in Charlottesville, Virginia a few weeks ago, do you feel President Trump's response to the violence in Charlottesville has been strong enough, or not strong enough



Gillespie's stance on MS-13 gangs

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During his campaign for governor, Ed Gillespie recently said that cities which try to help immigrants are actually promoting violent gangs. He said illegal immigrants are a dangerous threat to public safety, and that immigrants from Central America are violent gang members who rape and kill people in Virginia. Did these statements make you feel more enthusiastic about Gillespie or less enthusiastic about Gillespie?



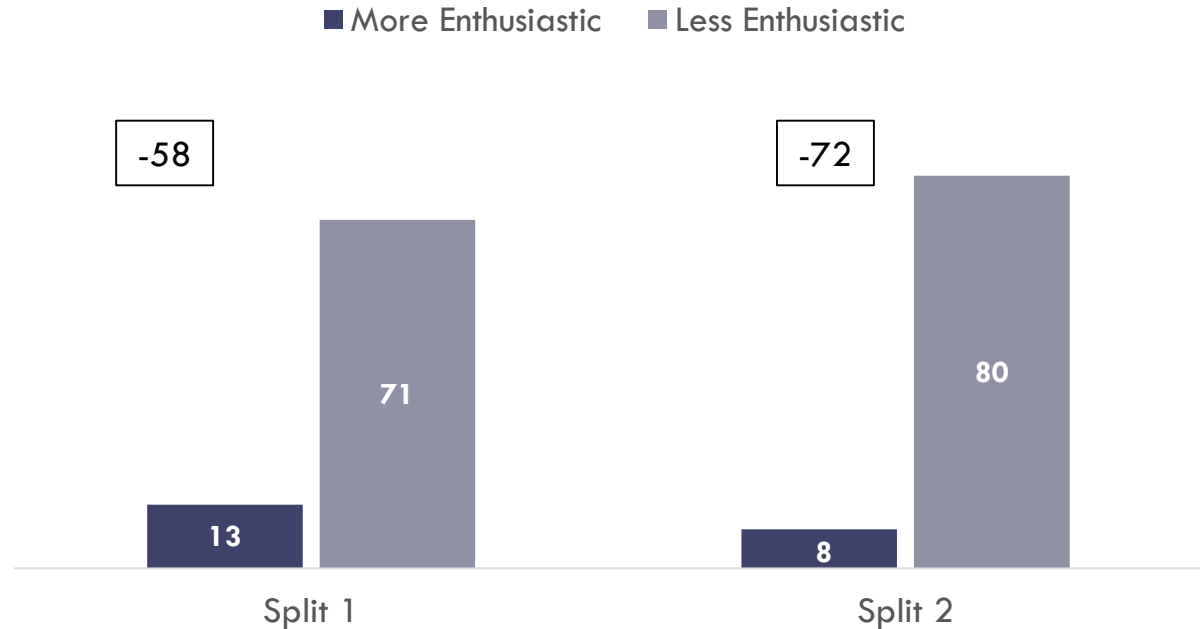
Gillespie's stance on felon disenfranchisement

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Split 1: During the election Ed Gillespie said he would stop efforts by Governor McAuliffe that allow people with former criminal convictions who have fully completed their sentences to have their rights restored so they can vote. The majority of people impacted are African American.

Split 2: ...Gillespie said these are unrepentant, unreformed violent criminals who do not deserve the right to vote.

Did these statements make you feel more enthusiastic about Gillespie or less enthusiastic about Gillespie



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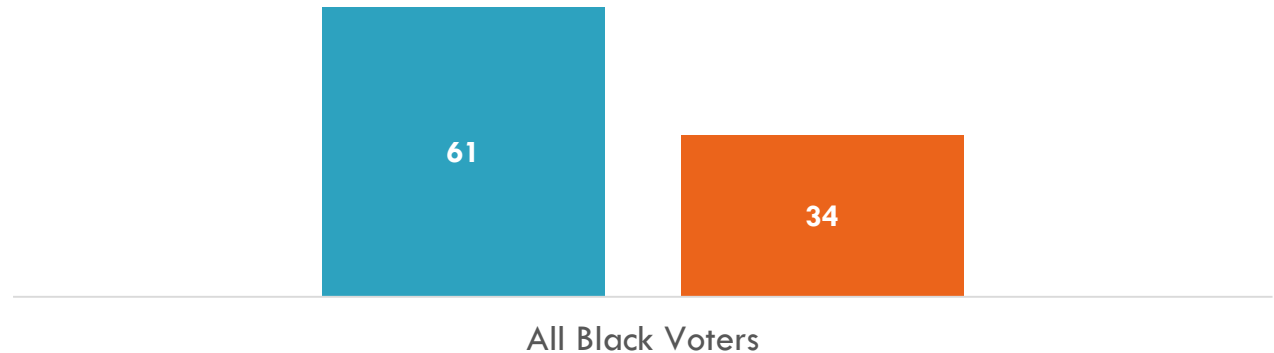
Issue awareness and backlash

Awareness of Gillespie's racialized rhetoric

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From November poll: During the campaign, some people stated that Ed Gillespie was following in Donald Trump's racist and divisive footsteps because he did not strongly condemn the Nazi march in Charlottesville and he supports Confederate monuments. During the campaign, did you hear or see any ads or discussions like this?

■ Yes (Have Seen Ads/Discussions) ■ No (Have Not Seen Ads/Discussions)



Source: Latino Decisions/AARC Election Eve Poll N=1,735 Virginia voters, November 7, 2017

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Awareness of racialized rhetoric by voting

Those who saw ads/discussions about Gillespie's racist rhetoric

	All Black Voters	Young Blacks (18-39)	Older Blacks (40+)	Black Men	Black Women
Gillespie	8	5	8	12	5
Northam	89	90	89	84	93
	81	85	81	72	88

Those who HAVE NOT seen ads about Gillespie's racist rhetoric

	All Black Voters	Young Blacks (18-39)	Older Blacks (40+)	Black Men	Black Women
Gillespie	12	6	13	16	8
Northam	86	94	84	82	88
	74	88	71	66	80
Net Difference	7	-3	10	6	8

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Takeaway points

What we learn from the polling evidence and analyses

Virginia 2017 takeaways for 2018

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- ❑ African Americans turned out as 20% of all voters (corresponding to their portion of the electorate), apparently energized by racialized tone and opposition to Trump.
- ❑ Issues matter: African Americans identified confederate statues and Charlottesville as important issues in our first poll. Then as these issues became central, and voters better understood each candidate's positions, Black voters moved to Northam in our second poll. This appears to be a result of Northam's efforts, Gillespie's ads and advocacy group messages.
- ❑ Trump is remarkably unpopular with Black voters and a candidate who embraces Trump will likely lose Black support while potentially increasing Black turnout.

Virginia 2017 takeaways for 2018

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- ❑ Race-baiting and criminalization will backfire increasing turnout among African Americans, even when Latinos are the targeted population (see MS-13 ads, which were most unpopular among Black voters).
- ❑ Field efforts that exceeded 50% of Black voters saying they were contacted appear to have increased turnout and support.
- ❑ When Northam highlighted Gillespie's racial rhetoric, there was no apparent negative impact on Northam's support among white voters.

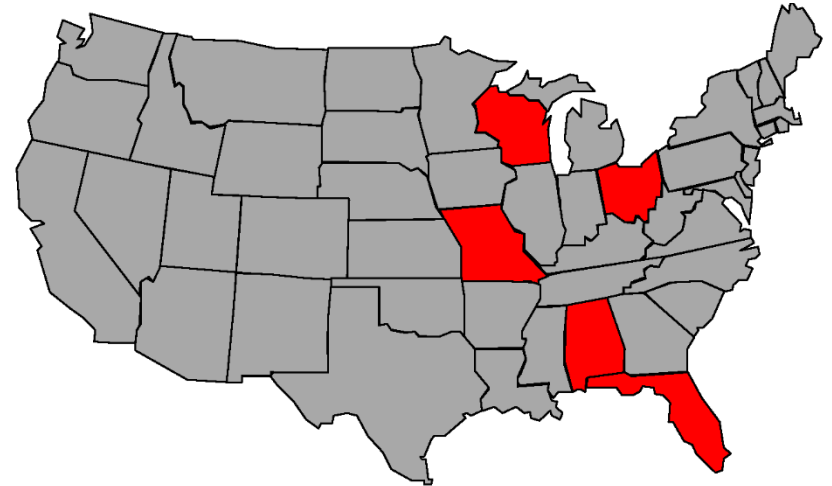
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Future congressional races where Blacks could impact the outcome

Senate races where Black votes could matter

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- AL, FL, MO, OH, and WI are battleground states in which Black voters will be critical to the outcome.
- AL is currently held by a Republican while the rest are currently held by Democrats.



House races where Black votes could matter

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Competitive house districts that are currently held by Republicans

- ❑ **Florida 26** - Clinton won the district by 20 points, and it is 10% Black among eligible voters
- ❑ **Florida 18** - incumbent won by less than 10 in 2016 and it is 13% Black
- ❑ **Texas 7** - Clinton won the district in 2016 and it is 14% Black
- ❑ **Georgia 6** - Clinton won the district in 2016 and it is 15% Black
- ❑ **Texas 32** - Clinton won the district in 2016 and it is 14% Black
- ❑ **North Carolina 13** - incumbent won by 12 points against weak opponent and it is 24% Black
- ❑ **North Carolina 2** - same story as above, it is 19% Black
- ❑ **Virginia 10** - Clinton won by 10 points, incumbent won by 4, it is 8% Black
- ❑ **Nebraska 2** - incumbent won by 1 point, it is 10% Black
- ❑ **Kansas 3** - Clinton won this district in 2016 and it is 9% Black

Thanks to our Contributors

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- **Henry Fernandez**, Fernandez Advisors
- **Roger Vann**, State Voices
- **Tracey Meares**, Yale Law School
- **Ray Block**, AARC, Latino Decisions, & Univ. of KY

Q & A

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