Rubio/DeSantis Lead Their Respective Opponents in US Senate/Governor Races

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & KEY FINDINGS

Pennsylvania-based Susquehanna Polling and Research, a firm profiled in two episodes of CBS’s nationally televised Inside Edition Program for its accuracy in presidential battleground polling, today releases its latest Florida poll testing races for United States Senate and Governor. The poll was conducted Aug. 29 – September 3, 2022, with a sample size of 500 likely voters using live telephone agents; the poll’s margin of error is +/-4.3% at the 95% confidence level.

Key highlights of the poll include:

US SENATE: Rubio Leads Demings by Three Points, But Independents Lean Democrat
Marco Rubio leads his Democratic opponent Val Demings by a narrow 47:44 margin, a tightening of the race when compared with SP&R’s last poll in this race in August ’21 when Rubio lead Demings 50:39 in a hypothetical match up. Eight (8) percent of likely voters remain undecided. Rubio leads among Republicans 96:1, while Demings leads among Democrats 92:3. However, the biggest shift comes from Independents and NPA’s, where Demings leads Rubio 41:32, a reversal from a 42:41 Rubio lead last year. Exit polling¹ shows Rubio won Independents/NPA’s by a 52:42 margin over his last opponent in 2016 (P. Murphy), so Rubio’s loss of support with this critical swing group could cost him the election if he doesn’t shore up this vote. Among Independents Demings has a better image in hard name ID (31:28 favorable/unfavorable) while Rubio is inverted 47:24 (unfavorable/favorable).

GOVERNOR: DeSantis Expands Lead to 4 Points Over Crist; [Undecided] Independents Poised to Break for DeSantis
Incumbent Gov. DeSantis leads C. Crist by a 47:43 margin with 10% undecided, a slight expansion of his lead from his 46:43 margin in our public poll one year ago. DeSantis leads among Republicans 95:1 while Crist leads by a similar margin among Democrats (93:4). Among Independents who have committee to a candidate, Crist leads 36:31, but nearly 1 in 3 (or 32%) are undecided. These undecided Independents could break for DeSantis because 45% of Independents view DeSantis favorably, while they view Crist more unfavorably [than favorably] by a 39:32 margin. According to exit polling in 2018, DeSantis lost Independents to his then-opponent (Gillum) by a 54:44 margin, so if DeSantis overperforms with Independents it could cement his margin of victory.

The Economy and Inflation Remain the Top Issue, But Social Issues/Abortion Ruling Has Energized Democrats
From a list of 7, voters cite the economy/inflation (54%) and abortion (44%) as the top two issues that will most influence their vote this November. The rise of abortion as a top issue is significant because it far exceeds other issues, like crime and public safety (only 16%) or immigration (26%), both issues polling shows Republicans are more trusted on (than Democrats). Moreover, this is the second state polled by SP&R in less than a month where abortion has risen to a top spot, as was the case in recent SP&R’s Pennsylvania poll which also showed abortion in the #2 spot (at 41%). As a result, on the issue of voter enthusiasm, Republicans hold only a 3-point lead over Democrats in the current poll (33:30).

¹ CBS News Exit Poll, 2016
Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is (YOUR FIRST NAME). I am calling on behalf of Susquehanna Polling and Research, a public opinion research firm. May I speak to (name on list) or another registered voter in your household? (If name on list or another registered voter is not available, TERMINATE)

INTRODUCTION: We are conducting a survey of attitudes and opinions concerning some important issues facing Florida today. May we have just 4 to 5 minutes of your time to complete a brief survey?

Great, thank you...

F1: Thinking ahead to the general election on Tuesday, November 8th for United States Senate and Governor, if the election were being held today how would you rate your chances of voting – would you say excellent, good, fair or poor?

1. IF excellent 425 85% PROCEED
2. If good 75 15% PROCEED
3. If fair -- THANK AND TERMINATE
4. If poor -- THANK AND TERMINATE

Q1. From the following list of seven, which two issues will most influence your vote for a candidate in the November elections – (ROTATE ISSUES) ...immigration, inflation and the economy, social issues like abortion rights or gun control, crime and public safety, environment and climate change, taxes and federal spending, health care? (PROBE FOR TWO)

1. Immigration 129 26%
2. Inflation/economy 270 54%
3. Social issues like abortion rights or gun control 218 44%
4. Crime/public safety 78 16%
5. Environment/climate change 103 21%
6. Taxes/federal spending 84 17%
7. Health care 65 13%
8. Other (Do Not Read) 4 01%
9. Not Sure 29 06%

Q2. When you think about the upcoming election in November, would you say you are more excited and enthusiastic about voting this November in comparison to past elections, less excited and enthusiastic or about the same amount?

1. More excited/enthusiastic 164 33% Rep 33% Dem 30% Ind/NPA 36%
2. Less excited/enthusiastic 35 07% 05% 07% 09%
3. About the same amount 286 57% 59% 59% 52%
4. Not Sure 13 03% 02% 03% 03%
Q3. Is your opinion of Marco Rubio favorable, is it unfavorable or do you have no opinion of him?

1. Favorable 203 41%
2. Unfavorable 226 45%
3. No Opinion 69 14%

Q4. Is your opinion of Charlie Crist favorable, is it unfavorable or do you have no opinion of him?

1. Favorable 173 35%
2. Unfavorable 239 48%
3. No Opinion 87 17%

Q5. Is your opinion of Ron DeSantis favorable, is it unfavorable or do you have no opinion of him?

1. Favorable 248 50%
2. Unfavorable 217 43%
3. No Opinion 34 07%

Q6. Is your opinion of Val Demings favorable, is it unfavorable or do you have no opinion of her?

1. Favorable 183 37%
2. Unfavorable 156 31%
3. No Opinion 161 32%

Q7. If the election for United States Senate were being held today, would you vote for Val Demings, the Democrat candidate, or Marco Rubio, the Republican candidate?

1. Demings/Democrat 221 44%
2. Rubio/Republican 235 47%
3. Other 1 00%
4. Not Sure 41 08%
5. Refuse 2 01%
Q8. If the election for Governor were being held today, would you vote for Charlie Crist, the Democrat candidate, or Ron DeSantis, the Republican candidate?

1. Crist/Democrat 218 43%
2. DeSantis/Republican 233 47%
3. Other 0 00%
4. Not Sure 48 10%
5. Refuse 1 00%

Q9. Are you registered to vote as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent or a voter with No Party Affiliation?

1. Republican 203 41%
2. Democrat 187 37%
3. Independent/NPA 107 21%
4. Other 1 00%
5. Refuse 2 01%

Q10. Regardless of how you are registered to vote, do you consider yourself to be more of a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent or unaffiliated voter?

1. Republican 183 37%
2. Democrat 157 31%
3. Independent/Unaffiliated 154 31%
4. Other 5 01%
5. Refuse 1 00%

Q11. What was your age on your last birthday? (Use brackets below)

1. 18-29 49 10%
2. 30-44 70 14%
3. 45-54 96 19%
4. 55-64 110 22%
5. 65 and older 173 35%
6. Refuse 2 00%

Q12. What is your main racial or ethnic background?

1. African American/African/Black 68 14%
2. Asian American/Asian 7 01%
3. Hispanic/Latino (general) 50 10%
4. Hispanic (Cuban/Puerto Rican/Dominican Republic) 24 05%
5. Multiracial/Multiethnic 9 02%
6. Native American/Alaska Native 2 00%
7. Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 1 00%
8. White (Not Latino/Hispanic) 315 63%
9. Race/ethnicity not represented by above categories 10 02%
10. Refuse (Do Not Read) 14 03%
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE SURVEY. HAVE A GOOD DAY.

Gender (by observation):

1. Male 246 49%
2. Female 254 51%

Media market (coded from list):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Market</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pensacola/Panhandle</td>
<td>04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama City</td>
<td>02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainesville</td>
<td>02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacksonville</td>
<td>08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlando/Daytona Beach</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa/St. Pete/Sarasota</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Palm Beach/Ft. Pierce</td>
<td>06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ft. Myers/Naples</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami/Ft. Lauderdale</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vote History Universe (G20, G18, G16 and/or G14 plus new registrants since G20):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote History</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0X</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1X</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2X</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3X</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4X</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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METHODOLOGY, SAMPLE FRAME CONSTRUCTION AND DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

This poll is conducted by Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc² purely for public consumption. Interviews were conducted August 29-September 3, 2022, with 500 registered voters in the state of Florida. Survey respondents are randomly contacted using random selection procedures, and all telephone interviews are conducted using live telephone agents. Respondents were pre-selected for the sample frame based exclusively on households showing prior vote history in at least 1 of 4 (or better) general elections, using G20, G18, G16 and/or G14 as the base universe, plus new registrants since G20. The sample frame was compiled using random telephone sequence methods, and includes both landline and cellular households, purchased from a certified list vendor; all households are pre-screened to eliminate household telephone numbers on the federal Do Not Call registry in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws.

Interviews are closely monitored to ensure a representative sample of registered/likely voters in Florida is achieved based on party registration, geography, racial background, gender, age and other demographics; results are sometimes statistically weighted to account for non-response and/or coverage bias.

The margin of error for a sample size of 500 likely voters is +/- 4.3% at the 95% confidence level.

²Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc. is a nationally recognized polling and focus group company and conducts polling for political, media and corporate clients in numerous states. SP&R’s polling has been featured on many national platforms, including the Rush Limbaugh Radio Show, FOX News Channel, The O’Reilly Factor, the Bill Maher Show and MSNBC. The former internet news service Sunshine State News of Florida referred to SP&R as “one of the most prominent pollsters in the country” for its accurate polling in the 2010 Florida Gubernatorial GOP Primary Election. The website [www.realclearpolitics.com](http://www.realclearpolitics.com) lists SP&R’s Presidential Battleground Polling in PA, WI, NC, FL and AZ as some of the most accurate polling by any survey firm in the 2020 POTUS elections. CBS’s nationally televised Inside Edition program chose SP&R to profile on two separate segments due to its unmatched accuracy in 5 key battleground states in the lead up to the 2020 General Election.