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Tea Party poses little threat to George Allen

Raleigh, N.C. – The Tea Party movement had a string of successes deposing incumbent and establishment Republicans in primaries last year. At the moment, former Virginia Senator George Allen is in strong shape to head off serious opposition.

PPP has tested hypothetical “more conservative challengers” against a number of favorites for the GOP nomination for various offices in several states. Invariably, that generic rightwinger does quite well, even if the more establishment figure is well-liked and well ahead of named opponents. But Allen routs on this question by more than a 2:1 margin. 52% of Virginia’s GOP primary voters would still favor their former senator and governor over this unspecified spoiler, who gets the support of only 25%. The gap closes a bit with the 38% who say they are very conservative, but he still leads 45-31.

Part of the reason: 68% have a favorable view of Allen, and only 15% have a negative opinion. Similarly, 69% think his views are “about right,” as opposed to only 9% seeing him as too liberal and an equal share thinking him too conservative. Maine’s Olympia Snowe is losing to her generic “more conservative challenger” in a recent PPP poll because she is seen as too liberal and too cozy with Democrats, but Allen’s voters evidently do not have concerns about his conservative bona fides.

In a field that includes four potential primary opponents, Allen trounces. A full two-thirds want him to be their nominee to replace Jim Webb next year. 7% favor Del. Bob Marshall, 4% Tea Party leader Jamie Radtke, and 3% each county executive Corey Stewart and attorney David McCormick. Radtke and McCormick are the only announced candidates so far. McCormick’s favorability was not tested, but more than three-quarters of even these hardcore voters are not familiar with Radtke or Marshall, and both are seen slightly negatively. They have room to grow, but Allen starts out in formidable shape.

“The threat of a Tea Party challenge to George Allen has been pretty overblown,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “He’s a lot more immune to that than most establishment Republican politicians are.”

The presidential contest in the state is fairly close, with the top four in a statistical tie. Mike Huckabee leads with 20% to Mitt Romney and Sarah Palin each at 16%, and Newt Gingrich at 14%. Lagging are Ron Paul (8%), Mitch Daniels (7%), and Tim Pawlenty and Haley Barbour (each 4%).

PPP surveyed 400 usual Virginia Republican primary voters from February 24th to 27th. The survey’s margin of error is +/-4.9%. Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify.



Virginia Survey Results

Q1 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Newt Gingrich?

Favorable 54% *Not sure* 17%
Unfavorable 29%

Q2 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Mike Huckabee?

Favorable 68% *Not sure* 12%
Unfavorable 20%

Q3 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?

Favorable 63% *Not sure* 7%
Unfavorable 29%

Q4 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Mitt Romney?

Favorable 58% *Not sure* 19%
Unfavorable 23%

Q5 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of George Allen?

Favorable 68% *Not sure* 18%
Unfavorable 15%

Q6 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Bob Marshall?

Favorable 11% *Not sure* 74%
Unfavorable 14%

Q7 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Jamie Radtke?

Favorable 8% *Not sure* 78%
Unfavorable 13%

Q8 Between George Allen, Bob Marshall, David McCormick, Jamie Radtke, and Corey Stewart who would you most like to see as the Republican candidate for Senate next year?

George Allen 67%
Bob Marshall 7%
David McCormick 3%
Jamie Radtke 4%
Corey Stewart 3%
Someone else/Not sure 18%

Q9 Do you think George Allen is too liberal, too conservative, or about right?

Too liberal 9%
Too conservative 9%
About right 69%
Not sure 12%

Q10 Generally speaking would you prefer that the Republican nominee for Senate next year was George Allen, or someone more conservative than him?

George Allen 52%
Someone more conservative 25%
Not sure 23%





Q11 If the Republican candidates for President in 2012 were Haley Barbour, Mitch Daniels, Newt Gingrich, Mike Huckabee, Sarah Palin, Ron Paul, Tim Pawlenty, and Mitt Romney who would you vote for?

<i>Haley Barbour</i>	4%
<i>Mitch Daniels</i>	7%
<i>Newt Gingrich</i>	14%
<i>Mike Huckabee</i>	20%
<i>Sarah Palin</i>	16%
<i>Ron Paul</i>	8%
<i>Tim Pawlenty</i>	4%
<i>Mitt Romney</i>	16%
<i>Someone else/Undecided</i>	11%

Q12 Would you describe yourself as very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?

<i>Very liberal</i>	2%
<i>Somewhat liberal</i>	3%
<i>Moderate</i>	18%
<i>Somewhat conservative</i>	38%
<i>Very conservative</i>	38%

Q13 If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

<i>Woman</i>	47%
<i>Man</i>	53%

Q14 If you are 18 to 29 years old, press 1. If 30 to 45, press 2. If 46 to 65, press 3. If you are older than 65, press 4.

<i>18 to 29</i>	10%
<i>30 to 45</i>	30%
<i>46 to 65</i>	38%
<i>Older than 65</i>	22%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Gingrich Favorability						
Favorable	54%	-	38%	37%	53%	68%
Unfavorable	29%	90%	62%	41%	31%	14%
Not sure	17%	10%	-	21%	16%	18%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Huckabee Favorability						
Favorable	68%	31%	51%	49%	70%	78%
Unfavorable	20%	40%	49%	29%	17%	15%
Not sure	12%	29%	-	22%	13%	7%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Palin Favorability						
Favorable	63%	25%	50%	37%	63%	80%
Unfavorable	29%	55%	50%	51%	28%	17%
Not sure	7%	20%	-	11%	9%	4%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Romney Favorability						
Favorable	58%	51%	41%	54%	58%	61%
Unfavorable	23%	40%	47%	16%	25%	21%
Not sure	19%	10%	12%	30%	16%	18%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Allen Favorability						
Favorable	68%	25%	56%	55%	70%	75%
Unfavorable	15%	60%	26%	21%	12%	10%
Not sure	18%	15%	18%	23%	18%	15%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Marshall Favorability						
Favorable	11%	20%	29%	3%	10%	14%
Unfavorable	14%	55%	34%	14%	12%	13%
Not sure	74%	25%	37%	83%	78%	73%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Radtke Favorability						
Favorable	8%	35%	14%	4%	8%	8%
Unfavorable	13%	40%	49%	18%	9%	11%
Not sure	78%	25%	37%	78%	83%	80%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
2012 GOP Sen Primary						
George Allen	67%	40%	39%	67%	68%	69%
Bob Marshall	7%	40%	36%	4%	5%	5%
David McCormick	3%	-	18%	2%	2%	2%
Jamie Radtke	4%	20%	-	-	5%	4%
Corey Stewart	3%	-	-	2%	2%	4%
Someone else/Not sure	18%	-	7%	24%	17%	17%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Allen Ideology						
Too liberal	9%	20%	7%	6%	8%	10%
Too conservative	9%	29%	52%	21%	5%	4%
About right	69%	31%	34%	64%	75%	72%
Not sure	12%	20%	7%	10%	13%	13%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Allen or Someone More Conservative?						
George Allen	52%	31%	53%	63%	56%	45%
Someone more conservative	25%	40%	36%	13%	22%	31%
Not sure	23%	29%	11%	24%	22%	25%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
2012 GOP Pres Primary						
Haley Barbour	4%	20%	-	4%	5%	3%
Mitch Daniels	7%	-	40%	2%	6%	8%
Newt Gingrich	14%	20%	14%	9%	11%	19%
Mike Huckabee	20%	15%	23%	26%	20%	16%
Sarah Palin	16%	25%	12%	17%	14%	17%
Ron Paul	8%	-	-	9%	8%	9%
Tim Pawlenty	4%	-	-	3%	6%	4%
Mitt Romney	16%	-	11%	21%	18%	12%
Someone else/Undecided	11%	20%	-	10%	11%	12%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Gingrich Favorability			
Favorable	54%	48%	59%
Unfavorable	29%	29%	28%
Not sure	17%	23%	12%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Huckabee Favorability			
Favorable	68%	70%	66%
Unfavorable	20%	17%	22%
Not sure	12%	13%	12%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Palin Favorability			
Favorable	63%	63%	64%
Unfavorable	29%	28%	31%
Not sure	7%	10%	5%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Romney Favorability			
Favorable	58%	57%	58%
Unfavorable	23%	20%	26%
Not sure	19%	23%	16%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Allen Favorability			
Favorable	68%	62%	73%
Unfavorable	15%	12%	17%
Not sure	18%	26%	10%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Marshall Favorability			
Favorable	11%	9%	13%
Unfavorable	14%	10%	18%
Not sure	74%	80%	69%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Radtke Favorability			
Favorable	8%	5%	12%
Unfavorable	13%	8%	18%
Not sure	78%	87%	71%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
2012 GOP Sen Primary			
George Allen	67%	67%	66%
Bob Marshall	7%	4%	9%
David McCormick	3%	3%	2%
Jamie Radtke	4%	2%	5%
Corey Stewart	3%	2%	3%
Someone else/Not sure	18%	22%	14%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Allen Ideology			
Too liberal	9%	5%	12%
Too conservative	9%	6%	12%
About right	69%	72%	67%
Not sure	12%	16%	9%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Allen or Someone More Conservative?			
George Allen	52%	46%	58%
Someone more conservative	25%	22%	27%
Not sure	23%	32%	15%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
2012 GOP Pres Primary			
Haley Barbour	4%	3%	5%
Mitch Daniels	7%	5%	9%
New t Gingrich	14%	14%	14%
Mike Huckabee	20%	21%	18%
Sarah Palin	16%	15%	17%
Ron Paul	8%	6%	10%
Tim Pawlenty	4%	4%	5%
Mitt Romney	16%	17%	14%
Someone else/Undecided	11%	14%	8%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Gingrich Favorability					
Favorable	54%	33%	52%	55%	65%
Unfavorable	29%	52%	28%	29%	18%
Not sure	17%	14%	20%	16%	18%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Huckabee Favorability					
Favorable	68%	52%	71%	66%	74%
Unfavorable	20%	38%	22%	19%	11%
Not sure	12%	10%	7%	16%	15%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Palin Favorability					
Favorable	63%	52%	61%	69%	61%
Unfavorable	29%	38%	38%	23%	25%
Not sure	7%	10%	1%	7%	15%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Romney Favorability					
Favorable	58%	52%	49%	61%	67%
Unfavorable	23%	24%	27%	22%	19%
Not sure	19%	24%	24%	17%	15%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Allen Favorability					
Favorable	68%	62%	59%	73%	75%
Unfavorable	15%	33%	13%	13%	10%
Not sure	18%	5%	28%	14%	15%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Marshall Favorability					
Favorable	11%	24%	10%	11%	8%
Unfavorable	14%	33%	11%	14%	12%
Not sure	74%	43%	79%	75%	80%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Radtke Favorability					
Favorable	8%	14%	7%	10%	5%
Unfavorable	13%	38%	9%	11%	12%
Not sure	78%	48%	84%	79%	82%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
2012 GOP Sen Primary					
George Allen	67%	48%	65%	65%	80%
Bob Marshall	7%	29%	2%	4%	7%
David McCormick	3%	5%	5%	2%	-
Jamie Radtke	4%	10%	4%	4%	2%
Corey Stewart	3%	-	1%	5%	2%
Someone else/Not sure	18%	10%	23%	20%	10%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Allen Ideology					
Too liberal	9%	5%	7%	12%	7%
Too conservative	9%	24%	7%	8%	8%
About right	69%	57%	68%	68%	79%
Not sure	12%	14%	17%	12%	6%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Allen or Someone More Conservative?					
George Allen	52%	38%	47%	51%	67%
Someone more conservative	25%	43%	16%	29%	20%
Not sure	23%	19%	37%	19%	13%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
2012 GOP Pres Primary					
Haley Barbour	4%	10%	4%	3%	4%
Mitch Daniels	7%	14%	6%	7%	5%
Newt Gingrich	14%	5%	11%	17%	18%
Mike Huckabee	20%	19%	24%	16%	19%
Sarah Palin	16%	19%	13%	19%	12%
Ron Paul	8%	5%	15%	7%	4%
Tim Pawlenty	4%	-	4%	6%	5%
Mitt Romney	16%	19%	13%	13%	23%
Someone else/Undecided	11%	10%	10%	13%	10%

