

Background

- 56 years old, born and raised in VA. He and his wife Suzanne have 4 children
- Currently serving as the 74th governor of Virginia since 2022
- As of September 2021, Youngkin had an estimated net worth of \$440 million according to [Forbes](#). He has used his own money to campaign and donated his entire gubernatorial salary to the Virginia Law Enforcement Assistance Program and the Virginia Veterans Services Foundation
- On the [2020 election](#) – Prior to his victory at the VA Republican convention on May 10 2021, Youngkin acknowledged that Biden was president but would not clearly say whether he thought the president was fairly elected. After the convention, Youngkin started to acknowledge that Biden's election was legitimate.
- When he was [elected Governor](#) he chose Lieutenant Governor Winsome Sears, the first woman of color elected to statewide office in Virginia, and Attorney General Jason Miyares, the first Latino elected to statewide office in the state.

Latest

- [This November 7](#), Virginia will hold off-year elections to determine which political party controls its state legislature in Richmond.
- [Deep-pocketed Republican donors](#) have been trying to recruit Youngkin to run against Trump, but Youngkin has insisted he is not running for President and is focusing on the November Virginia election.
- [September 22, 2023](#)
 - Two Virginia Beach parents are suing to force their local school system to adopt Youngkin's new model policies for the treatment of transgender students. The policies roll back many accommodations for transgender students urged by the previous Democratic administration. Last month, the Virginia Beach School Board narrowly voted down a proposal that would have adopted the Youngkin administration's policies.
- [Sept 11, 2023](#)
 - Gov. Youngkin pardoned a father, Scott Smith, who was arrested during a contentious school board meeting in Loudoun County. Smith was charged after he announced during a 2021 school board meeting that his daughter had been assaulted in a high school restroom by a boy "wearing a skirt." Smith was arrested after he clenched his fist and leaned toward a woman during an argument. In a viral video, deputies dragged him to the ground as he continued struggling and arguing with them.
 - The pardon comes at a time when Youngkin, who had campaigned on parental rights and against transgender issues, is pushing to win Republican control in the State Senate in November.

Transcripts

[The Story With Martha MacCallum | Fox | August 21, 2023](#)

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iq5adHNzhHg>

Martha MacCallum 00:00:03

Some Virginia districts are defying Governor Glenn Youngkin's new gender policy for schools. It requires students to use their birth sex for school bathrooms and activities. But some districts say they will stick with their own guidelines. Prince William County Schools is one of them. They're saying that its regulation known as treatment of transgender and gender non conforming students "is consistent with both federal and state anti discrimination laws and PWCS employees will continue to follow this regulation." Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin joins me now lots to talk to him about today. Governor, good to have you back on the program. What do you say to those who are defying this Virginia legislation that passed and that you put into effect? Is there anything that you can do about it?

Governor Youngkin 00:00:50

Well, let me just first begin with it's the law. And the law is very clear that I issue model policies and local school districts have to adopt policies consistent with the model policies. **And I would add to the fact that this is common sense. We're very straightforwardly saying that first parents are in charge of their children's lives.** The kids don't belong to the state, they belong to parents and to families and they have the ultimate say in decisions that that child is going to make with a parent, not with a bureaucrat. And finally, at the end of the day, this is the these are the exact same school systems that fought us on allowing parents to decide whether children wear a mask or whether sexual explicit materials could be rude removed from the curriculum, or that schools were going to stay shut for a long, long period of time unnecessarily long which resulted in massive learning loss. **And again, parents today in Virginia get to decide whether their child wears a mask and parents in Virginia today get to decide whether sex explicit material should be removed from the curriculum for their child, schools are open and these school districts will in fact comply with the law because it is the law and they don't have a choice.**

Martha MacCallum 00:02:03

It's gonna be interesting to watch how that plays out and whether or not you'll see movement in the school boards in those places. I know there's been a big push to do this politically as well to get on board with what your policies have been popular overall in Virginia for sure. I do want to ask you you're --

Governor Youngkin 00:02:21

Martha, can I just add one thing? And you are seeing parents react. These aren't just Republican parents. These are parents who were frustrated with the fact that the dignity and the safety and the privacy of all children and families is not being ensured by the old policies that pushed parents out of their children's lives. And this is exactly what we saw in Loudoun County, where in fact it it became a true groundswell, I mean, ground zero of the parents movement,

and now we're seeing it in Fairfax County and others. This is a parent moment, not a political moment, and they will in fact comply with the law and stop thinking that they know more than parents.

Martha MacCallum 00:03:03

So let me ask you about the secure the vote effort in Virginia and I know that you also were discussing this with Governor Kemp who is working on a similar program for Republicans to work on getting the vote in early and mail in vote. You're trying to change the way people look at this on your side of the aisle, right.

Governor Youngkin 00:03:21

Martha, we have just essential critical elections this year in Virginia. We have midterms, our entire house, our entire senate is up. We have to hold our house and I want to flip our Senate and this is so important to the future agenda in Virginia, which has been so successful to date, but we can accelerate and go even faster. And so getting Republicans off the sidelines and having them fully engaged in the entirety of the election process through early voting and through absentee voting. And so we launched secureyourvotevirginia.com. We're talking to voters about making a plan to vote early. It worked great in Georgia last year. We brought the team to Virginia. They wrote the first edition, we're writing the second edition, and I think we'll be able to demonstrate next year in 2024 that they can adopt the Virginia Plan and we can win early voting around the country but we're going to do it first in Virginia this year. These are such crucial elections for us. We're going to we're going to hold our house flip our Senate and demonstrate that in a very short 24 months a state that was extremely blue, can stand up can stand up and turn red

Martha MacCallum 00:04:30

Well that has a lot of people as you know paying attention to your future. And I know you have said the last time we spoke as well that you wouldn't consider anything until after that November election. You have things you want to accomplish in Virginia, but this didn't go unnoticed. The VCU poll just a week or so ago shows you beating Joe Biden in a head to head in Virginia in a presidential matchup you're at 44 and he is at 37. This is a state that Joe Biden won by 10 points over Donald Trump. There's also reporting this week that shows that there are major GOP donors who are sort of putting a pause button on their donations because they're waiting to see if you might consider being a late entrant to the 2024 presidential race. What do you say?

Governor Youngkin 00:05:15

Well, first, as you can imagine, it's incredibly humbling. I'm very focused on Virginia and we've got a lot of work to do. And it's also encouraging that people are paying attention to the great progress that we've made with going from near last in job growth to near the top in job growth and standing up for parents and backing law enforcement. And guess what? Common sense conservative policies work and in Virginia, we're showing it real time. We're focused on our November elections. We have got to be successful in holding our house and flipping our Senate. And again, I'm humbled by I'm humbled by the attention, but I'm laser focused. I just left the

campaign event for one of our great Senate candidates and one of our great House candidates. Tara Durant for Senate, Lee Peters for house and swing districts. We've got to get this done.

Martha MacCallum 00:06:03

All right. Well, we'll certainly be covering closely those Virginia elections and seeing how you do thank you so much, Governor Glenn Youngkin in Virginia.

The Ingraham Angle | Fox | August 3, 2023

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuTRJwcc46E>

Laura Ingraham 00:00:02

Joining us now on set Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin. Governor this is your old line of work, how important is that rating system? And what could that portend of things to come?

Governor Youngkin 00:00:12

Well, I think that what it says is that the financial profile of the United States of America is under huge pressure and, and we know that and the American people know that just ask them. Just ask them. I mean, every Virginian when they go to the grocery store, it's a gut punch. It's a gut punch and what they've seen since since the recession, I mean, since the beginning of the pandemic is a 40% increase in the cost of groceries. Every time they go to the gas pump. That's a shock.

Laura Ingraham 00:00:39

But Bidenomics if working Governor we hear speech after speech, media figure after media figure. Why aren't American people feeling this yet? Bidenomics, the jobs created, we have all this stuff all this good stuff happening.

Governor Youngkin 00:00:50

Yeah, you can change the words but you can't change the way people feel when they go in the grocery store. And that's what Virginians see every day. And that's what Americans see every day. And this is the issue, which is when you have credit ratings that are dropped when you have 22 year high in interest rates when you've had inflation that's been run away even his own economist told him this before he let loose, just unparalleled spending. It's hurting all Americans. And I will tell you, I see it all the time. You see folks who just can't make it work anymore. So almost 60 of Americans live paycheck to paycheck because they can't keep up with the cost of living in America and I see it in Virginia every day.

Laura Ingraham 00:01:27

I see it too. And Governor, I know you're leading the charge for something we've been talking about on The Angle now for two and a half years, which is early voting. Make it easier for people to vote absentee or early in person, ahead of the state's crucial off year election which is coming up in November. So Republicans can have like great policies and great answers to this economic disaster we're in. But if we don't invest in getting ballots in people's hands and then

returned like, you know, Mark Zuckerberg and all these other people knew was important than what what is it all for?

Governor Youngkin 00:02:02

We have a huge election in Virginia this year. It's Virginia's midterms. Our House and Senate are all up. I got to hold our house. We got to flip the Senate. And I need Republicans to get in the game fully. And so we launched secureyourvotevirginia.com to make it easy to schedule the vote early. Sign up for our permanent absentee ballot list. Order mailing ballot or just make a plan to vote early but we need everybody to vote. I am so frustrated in watching election returns on election day when the Democrats show up with 1000s of votes through absentee ballots and so, listen I inherited these rules when I came in as governor, we get to choose are we going to compete are we going to show up ballot 1000 votes for race? I'm going to compete and so we're signing up Virginians to vote Republicans please participate

Laura Ingraham 00:02:47

What are the national Republicans doing? You're doing it in Virginia and we've been urging, they all these groups that collect all this money all these think tanks out there, but what are grassroots organizations doing? Do you know?

Governor Youngkin 00:02:57

Well, they've gotten started but I think we're writing the playbook here in Virginia. What we did was we're leveraging what Brian Kemp did in Georgia, they did a great job. We are now doing it in Virginia. We're gonna write the second edition to this early voting playbook. And then hopefully it'll be it'll be the playbook for next year and 2024

Laura Ingraham 00:03:14

Trump indictment, what are your, what's your sense?

Governor Youngkin 00:03:17

Well, I've said before that this this two tiered justice system on display is eroding everyone's trust in our legal system. And the reality is if you're in the opposition party, you're treated one way and if you're a friend of the party in power, then you're treated in a completely different way. And, and this is eroding everyone's faith. I hear it every day in Virginia, we can't trust our justice system right now.

Laura Ingraham 00:03:40

Have you ever considered jumping in? And I can't tell you how many people asked me because they know I know you and so, would Glenn Youngkin ever consider if there was an opening for you to jump in?

Governor Youngkin 00:03:50

Well, I'm so humbled when people say this to me --

Laura Ingraham 00:03:53

Oh come on answer the question

Governor Youngkin 00:03:54

It's, it's well, let me just be honest, I'm so focused on Virginia this year, and we just talked about we have huge elections, and we have a chance in 24 months take a state that was completely blue, statewide led legislature, and in 24 months, turn it Republican and I think we must get this done. We got to hold our House, flip our Senate and we can move forward with policies that you know, Laura, when I came in Virginia was bottom third and job growth, we're top five now. We effected back the blue and crimes coming down. We stood up for parents we made we made government run more efficient

Laura Ingraham 00:04:26

That sounds like a campaign speech governor

Governor Youngkin 00:04:27

Well I think that, I think that people are noticing what we're doing in Virginia and I think that's why we get so much attention.

Laura Ingraham 00:04:31

You're not ruling it out?

Governor Youngkin 00:04:33

Well, I am focused on our elections, and we're going to we're going to hold our House and we're going to flip our Senate and we're going to show folks that in 24 short months, you can take a blue state that was lost and turn it red.

Laura Ingraham 00:04:42

Results. Governor Youngkin, thank you so much for stopping by

[The Source with Kaitlan Collins | CNN | July 20, 2023](#)

COLLINS: Governor, thank you, for being here, for the premiere of the first show.

GOV. GLENN YOUNGKIN (R-VA): Kaitlan, congratulations, on this great show. It's great to be with you, and have a chance to talk about Virginia. We have a lot of great things going on there.

COLLINS: You do have a lot going on, in Virginia. And you recently went 10 for 10, in the contested primaries, in your home state. The candidates that you endorsed all won. Your own election, in Virginia, was also seen as a playbook, for Republicans, across the country.

When you look at Virginia, and you look at 2024, what do you think Republicans need to do, nationally, to win in 2024? What can they learn from you?

YOUNGKIN: Well, I have to look back, at what we learned, in 2021.

First and foremost is we've got to listen to the voters. And I listened to a lot of Virginians, about what issues were most important to them. And I think the same issue set will be presented this year, in our 2023 elections, which we have, in Virginia. Our whole House, our whole Senate is up. That's what I'm really focused on.

And that issue sets really clear. Cost of living has run away from folks. And they're worried about the economy. They're worried about public safety. They're really worried about education. They're worried about behavioral health. I hear it over and over again.

And so, we focused on that in 2021. And we put together a really commonsense platform, in order to address these issues. And when I was hired, we went to work. And we got a lot done, even with a split Legislature. With a House controlled by Republicans, and a Senate controlled by Democrats, commonsense prevailed. We cut taxes. We invested a record amount, in education, a record amount in law enforcement. We went to work on behavioral health. We've made tremendous strides. And that's why I'm confident this year that the voters will be very pleased with the work that we've done, in Virginia.

COLLINS: One other thing voters have been concerned about is abortion, though. It is still top of the mind, for a lot of voters, including in Virginia, and in those elections.

You have said that you've pushed for a 15-week ban, and that it belongs, that it's up to the states. It's a state's issue after, Roe versus Wade was overturned.

But are federal candidates, or candidates running for the 2024 nomination, pushing for a federal ban, are they wrong?

YOUNGKIN: Well, let me just begin with where things stand in Virginia. So, I'm a pro-life governor. That's what Virginians elected. I believe in exceptions in the case of rape and incest, and when the mother's life is at risk.

And just three years ago, in Virginia, the Democrat-controlled Legislature and Governor were pushing for abortion to be legal all the way up through, and including birth. And Virginians viewed that as way too extreme.

And so, when the Roe v. Wade decision came down, I viewed it as a chance, to bring people together, a chance to bring people together, around a bill that would protect life, at 15 weeks, 15 weeks, when a baby can feel pain. And I believe this is the place that we can come together.

What I hear from Virginians over and over again is that abortion all the way up through and including birth is far too extreme, and that they want fewer abortions, not more. And I think we can come together, on this topic. And I think it will be something that is discussed extensively, during this election, in 2023.

COLLINS: It will be. But what about a federal ban?

YOUNGKIN: Well, I don't think --

COLLINS: Are you for that?

[21:05:00]

YOUNGKIN: Yes, I don't think that I -- again, I think that where commonsense brings us together, is around a 15-week bill that protects life, when a child can feel pain.

And this is a really important moment. There's a chance, for us, in Virginia, to really demonstrate leadership, to bring people together, on a topic that has really been a divisive one. And this is why I am focused, on coming together, on a topic that has historically been one that's divided people. Let's unite each other.

COLLINS: You talk about coalescing around 15 weeks.

Governor DeSantis is someone, a fellow governor of yours, a Republican, who signed a six-week ban, in Florida. He is obviously running against Donald Trump, for the nomination. He hasn't done, as people had predicted he would. He hasn't been as big of a challenge to Trump, as people thought he would.

Do you think you would be able to be a challenge to Trump?

YOUNGKIN: Well, as I've said to folks, because I've been asked this question, frequently, one, I'm humbled by it. I've been at this for 18 months. And, gosh, 40 years ago, I was washing dishes, and taking out trash, in Virginia Beach, because I needed a job.

But I think what has been demonstrated is that when someone brings commonsense, to an office, like a Governor in Virginia, and you get a lot done, and we deliver on promises made? People pay attention. And I'm encouraged by that.

Because I think what folks are seeing in Virginia is that commonsense prevails. And when we lower taxes, and streamline regulations, and invest a record amount in education, and stand up for law enforcement, and prioritize behavioral health? Change can happen, and good things come of it. And that's what's encouraging to me.

But as I've said to folks, I am focused on 2023. The entire Legislature is up this year, our House and our Senate. I want to hold our House.

COLLINS: Yes. You got every election (ph).

YOUNGKIN: And I want to turn our Senate.

COLLINS: And I've heard you say that you're humbled by this, when people ask you about this. But you also, you've never ruled it out?

YOUNGKIN: Well, I think what is most encouraging is the frequency that people are asking, because of what's going on in Virginia. And what I've constantly said is, and you just said that the Iowa -- the Iowa caucus has been pulled forward, into January. I'm not in Iowa. I'm not at this, actually (ph) --

COLLINS: Will you be in January?

YOUNGKIN: I am going to be in Virginia.

COLLINS: In January, you will not be an Iowa?

YOUNGKIN: Well, this is where you have to be. And I don't think I'll be in Iowa. I think I'm going to be in Virginia. We're going to do everything we can, to hold our House, flip our Senate, and lead. And this is what I was hired to do. And that's what's exciting to me.

COLLINS: So, are you going to rule it out?

YOUNGKIN: Well, again, I'm going to repeat to you one more time. And you've asked this, in very creative ways. And I've had it, from many folks, and I've said many, many times that I'm focused on Virginia. And this is one of these moments, where we, in Virginia, can demonstrate that with commonsense, with collaboration, with strong principles.

Listen, I believe what I believe, and I think I've been very clear that we're going to lower taxes, and we are going to streamline regulations. We're going to back parents. We're going to reestablish excellence in education. We're going to fund law enforcement. We're going to fix behavioral health.

These are the issues that Virginians have been focused on. And what we've been able to do, Kaitlan, is I think, deliver. And I'm incredibly humbled by the fact that there's been some focus on what we're doing. And that has translated into some national interest.

COLLINS: Well, in Virginia --

YOUNGKIN: But I've said over and over again, I'm focused on the Commonwealth.

COLLINS: Virginia is often also a bellwether for national politics. People have looked at your run. You also did put out a campaign a video not that long ago that a lot of people thought looked like a presidential campaign video.

But, when you talk about what Republicans need to do to win back the White House? You're talking about mirroring what you're doing. Do you think Donald Trump is the best option, for Republicans, right now? Is he the best your party has to offer?

YOUNGKIN: Well, here's what I believe that we will nominate a candidate, who will win. I believe that it's time for --

COLLINS: You think whoever the Republican candidate is will defeat Biden?

YOUNGKIN: I think we -- I think it's time, for a Republican leader. I think what's been demonstrated, from the Biden White House is that foreign policy weakness, and a disarray in the economy, and a lack -- full lack of understanding, about how all the pieces fit together, has resulted in America struggling.

Inflation is the biggest issue, on voters' minds. Crime is the second biggest issue, on voters' minds. And third is education. And I see it and hear it every day, from Virginians. And there's nothing that's come out of the Biden White House, to address these issues, these most important kitchen-table issues.

And so, I think, this is a great opportunity, for commonsense, conservative values, to be reflected, in a candidate. I'm going to back whoever the candidate is. And I think it's a great chance, for Republicans, to lead again.

COLLINS: OK. So, even if that candidate is Donald Trump. When he was indicted recently, in the documents investigation, you posted a tweet, saying that the charges were unprecedented. You called it a sad day, for the country. And you referred to a two-tiered justice system.

But now that you've seen the indictment, we've heard Trump in his own words, in that audio tape, do you still not think that he should be held accountable, for what is being alleged in that indictment?

YOUNGKIN: Well, let me back up, and just be clear that what we've seen happen, to the former President, is inconsistent with what we've seen happen, in other circumstances, with elected officials.

COLLINS: Like which one?

YOUNGKIN: And I think this is what folks are concerned about. There's plenty of allegations against the current Biden White House, and things that have gone on there.

[21:10:00]

And, in Virginia, one of the things that we saw was that, parents, standing up, at school board meetings, and demanding transparency, and accountability, in their children's education, was

met by the Justice Department, of the United States, with accusations, of being terrorists. That was alleged by one of the teachers' unions.

I mean, this is the inconsistency that Virginians and, I believe, Americans see, and it's something that undermines people's trust in the system.

COLLINS: But you can have concerns about that. But the allegations, against Trump, are completely different than that. He was the Commander-in-Chief. They say that he took documents related to national security, our allies' weaknesses, U.S. weaknesses. I mean, he's on this audiotape, talking about the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Do you have any issue, after you've seen that indictment and heard that audio?

YOUNGKIN: Kaitlan, I think the big concern, from people, is the fact that this seems to be a differential treatment, than what other elected officials are receiving.

And, I'll repeat it again. One thing about justice is that it should be applied equally. And again, with the home Virginia view, I was stunned that parents were being pursued, by the Justice Department, for showing up, at school board meetings. This doesn't comport. And therefore, I do think that this is what causes people, to lose trust, in our justice system.

COLLINS: One more question on this, because you talk about regular people, and how they would be treated. If a regular person took home classified documents, as we've seen, just happened to a Kansas City woman, they're sentenced to prison.

YOUNGKIN: Yes. And again --

COLLINS: They're being treated differently.

YOUNGKIN: And again --

COLLINS: Trump was given a lot of leeway, by the Justice Department, here, to return these documents.

YOUNGKIN: As you continue to press on this topic, let me just be clear. It is the difference in approach that happens to different people that causes concern, and a lack of faith, in the system.

As long as people are treated consistently, one elected official, and another elected official, then I think that trust is actually furthered. And when they're treated differently, it's undermined.

COLLINS: Yes, I just think the Pence situation, the Biden situation, and the Trump situation, they're all different, in the sense of how they pushed the documents, or returned the documents, and how they participated.

YOUNGKIN: But I don't think that the American people will see it that way, Kaitlan.

COLLINS: But is that because they're not given the accurate information? I mean, Trump fought, a year and a half subpoena from the Justice Department, on this. He misled his own attorneys, according to this indictment, and had an aide moving boxes, to essentially evade them.

YOUNGKIN: Again, what we're learning as the curtain is pulled back, on a variety of topics, is that not all elected officials have been treated the same. And I think this is where people are scratching their heads. Why aren't all elected officials treated the same here? And, in the case, again, of Virginia parents, or the Biden administration, people are asking, that's the basic question.

COLLINS: Let me ask you another question, about Virginia, because I know mental health, in your state, and how that's dealt with. It's really important to you.

And we were looking at the numbers on this. Mental Health America ranked your state, 48th, in the nation, this year --

YOUNGKIN: Right.

COLLINS: -- when it came to what kids are dealing with, and how they are treated, with their issues. Why is your State ranked so low? And what are you doing to change that?

YOUNGKIN: Yes, it's such a great question. And it is such a huge problem.

First of all, that data is based on 2019 and 2020, comparative data. And so, the first thing is that Virginia was ranked near the bottom, before the pandemic. And then, as you come through the pandemic, it only got worse. And our behavioral health system is being overwhelmed. And that's why I made it a top priority, to transform it.

And we launched, this past December, a complete transformation, of our behavioral health system. It's called Right Help Right Now, so that we can fundamentally build a system that can meet people, where they are. It has to extend to children, particularly because we have a big gap to close.

This is a top priority. You can't have the best State to live, work and raise a family, if you don't have a healthy state. And we have to treat mental health, and health-health with equal attention.

COLLINS: Yes, it's a really important issue. I know it's important to your administration.

Governor Youngkin, thank you for joining us, here tonight.

YOUNGKIN: Great. Thank you so much. Congratulations, again, on your show.

COLLINS: Thank you.

NBC News Exclusive | January 12, 2023

20:56:24 GG: So, Governor, thank you so much for being here. You spent you just spent the past hour talking about all the accomplishments that you've done over the past year for the people of Virginia. You mentioned taxes, tax cuts. You've mentioned the law enforcement and school funding. You mentioned the— grocery tax, which was really big for you guys. What's the single biggest accomplishment you've done for the people of Virginia in the last year?

20:56:47 YOUNGKIN: Well, thank you for spending some time with me. And that's a little bit like asking me which one of my children I love most. We had a tremendous first year and we came into office, I think with real momentum but also **very clear priorities, to get taxes down**. Over \$4 billion in tax cuts, and to fund law enforcement and to get law enforcement moving in the right direction. \$400 million in in compensation and training and equipment, and to really begin the march to put our schools back where they belong, as the best in the country. And they've deteriorated and unfortunately previous administrations had lowered expectations, purposely, in our schools. And sadly, our children met those low expectations. And so we had to fund teachers, and fund construction and introduce lab schools into Virginia. And it was a huge agenda. And then finally, we wanted to empower parents, and I believe that our bill that was accomplished on a bipartisan basis that gave parents the ability to decide whether their child wears a mask or not to school, was really important. What it showed is that one parent's rights matter. And second of all, that Republicans and Democrats can come together and get something done. That's really important to Virginians, all Virginians.

20:58:48 GG: So you didn't get everything you want to get done in this first year. I think the gas tax you tried three different times on that. You wanted more school resource officers in schools, as well, which I don't think you got the numbers you wanted. But what over the next year, I know you just spent an hour talking about this, but what over the next year is sort of priority number one to handle, over everything else.

20:58:18 YOUNGKIN: Well, let me let me start by saying **I think we got most of everything else we wanted to get done**. And we did get a substantial investment in school resource officers, which is so important. I mean we've just seen tragic violence in an elementary school in Newport News, and the funding for school resource officers is so important. And the gas tax was a frustrating one. I'm not sure why Senate Democrats didn't want to do that. Gosh, the Democrats in Washington did, but the ones in Virginia didn't, and it was a great chance for us to give Virginians a break. **But as we look into 2023, I do think that because of our accomplishments in 2022, it sets the bar high. And so I think there's a chance for us to, again, deliver another big tax step. Another reduction in tax burden for Virginians, and we're gonna have a \$3.6 billion surplus and we can take a billion of that and cut taxes again.** To cut individual rates and business rates to deliver further tax cuts for our veterans, and to increase our

standard deduction again, which is the most efficient way to get tax cuts to all people. We'll have 47,000 Virginians if we are able to get this done, between last year and this year, whose full tax burden has been extinguished. I think this is effective way for us to reduce the cost of living in Virginia. One of our big items that we're focused on is our behavioral health system. And we are in a behavioral health crisis, not just here in Virginia. But around the nation. And I felt that there is a chance for us to embark on comprehensive fundamental change. And we brought to our legislators a transformative plan to invest in capacity, substantial capacity across the Commonwealth. In our schools, in facilities with with mobile resources, so that we can get help to Virginians when they need it. And so I've asked our general assembly to Bank a \$230 million plan to increase capacity across the Commonwealth and take a big step in delivering the kind of behavioral health support that Virginians need when they need it.

21:00:23 GG: And you mentioned you mentioned that plan, you mentioned the shootings. There have been a number of shootings across the Commonwealth this year, you did introduce the hundreds of millions of dollars towards mental health that would go into crisis— mobile crisis centers, it would go to telehealth, but it wouldn't necessarily stop a six year old from walking into a school and shooting their teacher. What plan do you have to prevent something like that from happening?

21:00:43 YOUNGKIN: That was such a shocking moment. And I think it brought everybody, not just across the Commonwealth, but across the nation to our knees. To think about six year old bringing a gun, taking a gun from their parents house. And shooting a teacher. I do think we have to stop for a minute and and recognize the bravery that was shown in that classroom. This teacher, she she's put her life in jeopardy in order to protect students. And then she went out and called for help. It was an extraordinary moment. I know she's doing much better. We pray for her every day that she can get back in the classroom. The reality is that Virginia has some of the toughest gun laws in the nation. I think we have a real challenge in our behavioral health system to bring the kinds of services that can support all Virginians, and we also need to recognize that we don't actually use the gun laws on the books, and in fact we need to prosecute. And when there's a crime committed with a gun, we in fact need to prosecute.

21:01:47 GG: Are you suggesting prosecuting a six year old?

21:01:48 YOUNGKIN: Well I—We've never dealt with this. And so the six year old circumstance is really something so out of the norm. I think we've got a big investigation going on right now, to understand exactly what happened. How did this child get this gun? What was going on in their home life? Where, Where, Where was this child from telling people what they were going to what they — what he was going to do? There's a lot to understand here. The reality is that this kind of incident is so rare, so rare, we've had only a handful of incidents even remote to this, remotely similar to this— with with potential assailants or accused assailant under the age of 10. But but someone under the age of six is something new for us to deal with.

21:02:29 GG: So all eyes were on Virginia Beach area last night in that special election for the state senate. It really felt like abortion - You said this too yourself — abortion really very much was on the ballot...

YOUNGKIN: I'm not sure I said that....I don't think I—

21:02:47 GG: Well, but the Democrat did win in that race. And you were on the campaign trail across the country in the midterms and you were talking to voters and you were endorsing candidates. Do you agree with people like Donald Trump who say abortion really was part of the reason the GOP didn't do as well as you all hoped in the midterms?

21:03:04 YOUNGKIN: Well, let me just back up. First of all, we had a very good man running in Kevin Adams, and I'm sorry he didn't win. We worked hard. Kevin stood strong for the values that I think really represent Virginians. A veteran, a small business owner standing up for cutting taxes and backing police and making sure we stand up for veterans. It's a really tough district. We knew it going in. And it's been a district that swung back and forth, and I'm disappointed we lost.

21:03:34 YOUNGKIN: I think that what we see in elections is that we have got to demonstrate two things. One that we're going to get things done and two, we have to continue to connect to voters. We have to bring more people in. And that's the way that we won our election in 2021. When I came from a business career where I had left my job that I thought was my dream job, in order to run for Governor, it was clear that we had to run a different kind of campaign. A campaign that brought people in, that that grew Republicans as opposed to push them away and and that we had to focus on the issues that were most important to Virginians. And that's exactly what we did. Tax cuts, schools, law enforcement, making government work. And I think that's why Virginians are so pleased with what we're doing right now. Because that's in fact, what we delivered. We're on the right path, Virginians see the transformation and they want more of it, and they want it faster.

21:04:30 GG: But nationally, why do you think what's happening with the Republican Party is happening, and what happened, happened?

21:04:33 YOUNGKIN: Well, I'm not sure what you mean by what happened happened. What we saw on the 2022 midterms is that first of all, incumbents won. It was very hard to be unseated as an incumbent. In fact, it's the first year in over 100 years that every Senate— every Senate race was won by an incumbent. I think there's a small group of of persuadable or independent voters, and I think that they vote on who the candidate is. And I think our job as Republicans is to continue to demonstrate that there's room in our party for everyone. We do believe in low taxes and small business and strong defense and standing up for law enforcement. And by the way, educational excellence. We should be the party of education. I think that's what we've proven in Virginia. And I think that's why so many people are paying attention to what's happening in Virginia, is because we've demonstrated that we can lead, that we can bring

people together and even when we have a house that's controlled by Republicans and a Senate that's controlled by Democrats, we can get an extraordinary amount done.

21:05:35 GG: I'm getting the wrap here so one more question for you. I know you're focused on the people of Virginia, and you're focused on being the best Governor you can be. You've said both of those things many times. But when you hear the idea that people have you on a shortlist for 2024. Are you humbled by that? Are you like, Absolutely not, I would never...Where do you sort of stand on that?

21:05:53 YOUNGKIN: I am overwhelmingly humbled by it. When I was 15, 41 years ago, I was taking out trash and washing dishes and I never dreamed I would have the business career that I had. Nor would I have ever dreamed that I wouldn't be sitting here with you as the 74th Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia. I'm so focused on the Commonwealth. And I do think that people are paying attention to what we're doing, because we in fact took a state that was blue, and won as a Republican. And we are delivering. We're delivering with a split legislature. We're bringing people together and getting things done.

21:06:32 YOUNGKIN: My sense is that's what Americans are looking for. That's what Virginians are looking for. That's why I'm so focused on this year. This legislative session is so important. We have a chance to cut taxes again, another billion dollars, to invest further in education, to invest further in law enforcement, to back a behavioral health transformation that I hope will lead the nation, in how we need to take care of Virginians and Americans with the help they need when they need it.

21:07:01 GG: So you're not ruling out a run for president?

21:07:02 YOUNGKIN: I am so focused on Virginia, and Virginians hired me to do a job and I so am enjoying doing it. I feel every day that that there's folks who are counting on us and I'm looking forward to delivering for them.

21:07:17 GG: Thank you Governor. Appreciate it.

YOUNGKIN: Thank you.

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GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, hello, everybody. Can't just sit there. Hello. Nice to see everybody. It is so much fun to be back in this environment, so thank you for inviting me.

YLAN MUI: Thank you so much for being here. I'm so glad you're bringing the energy. You don't need a cup of coffee, they can just listen to our conversation. I want to get started with, first, a disclosure, which is, like Tyler, I live in Virginia. I'm a Virginia resident. I'm a Virginia voter.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: There is a trend here, by the way.

YLAN MUI: There is a trend here. Virginia produces great journalists, that's number one. But that means I have a lot of questions for you. So the first thing I want to ask you about, of course, is the political landscape and what your expectation is for what happens in November. Because you've been on the campaign trail, not just in the state of Virginia. You've been in Georgia, you've been in Maine, you've been in Nevada, you're going to go to Arizona. So what is the vibe like?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Oregon.

YLAN MUI: Oregon. I missed a couple. You've been busy.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Kansas.

YLAN MUI: What's the vibe? What's the vibe out there?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: So what I learned last year -- by the way, I want to reiterate, thank you again for having me. It is so much fun to be here. This is old home for me, and to get a chance to come back and be with all of you and talk about Alpha, that's pretty cool. But what I learned last year, I think is something that's repeating itself this year. What I learned last year was that there are real kitchen-table concerns every night, in Virginia families, in American families, concerns about inflation and what's going to happen to their job and can they make ends meet and to see grocery prices going through the roof and to see utility bills and college tuition and all the things that families worry about. That is such a big deal. Second of all is what's happened in the safety of my community. Violent crime's been on the rise across the country. And then third is what is happening in my school, and is my child getting the education that I want them to get that they need in order to be prepared for life. **These kitchen table issues have common-sense solutions. And, in fact, what we learned last year was it wasn't about Republicans versus Democrats; it was about these common-sense solutions to these issues that really are concerning Virginians.** I believe that that package of common-sense solutions is the same set of solutions that need to be delivered this year in the election, and, oh, by the way, after people are elected into office. And so by the way, how are we dealing with inflation? Are we printing more money? Are we, in fact, pretending it's not there? Are we putting brakes on the economy that make us feel like we're in the car with a 16-year-old driver? Or are we, in fact, trying to manage those in a way that does the best we can to in fact have a soft landing, maybe even a touch-and-go? Are we going to make sure that folks feel confident about the fact that their job will be there and not go away; that, in fact, their neighborhoods are safer than they were last year and that their schools are schools they can trust? I see these issues, and I hear it when I travel around the Commonwealth of Virginia. And I've had a chance to help governors campaign around the country. The same issues are on the ballot this year, and I expect that nationally they are going to react the same way they did in Virginia last year.

YLAN MUI: Which is vote Republican, as -- that's where I think you are headed here.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: I believe they will.

YLAN MUI: Do you think Republicans are going to capture control of the House, the Senate or both?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Let's just begin with governors. That's where I've been spending so much of my time. Then I'll get to the House. Because in Virginia we have specific House races at play, we don't have any Senate races this year. First of all, governors. What states have seen and America has seen over the course of managing through the pandemic and coming out of the pandemic is that **states that were led by Republican governors have substantially outperformed states that were run by Democrat governors. The data is so clear.** Out of the top 12 states in unemployment, 10 of them have Republican governors. Job recovery has been faster in Republican-led states than Democrat-led states. Learning loss has been higher in states that were closed longer. And the states that were closed longer were run by states with -- were run by Democrat governors. And so the performance of states with Republican governors has just been better. **And so I believe that every state should have a Republican Governor.**

[LAUGHTER]

And, therefore, part of what I've been, I think, trying to do is help candidates in states that look a lot like Virginia and help them win. The reality, of course, is that the Governor ends up being the top of the ticket in most elections, and the Governor's outcome tends to influence over 85 percent of the time what happens down ballot. So I do believe that in a lot of these states that are viewed as swing states for the House and for the Senate, we have really strong gubernatorial candidates. So I feel pretty good about what's going to happen in Georgia, for example. And **Governor Kemp is an extraordinary governor. He's done a great job. I feel very confident about what's going to happen in Nevada because I do believe that Sheriff Lombardo is an extraordinary candidate.**

YLAN MUI: What about Arizona?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: **I think Arizona is breaking right now towards a Republican win. Governor Ducey did an extraordinary job.** When you look back at what Arizona has accomplished with reducing tax rates and accomplishing real choice in public schools, I think what people in Arizona are seeing is they want a Republican governor because they want to continue those policies. And so people see that coming.

YLAN MUI: But Governor Ducey is not the nominee who is running now to head the state, it's Kari Lake, and there's been some concern that she represents a different wing of the Republican party. You said that you think every state should have a Republican governor, but I think there's a lot of question right now about what is a Republican. Is a Republican someone who, as you have said, believes that Joe Biden won the election, or can a Republican also be

someone like Kari Lake who you're going to campaign with, who believes the election was rigged?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: I believe that, in fact, they're all Republicans. And what we learned last year in my race was that bringing Republicans together is really important to win a race. And we were able to bring together forever Trumpers and never Trumpers, and we were able to bring together Libertarians and Tea Party members, independent voters. We won the independent moderate vote in Virginia. Democrats. And this is to recognize that all Republicans don't all believe the same thing. And, in fact, I do think that there's a desire on behalf of -- let's call them political analysts, to put people into buckets, and to force that. And the reality, of course, is that it's not about buckets competing with one another; it's about bringing people together. That's what we did in Virginia last year, something that pundits thought was never possible, that a Republican could actually win in Virginia. Virginia was too blue. I think the pundits forgot to do one thing, which is ask voters. And what voters expressed clearly was a desire to see common-sense solutions brought to bear against these most important issues. And when we were able to reduce taxes by \$4 billion, something that's never been done in the Commonwealth of Virginia, by a factor of 4, and yet have a record investment in education, raise teacher salaries, invest in school facilities -- oh, by the way, introduce lab schools for choice in the Virginia public school system, invest \$400 million more into law enforcement, to raise starting salaries by 20 percent to try to get at this depletion of manpower in our law enforcement community. We were able to accomplish a ton around doing things that people understood were moving Virginia forward. I think that's the future of the Republican party, is how do we bring people together around these common-sense solutions to these most challenging problems.

YLAN MUI: But even GOP leader Mitch McConnell has said that one of the things that he's concerned about in November is candidate quality when it comes to some of the Republican contenders that we're seeing. Are you worried about that? Do you think that the playing field is level when you look at some of the other folks who are running?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: All candidates have strengths and weaknesses. I mean, one of my weaknesses was I had never done this before. I was sitting where you are back in 2020, and I stepped into a field that I really didn't have any experience with. And oh, by the way, for those of you that are having a mid-life crisis, get into state politics. It's a great place to be. You can make a huge difference. But, of course, what we're seeing, and I would just specifically say in Virginia, the Congressional races in Virginia, we have extraordinary candidates, and we have three races that I think will be real bellwethers for whether the House of Representatives shifts or not. Jen Kiggans is running in our 2nd Congressional District down at the beach; Yesli Vega running in our 7th Congressional District which runs up into Northern Virginia; and Hung Cao running in what is Loudoun County. And, by the way, these are women and diverse candidates. They represent, I think, the Republican party of the future. They represent what we saw in Virginia last year, which was the most diverse ticket that Republicans or Democrats have ever put up in Virginia with a Lieutenant Governor who's the first black woman elected to statewide office and oh, by the way, an immigrant from Jamaica. And, of course, Jason Miyares, who is

our Attorney General, who is a first-generation Latino American, where his mother fled Cuba to get away from Castro. I believe this is the Republican party of the future, and I'm excited to be part of it.

YLAN MUI: You said before we walked on the stage here that the November election could be a time for investors to reset. How would you advise playing that?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, let me begin --

YLAN MUI: Put your financial hat back on.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Yes. Let me begin with, you know, recessions are not determined by a computer; they're determined by sentiment. And when consumers get concerned, when boardrooms all of a sudden hesitate and pull back from investment or hiring, that's what causes recessions. And we're in a moment where everybody is talking about a recession. And if we remember, go back to 2016, where it was clear that we were going to head into a recession, and it was also broadly thought that Hillary Clinton was going to win. And what happened, of course, was there was a switch, a change. When Donald Trump won, all of a sudden optimism went back into the market and we avoided a recession. And so when you look back to what can happen on November 8th, and I do believe that there's a broad view that Republicans will take back the House, and I think there's a big question about what's going to happen in the Senate. I am cautiously optimistic that I think Republicans will take the Senate as well, and I think that will be a calming influence. It will be a calming influence that now, instead of having single-party government, we have divided government, and that we could end up with, I think, a little bit more rational spending, because I do believe that what's come out of the Biden White House has, in fact, been disconnected from supply and demand of money, and, in fact, has driven a lot of our challenges right now. Not to mention the fact that we gave up energy independence and we should have kept it. And the combination of that has driven a lot of this inflationary pressure. So I do think that, somewhat of a surprise with a Republican win in the Senate, as well, I think will change the overall footing. And I am expecting that if that can happen, we can see, yes, a slowdown, but we won't see a hard landing. That's -- as Governor, I'm spending a lot of time working with industry across Virginia to understand are you still moving forward with your investment plans? And I hear consistently, yes, we are. We're building that new factory, we're putting down that new distribution center. Are you still moving forward with your hiring? What I hear over and over again is, yes, we are. In fact, our biggest challenge is filling the open positions. By the way, that's a really good thing when you're thinking about keeping people fully employed and confident about their future. So I think there is a moment here where, yes, demand is feeling the real pressure from the rise in interest rates, but I do think that we can manage through this with an election outcome that I think restores balance, but on top of that, companies maintaining confidence, moving forward with their long-term investment plans and maintaining their hiring plans.

YLAN MUI: So you talked a lot about the economy. And you ran for Governor focused on the economy. But right now there is a big divide over social issues in this country. It's happening

across the country, it's happening in Virginia, as well. Yesterday there were hundreds of students who walked out of their classrooms to protest the policies that they say are unfair to transgender students that the Virginia State Department of Education is putting forward. What is your response to those students who say, our rights are being taken away?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: First, I applaud the exercising of our First Amendment rights. I think that's --

YLAN MUI: So you support the protest?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: It's a really important moment for us. As long as people are not violent, as long as they're not destructing things, I actually think that that's part of America, is to be able to exercise your First Amendment rights. I want to step back, however, and explain a bit about the context of this. And the context of this is that we had existing policy frameworks that specifically did not include parents in these decisions that are extremely important in children's lives, and, in fact, enabled schools to say that parents would specifically not be informed by decisions that children are making. And voters spoke loudly in Virginia last year that parents matter, and I believe that parents should be fundamentally engaged in this. And, in fact, Virginia law states that parents have a fundamental right to be engaged in the education, the upbringing and the care of their child. So in this case what we have done with draft policies is reestablish parents' fundamental role in making this decision with their child, by the way, not at the exclusion of a trusted teacher or a trusted counselor, but at the end of the day, it's a parent and a child. It's about families. You know, I think it's really clear that children don't belong to the state; they belong to families. And children have a right to, in fact, have parents engaged in these most important decisions, and, oh, by the way, parents have a right to be engaged in their children's lives. The key for these policies is that if parents make a decision that, in fact, they would like for their child to have accommodations, then they will have them. So I've asked people who have spoken out quickly to please read the policies. I'm constantly reminded that people don't read anything anymore. They read headlines, not actually the body of the document. In this case, I think that what people will find is that these policies are very much drafted with a fundamental belief in the necessity to protect all children, to protect their dignity, their confidentiality and their safety. The word "bullying" is used 36 times in the document to reassure that we are doubling down on the fact there can be no harassment and no discrimination and that parents must be at the center of these decisions that are made as a family. I think this is going to be an important moment for folks to recognize that we can have an "and" moment. This isn't an "or" moment, this is an "and" moment, where we can bring families into an important decision that can be made that is in the child's best interest.

YLAN MUI: What happens when it's not just the students who are protesting, but also companies that might be upset with your decision? We've heard from the Salesforce CEO, for example, who has said that, in his words, there are crazy governors in states across the country who are rolling back rights for LGBTQ people, rolling back rights for women when it comes to abortion. And Salesforce has threatened to leave states that they feel are enacting policies that they don't agree with. What do you think about that? What would you do if they said, hey, we're out of here if you move forward?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Companies make decisions just like families do, and that is part of, I think, leading a company, is deciding what is in that company's best interest, and, oh, by the way, reflecting the desires and wants of shareholders and customers and a board and a management team, and, oh, by the way, employees. I do believe that what companies have been saying very loudly over the course of the last many years is that when they assess the totality of where they want to be, there's been a very clear migration, and that migration has been to Virginia. That migration's been to Texas, it's been to Florida, it's been to Georgia. This is where companies are going.

YLAN MUI: So you're saying they're bluffing when they put forth a certain rhetoric or say a certain message, but they're voting with their feet?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: I wouldn't say they're bluffing. I would just say it's not universal that all companies are saying the same thing. And, of course, what we're seeing is companies are making these decisions based on a totality of inputs, and those inputs seem to be predominantly resulting in companies moving to Virginia and Texas and North Carolina and Georgia and South Carolina and Florida. **What we've seen in Virginia is we've had corporate relocations just in the last six months**, where Boeing left Chicago and came to Virginia, and Raytheon left Massachusetts and came to Virginia. We've had Lego assess the entire U.S. footprint and choose to put their only U.S. manufacturing in Chesterfield County in Virginia. **We've watched companies that are in Virginia double down and expand within Virginia, like Hilton.** And we've watched new industries come to Virginia. And just in the last month, we've been able to announce the real epicenter in Virginia of the indoor growing or vertical farming industry, where we will have the two largest indoor farms in the world in Virginia. So I think that what corporations constantly have to assess is the totality of where they're going to be and the environment they're going to be in. As a governor, my job, I think, is to be very transparent about where I believe Virginia is going. On day one, I announced Virginia is open for business. We are open for business. It had been shut, locked tight. We were ranked 47th in the nation in job recovery, 47th in the nation in job recovery, and now we're in the top 20. We, in fact, said we're going to get taxes down so that people can have a better lifestyle. We're going to invest in schools, we're going to invest in law enforcement. We put forth a regulatory management department to cut back the regulations that I thought were really damaging business. And we've watched job growth come back, we watched companies move, we watched them expand. And I think it's my job to be very transparent about what we're trying to get done in order to make Virginia the best state in America to do business. And so for those of you that are looking, please come look in Virginia because we have a lot to offer.

YLAN MUI: Well, if folks looked in Virginia and if Boeing and Raytheon and Lego called you up and said, hey, we don't really like this policy, we don't like this transgender policy, we're not happy with where you stand on abortion bans, what would you say to them?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, I would begin with "Read the policy and see where we stand," because neither one of those statements is actually very correct. What we've done in Virginia,

particularly on abortion, is recognize that Virginia elected a pro-life governor, and I'm very cognizant of where Virginia is today. We have a House that is controlled by Republicans and a Senate that is controlled by Democrats. Literally, just 20 months ago, there was debates on the House floor to expand abortion rights all the way up through and including childbirth, paid for with taxpayer money, and Virginians said that's too extreme. And I think that is way too extreme. So I've asked for our leading legislators to work on a compromise bill to bring to my desk for a 15-week pain threshold bill, where a child can feel pain, and we're working on trying to land that. And I think that's a good place for Virginia to land. And I believe that when it comes to policies with regards to our children, I believe that people universally understand that parents have a right to be engaged in their children's life. I've always asked folks, if you don't think that parents should be engaged in their children's life, like many of the progressive Democrats said last year during my election, and my opponent said it very clearly, Virginians stood up and said, no, that's not what we believe. We think parents should be. And so, again, I don't think this is an either/or moment. I think that's what people try to do today, is put you in either this far box or that far box. And there is an "and" moment here, which is there is a path forward that respects parents' rights to be engaged in their children's lives and, in fact, fully respects the child as well.

YLAN MUI: So you want to run as a unifier, it sounds like, you know, operating as a unifier in a political environment that is extremely divided. Where do you see the Republican party going? Do you see the Republican party coming together? Or there are some in the party who say it's splintering.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Let me begin with the fact that I'm an outsider, so I'm new to this. My training, in a 30-year business career, was that you set a path and you bring people around that path in order to try to get folks where, collectively, they're better than they were when they started. That's what corporate strategy is about, that's what execution is about when you try to execute against your corporate strategy, and I think that's what we're doing in Virginia. And what that translates to is maybe a different way of thinking through this, which is, the fact is, we don't have to agree on everything. Because guess what? We don't. But we sure agree on a lot. As I said earlier, we were able to bring together Republicans in a unique way last year. We had forever Trumpers and never Trumpers in the same room together, talking about what the best answer is; not debating one another. And we, in fact, found that we could bring Republicans and Democrats together and independents and moderates all in the same place around a shared vision. I think that's the future of the Republican party, and I do believe that that's where America is right now. And I think it all gets back to focusing on issues that really are at the heart of people's lives.

YLAN MUI: So another fun fact for the crowd about Virginia. Virginia is term-limited when it comes to how long the Governor can serve. So you can only serve one term, right? You can only serve four years. Are you committed to serving out all four years of your term?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Yes. So, first, let me just give a little background on that. So Virginia, of course, its founders were the founders of our nation. And if you think back to folks like Thomas Jefferson, they weren't big fans of the Executive Branch. And so Virginia's own Constitution has

been constructed to limit the term of a Governor. So I have a four-year term, and what my whole goal is, is to be the best Governor that I can be. I think we can accomplish a lot in four years. I had a really interesting moment when I was inaugurated. A FedEx package arrived. I zipped it open and I read the letter. It was from Jeb Bush. It said: Governor, get moving, you only have four years. And inside --

YLAN MUI: Exclamation point.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: And inside was a clock counting down on four years. And I have that clock in my office. I look at it every morning. **And I recognize that we have a big agenda, and that big agenda, we only have four years to accomplish. I'm committed to completing our agenda. And I think we can.** One of our cabinet members said to me, I've never experienced such a sense of urgency every day. I said, we only have four years, and we have a lot to get done.

YLAN MUI: What happens after this four years?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: I think I'm going to first celebrate my 30th wedding anniversary with my lovely wife and really reflect on the fact that we've been given a great gift to serve the way we have. **And then we'll see what happens. I didn't plan to run for governor. I saw a moment where there was a real need in the Commonwealth of Virginia, in my view, and I stepped out of my dream job.** I mean, I had a chance to lead a company that I'd grown up in. And that moment was a big one for my family, where we committed ourselves to do something very different, to put ourselves in the public spotlight in a way that we never had been. **So I'll have a chance to discuss things with my wife and kids again and decide what's next.**

YLAN MUI: Would that discussion include a potential run for the White House?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: That discussion will be whatever is available at the time. I have to say, there is a long way between here and there. I had somebody describe it as various ages. An archeologist will have to decide what happens between here and there. It's 2022, and my big focus right now is being the best Governor that I can possibly be in Virginia to get our agenda moving, which I'm very pleased with how much we've accomplished, and to help our Congressional representatives win in Virginia and to help a few governors.

YLAN MUI: Governor Youngkin, thank you so much for your time. If you come to a conclusion of your decision, please let us know.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Thank you very much. And thank you all very, very much.

[**Face the Nation | CBS | July 10, 2022**](#)

FACE THE NATION

Transcript: Gov. Glenn Youngkin on "Face the Nation," July 10, 2022

face-the-nation

JULY 10, 2022 / 12:30 PM / CBS NEWS

The following is the transcript of an interview with Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin that aired Sunday, July 10, 2022, on "Face the Nation."

ROBERT COSTA: We turn now to the Republican Party, for Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin is a newcomer to politics who won in an upset last November. We want to welcome Governor Youngkin to the broadcast. Good morning, Governor. Let's begin with the Supreme Court and abortion. You just heard from Vice President Harris, she said, You don't have to abandon your faith to believe that a woman should have the ability to decide whether she gets an abortion or not. Do you agree?

VIRGINIA GOVERNOR GLENN YOUNGKIN: Well, first of all, good morning, and thank you for having me. And the debate on abortion has been raging for a long time. And I believe, as a pro-life governor, that life begins at conception and my job as a pro-life governor in a state in Virginia, where 18 months ago, the debate in our general assembly was around whether abortion should be allowed all the way up through and including birth, funded by taxpayer money. And so this in Virginia is a debate that we are going to run to the Supreme Court's decision. I agree with that this is a decision for states to make by elected officials, by the citizens of Virginia, and that's why, right out of the box, I called for a 15-week pain threshold bill to be formed and crafted by a bipartisan group of legislators. I think this is what it's all about- is this is a moment for our country to have a discussion around this and each state will decide something different. And I think that's the-that's the real value of the Supreme Court's decision.

ROBERT COSTA: You've said you've proposed a 15-week ban, will you ever pursue a full ban on abortion in Virginia?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, the reality is that as a pro-life governor in a state like Virginia where I have a Senate that's controlled by Democrats and a House that's controlled by Republicans, we have to find a way to get things done. And I believe that's what we've been able to do is get things done at a time where you have to bring people together in order to make progress. As I said, I believe life begins at conception. In Virginia, we've got to work with a Senate and a House. This is what we've been doing.

ROBERT COSTA: But will you ever pursue a full ban?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, I believe that what my job is, is to get something done. And I believe we can get a 15-week pain threshold bill done in Virginia for the first time. Think about it, this was a state again, that just 18 months ago was talking about enabling abortion all the way up through and including birth, and now we're able to talk about a 15-week pain threshold bill where a baby feels pain. This is a remarkable moment for us. And it's an opportunity, I'm not going to let go.

ROBERT COSTA: You support exceptions for rape, incest in the life of the mother, some other Republican governors do not- Republicans. Are they wrong?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Again, I think this is a moment where we have to reflect on our personal beliefs, and as a pro-life governor, I have really reflected on my own faith in my beliefs. And I do believe that there should be exceptions that are made in the case of rape and incest and when the life of the mother is truly at risk. Again, this is a moment that- where people have to come together. The one thing that's very much agreed upon in Virginia today is that we want fewer abortions, not more. And I think this is a chance over the next five months for a bipartisan group of legislators to craft a path there and give me a bill that I can sign.

ROBERT COSTA: On education, one of your first actions as governor was to propose the end of teaching of quote, "inherently divisive concepts." What's an example?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, in Virginia schools, and we saw Loudoun County literally be ground zero, we solve students being taught that they should view everything through a lens of race, and judge one another. And again, we're not talking about forgetting our history. And in fact, one of the things we have to do is teach all of our history, the good and the bad. But we shouldn't- we shouldn't play- we shouldn't play privilege bingo with children, we shouldn't teach children that they should judge one another and one group is privileged and another group is- is going to find it hard in life, necessarily. And we shouldn't blame someone and have them form a view that they're inherently racist because of their race or their sex or their religion. We shouldn't judge one another. We can do this. And so right out of the box, we worked in order to- to remove inherently divisive concepts from curriculum. We absolutely- we absolutely are pushing to teach all history, the good and the bad. And again, we can bring people together around this, as opposed to divide them

ROBERT COSTA: It's a challenge, though. You say Virginia is willing to teach all history. Suppose your board of education comes to you Governor and says to you, 'Governor, the Civil War, we recommend it's too divisive. We want to call it the War Between the States.' What would you do?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, I don't think they're going to do that--

ROBERT COSTA: So they could.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: But I don't believe they will. And I think what we all recognize is that slavery was an absolute- It was an absolute black spot in our history, I mean, it is so, so abhorrent. We have to teach it. And this is not a moment where we're running away from these topics. And this is why I'm so excited about our education agenda in Virginia. I mean, we stepped into our day-one game plan with a comprehensive education plan to have the highest education budget in the history of Virginia, to fund special-ed programs, to fund into laboratory schools to provide

choice, to give teachers raises, and we got it all done, all of it. That's what's so exciting is that we brought people together around an education agenda, which is common-sense focused. And again, I believe that there's certain groups that want to drive people apart. And my job is to pull them together around a vision for education that can deliver for our states.

ROBERT COSTA: Security is also an issue in your state. We've been talking about the Supreme Court, some of those justices live in Virginia, do you have confidence the justices who live in Virginia are adequately protected?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Our judges in- our judges in Virginia are adequately protected. I wish we could do more. And this is why I've called on Attorney General Garland to enforce the federal law, which is so clear, you can't parade and pick it in front of the judges home and try to influence them. And I've been- and I've been consistent and calling on him to please enforce the law. We have substantial state resources positioned right around from the justices' homes. I speak to them frequently to make sure that they feel adequately protected and I'm encouraged by those conversations. This is not a moment where we can allow anything to happen to our justices. Broadly speaking, this is about democracy.

ROBERT COSTA: On the court, the court is moving right now on several different fronts. It could move on same-sex marriage in the coming years. Will you take any steps to codify same-sex marriage in Virginia?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: I believe that what the Supreme Court has done most recently is so consistent with what we know the Constitution stands for which is returning the rights to states to make these decisions like Roe v. Wade, protecting, in fact, the right of lawmakers to make laws, not an executive branch to pass rules and regulations that overstep boundaries. This is what our Supreme Court has- has been so focused on--

ROBERT COSTA: -- Yes or no, though. Protect same-sex marriage or not?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: In Virginia, we actually do protect same-sex marriage in Virginia. That's the law in Virginia and therefore as Governor of Virginia, we protect same-sex marriage. I think what's happening in- right now is that there are so many- there's so many elements that are trying to pull people apart and we have a chance to hold them together.

ROBERT COSTA: You were just in Nebraska on Saturday speaking to Republicans across the country. You have also said President Biden was legitimately elected. Former President Trump continues to falsely claim the 2020 election was stolen. Should he stop saying that?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, let me begin with my trip to Nebraska, which was really great fun. Governor Ricketts had really helped me in my race and it was a great chance for me to show up and help in the next race to elect a Republican in Nebraska. And one of the things that I'm really focused on is helping Republican governors get elected. You know, I've got a big job in Virginia, and it takes the- takes the vast majority of my time, but I do think there's spots that I can be

helpful and so I plan on doing that this year. Of course, the other thing we plan on doing this year is helping congressional wins in Virginia. And I think there's a great opportunity there.

ROBERT COSTA: What about former President Trump?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, I think this is a moment for the Republican Party to- to recognize exactly what I recognized last year, was this is not an or moment, but an and moment. We brought together Virginians last year, forever Trumpers, never Trumpers, independents, Democrats. We won the- we won the Latino vote, the Asian vote, the largest voter turnout for black Virginians that anybody can remember to vote for a Republican. I think this is the future of the Republican Party, which is to recognize that we have to come together in these common sense kitchen table issues that are on the forefront of everybody's mind, inflation schools, safe communities, an economy that isn't stealing everybody's hard working money through inflation, but gives them a job. This is where the Republicans--

ROBERT COSTA: Should he stop talking about 2020?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: This is the Republicans who- that we can win.

ROBERT COSTA: So former President Trump should stop talking about it?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: I think what I did last year was I focused on 2021. And we had 5,000 People come and volunteer at elections and that gave everybody confidence in our election process. They showed up, they voted in record numbers for a governor's race, and we won.

ROBERT COSTA: The January 6 Committee continues its work this week. Some members of the committee believe the former president has criminal wrongdoing. There have been many revelations made by this committee. What do you believe you should do in the wake of all of this new evidence? Can you continue to support someone like President Trump?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, let me begin with what happened on January 6, with the- with the invasion of our capital was- was awful and it's a blight on our democracy. I have to be honest, though, I talked to 1,000s of Virginians, and the topics they want to talk about is not January 6. What they want to talk about is runaway inflation, gas prices. They wanna talk about crime and their communities. They wanna talk about education and the rights of parents to be engaged in their kids' schools. I just fundamentally believe that- that the media's attention on this while- while I think it's important that immediate is really not what voters are focused on.

ROBERT COSTA: It's not just the media. Some Republican governors, like Governor Larry Hogan of Maryland have said President Trump shouldn't run again. Is that your view?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: President Trump's gonna do what President Trump wants to do. And my job is to have the best Virginia we can have and to demonstrate that Republican- Republican agenda on low taxes and great schools, and safe communities, and by the way, a thriving

economy that's working with companies like Boeing and Raytheon moving to Virginia. This is the Republican agenda of the future. And this is the one that I think we're delivering in Virginia and I think this is the one that's going to really carry a red wave across the nation this year.

ROBERT COSTA: So that that's your agenda. That's your focus. You also have political capital, you are a rising star in the Republican Party. Every reporter wants to know how politicians use that political capital, you have a political action committee that's busy right now. Will you support and spend money through your PAC to help candidates like Doug Mastriano, the election denier who's running for governor in Pennsylvania on the Republican side?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Well, I believe what I can do with- with our supporters is first get congressional representatives elected in Virginia. First and foremost, I think the road to the majority in our House of Representatives comes through Virginia, and I'm going to spend- I'm going to spend real time there making sure that we win these elections. And then I believe there are governor's elections around the country where I think I can make a difference.

ROBERT COSTA: Is Mastriano's one of them?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: I have a huge job in Virginia and so I've got to be real careful in how much I spend time out of Virginia. We're still working on my agenda. But I think there are states like Virginia, where people recognize that a Democratic governor has not done a good job and a Republican governor, like Republican governors all over America can do a good job. And those are the ones that I'm going to go support. We haven't figured out where I'm going yet but at the end of the day, I'm going to help some Republican governors get elected.

ROBERT COSTA: When you look at a map, Nebraska right next to Iowa, the early voting state in the 2024 presidential election. Are you open, and your family, to considering a run for President in 2024.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: First I am hugely humbled by this discussion that's going on--

ROBERT COSTA: Some donors have come to you.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: And- and- and the reality of course is I think it's based on the fact that I won in a state that was blue, and we turned it red. I ran on a platform that we're delivering. And I often find it shocking that people are surprised that a person runs for office and then goes to work to deliver on what they promised they were going to do. And so I think my job is to be a great governor in Virginia.

ROBERT COSTA: But are you open to considering, along with your family, the idea of a presidential run in 2024?

GOV. YOUNGKIN: **That's not a decision that we have even begun to undertake.** The reality of course is I've been in- I've been governor of Virginia for six months, we've got an extraordinary

amount done. \$4 billion tax cuts, a record budget for education, \$400 million into law enforcement to raise salaries and keep our community safe. This is where I'm focused.

ROBERT COSTA: I didn't hear you rule it out but I hope if you make a decision you come back here and break the news with CBS.

GOV. YOUNGKIN: Great.

ROBERT COSTA: Governor Youngkin thank you so much for being here, and we'll be right back.

Print

[Glenn Youngkin is not running for president. Or is he? | Financial Times | September 24, 2023](#)

In a slick video posted on social media earlier this year, Virginia's Republican governor Glenn Youngkin contemplates America's future.

"We can usher in a new era of American values," Youngkin narrates over images of him speaking at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and strolling a White House-esque colonnade. "The stakes are high, and the consequences couldn't be greater."

The video, paid for by Youngkin's fundraising vehicle, Spirit of Virginia, looks a lot like a presidential campaign advertisement.

But for months, Youngkin, 56, has insisted he is not running for the White House, even as deep-pocketed Republican donors have called on him to challenge GOP frontrunner Donald Trump.

At the same time, however, the former Carlyle executive and his aides have also quietly left the door open to an eleventh-hour entrance into the 2024 Republican primary field.

"The presidential pot is simmering, and he is happy to stir it," said one former colleague from Carlyle, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Publicly, Youngkin says he remains focused on this November, when Virginia will hold off-year elections to determine which political party controls its state legislature in Richmond.

Yet the governor — who met wealthy out-of-state donors in the Hamptons and on Nantucket over the summer, and has an estimated personal net worth of almost \$500mn — is also often coy when pressed on his presidential ambitions.

“I’m not in Iowa at the state fair,” he told Fox News earlier this month. “I’m campaigning in Virginia for Virginians, not around the country.”

The speculation surrounding Youngkin’s presidential ambitions underscores the meteoric rise of a former private equity boss who burst on to the political scene just two years ago, defeating a Democratic opponent in a state Joe Biden had won convincingly in 2020.

But it also exposes the sharp divisions in a Republican establishment wrestling with Trump’s grip on the party, and voters who are increasingly committed — or in some cases, resigned — to the former president being the GOP nominee in 2024.

Youngkin was a political novice when he left Carlyle in 2020 after losing a power struggle with his co-chief executive, Kewsong Lee. He had spent a quarter-century at the private equity giant.

But his electoral victory in Virginia the following year instantly boosted his standing with establishment Republicans, after he won over centrist suburban voters who had eschewed the GOP in the Trump era. Many pondered whether his Wall Street CV, mild manners and focus on education issues offered a new blueprint for the national party.

Youngkin’s campaign ethos was on display on a recent weekday afternoon in Leesburg, an affluent suburb about 40 miles west of Washington. More than 200 voters packed an auditorium at Cornerstone Chapel, an evangelical mega church, to hear the governor speak at what was billed as a “Parents Matter” forum.

For more than an hour, Youngkin — who had removed his suit jacket and rolled up his shirt sleeves after stepping on stage — fielded questions from voters and scribbled in a notebook, vowing to address their concerns on everything from classroom sizes to sex education to the rights of transgender students in schools.

A social conservative and evangelical Christian, Youngkin pointed to his faith several times. Parents should be “empowered to play the role in their children’s lives . . . God granted us”, he said. “There’s only been one perfect person in the history of this planet.”

Youngkin made no mention of national politics, or the former president, or the current race for the White House. But as he wrapped up, he made a pitch for his own brand of conservatism.

“Elections have consequences. At the heart of my conservative philosophy, I talk a lot about common sense conservative governance,” Youngkin said. “We need you to get to work.”

After the event, supporters heaped praise on the governor. Susan Cox, a ballroom dance instructor from nearby Sterling, called him a “class act”, adding: “I really do think he cares.”

But Cox hesitated when asked if Youngkin should run for even higher office.

“If in the future he ever decides to run for president, you can probably count me on board . . . but it is so new right now,” she said.

Paul Lott, a Republican candidate for the state legislature from Ashburn, said Youngkin would make a “wonderful candidate” for the White House — but said the former president’s Republican nomination appeared inevitable.

“If Trump is not derailed, he will be the nominee,” Lott said.

Their comments underscored Trump’s seemingly unassailable lead in the polls, despite facing an array of criminal charges. The failure of other GOP candidates to mount a credible challenge has disappointed anti-Trump donors and party operatives, who have called on popular Republican governors such as Youngkin and Brian Kemp of Georgia to make a last-minute bid for the nomination before the party’s primary season begins in January 2024.

The latest FiveThirtyEight average of national opinion polls shows Trump has the backing of more than 55 per cent of Republican voters, followed by Florida governor Ron DeSantis in a distant second place, at 14 per cent. The rest of the candidates trail in the single digits.

The most recent Roanoke College poll of Virginia voters paints a similar picture.

The survey, conducted last month, found that Youngkin enjoyed a job approval rating of 51 per cent among Virginians. But the same poll showed that among Republican voters Trump was the first-choice presidential candidate for nearly half of them, followed by DeSantis, at 13 per cent. Youngkin came in third, at 9 per cent.

“The former president remains incredibly popular among Republicans, not just nationwide, but certainly here in Virginia,” said Bryan Parsons, senior political analyst at the Institute for Policy and Opinion Research, which conducted the Roanoke survey.

“It is not surprising that there would be elements within the Republican party that would lean towards a candidate with Youngkin’s resume,” Parsons added. “But there are other elements of the party that are very mobilised and very supportive of the former president.”

Many campaign veterans agree. Mick Mulvaney, who was Trump’s White House chief of staff, said Youngkin was an “excellent candidate” and “very capable gentleman” — but was sceptical that either Youngkin or Kemp could pull more voters from Trump than the other challengers could.

“What does Glenn Youngkin bring to the race that isn’t there already?” said Mulvaney.

“Are there really Trump voters out there who say, ‘You know what, I was with Trump. I wasn’t with DeSantis or [former vice-president Mike] Pence or [former UN ambassador Nikki] Haley but I’d be with Glenn Youngkin’?”

Youngkin's former Carlyle colleague said his one-time boss was playing the political game "brilliantly" by building name recognition without actually entering the presidential race.

They predicted he would keep his powder dry next year — and run for president in 2028. Virginia law bars governors from serving consecutive terms, meaning Youngkin is not eligible to run for re-election in 2025.

Several voters at the event in Leesburg also said the presidential race in four years' time might be a better choice for Youngkin.

"I would love to see him as president at some point," said Amy Riccardi, a local business owner and non-partisan candidate for the county school board. "Is it this cycle? Next cycle? I don't know."

[Va. Dems outraise GOP, but Youngkin's White House buzz helps close gap | The Washington Post | September 16, 2023](#)

Democrats running in Virginia's high-stakes General Assembly races raked in millions more than Republican candidates as Election Day nears, but Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) has been closing the gap with out-of-state GOP megadonors enticed by his prolonged flirtation with a 2024 presidential bid.

With all 140 House and Senate seats on the ballot Nov. 7, individual Democrats raised a combined \$15 million while Republicans brought in about \$10.6 million between July 1 and Aug. 31, according to an analysis released Saturday by the nonpartisan Virginia Public Access Project.

Youngkin's Spirit of Virginia political action committee raised \$3.8 million over that period, including a \$1 million donation from billionaire Thomas Peterffy, a major national GOP donor and Florida resident who also made a \$1 million contribution to the PAC in April.

The outcome on Election Day will shape Youngkin's trajectory as a presidential hopeful and Virginia's as a relatively liberal outlier among Southern states. If Republicans hold the House and flip the Senate, Youngkin will have the allies he needs to enact a conservative agenda that includes banning abortion after 15 weeks, with some exceptions.

Virginia is the only Southern state that has not tightened restrictions on the procedure since the Supreme Court struck down Roe v. Wade last year.

Both chambers are up for grabs in elections playing out on new legislative maps that created far more open seats and uncertainty than usual. Republicans are defending a narrow majority in the House (49-46), as are Democrats in the Senate (22-18).

The big money is guaranteed to bombard Virginians with TV ads, mailers and door-knockers through November. Early voting begins Friday.

“This is on track to be the **most expensive Virginia midterm in the commonwealth’s history**,” said Stephen Farnsworth, director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington. “Because the parties are so much more ideologically distinct than used to be the case, the stakes are very high for the future direction of Virginia.”

Youngkin’s public flirtation with a potential last-minute entry into the GOP presidential primary — a move some prominent GOP donors have urged him to make as they’ve cooled to former president Donald Trump and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis — has only served to draw more interest and money to what could have been sleepy elections, with no statewide contests on the ballot.

“Whether Youngkin runs for president this year or not, the presidential conversation is already paying off for him,” Farnsworth said. “His political legacy depends on Republican majorities in the House and Senate. And his ability to raise money as a possible presidential candidate can help fund those close races that Republicans will need to win to secure majorities.”

Democrats benefited from massive donations from Charlottesville investor Michael Bills, who during the last period dumped \$3 million into Clean Virginia Fund, a climate group that mostly bankrolls Democrats along with a few Republicans who have bucked utility giant Dominion Energy. That comes on top of \$3.8 million Bills gave to the fund earlier this year — and the \$1.6 million that his wife, Sonja Smith, donated to Democrats or allied groups.

“It’s extraordinary that a single individual has kept them ahead of the Republicans,” longtime Richmond political analyst Bob Holsworth said of Bills, noting that Democrats also led Republicans in small donations, which is considered a sign of grassroots support.

Taken together, Democrats running for Senate raised \$7.5 million between July 1 and Aug. 31 while their Republican counterparts raised \$4.9 million. The Democrats’ Senate candidates also led their GOP rivals in cash on hand heading into September, \$7.2 million to \$6.6 million.

Four of the top five Senate fundraisers were Democrats. The candidate who hauled in the most was Democrat Russet Perry, who raised \$1.3 million over the period. She faces Republican Juan Pablo Segura in Senate District 31, competitive territory that covers parts of Loudoun and Fauquier counties. Segura, the lone Republican to crack the top five, reported raising about \$653,000.

The second-highest Senate fundraiser was Sen. T. Montgomery “Monty” Mason (D-Williamsburg), who is facing a challenge in Hampton Roads swing territory from Republican Danny Diggs. Mason raised about \$1 million to Diggs’s \$629,000.

Rounding out the top five were two House Democrats seeking to move to the Senate, Dels. Schuyler VanValkenburg (Henrico) and Danica A. Roem (Prince William).

VanValkenburg raised about \$976,000 in July and August. He is trying unseat Sen. Siobhan S. Dunnavant (R-Henrico), who raised about \$507,000, in a redrawn suburban Richmond district that now leans Democratic. Roem raised \$641,000 in her bid for an open, blue-leaning seat that covers Manassas and part of Prince William County. She faces Republican Bill Woolf, who raised about \$266,000 over the period.

Democrats running for the House raised a total of about \$7.5 million — about the same as Democrats running for Senate — while Republican House candidates as a whole raised about \$5.8 million. The Democrats running for the House also had the edge in cash on hand at the end of the period, \$9.9 million to the Republicans' \$9.3 million.

As was the case with the Senate, four of the top five House fundraisers for the period were Democrats. The top fundraiser was Democrat Michael Feggans, who is trying to unseat Karen Greenhalgh in House District 97, competitive territory that covers part of Virginia Beach. Feggans raised \$633,000 for the period. Greenhalgh, with the second-highest haul, was not far behind with \$598,000.

The House candidate with the third-highest fundraising was Susanna Gibson, who raised \$595,000 for an open seat in a competitive suburban district west of Richmond, covering parts of Henrico and Goochland counties. Her Republican opponent, David Owen, raised \$188,000.

The fundraising period closed Aug. 31 — before The Washington Post reported last week that Gibson performed sex acts with her husband for a live online audience and encouraged viewers to pay them with “tips” for specific requests. Gibson called the exposure of the videos “an illegal invasion of my privacy.” Casting Gibson as the victim of an unfair Republican attack, some Democrats sought to turn the episode into a fundraising opportunity.

Two other Democrats round out the top five House fundraisers: former delegate Joshua Cole, who is running in a competitive district that includes Fredericksburg and parts of Stafford and Spotsylvania counties, and Del. Rodney Willett (Henrico), whose suburban Richmond territory leans blue.

Cole raised about \$588,000 while his opponent, Republican Lee Peters, drew \$352,000. Willett collected \$535,000, substantially more than the \$182,000 raised by GOP challenger Riley Shaia.

The big money reeled in by Youngkin's PAC could help his party stay competitive with Democrats. In addition to the \$1 million from Peterffy, Spirit of Virginia raised \$300,000 from the Republican State Leadership Committee PAC, and \$125,000 from Tassos Paphites of Virginia Beach, one of the nation's largest Taco Bell franchisees.

Youngkin has been the object of presidential speculation since the former Carlyle Group executive and political novice flipped seemingly blue Virginia red in November 2021. Although

he has failed to register in national polls, he still gets mentioned as a potential latecomer to the GOP presidential primary.

Youngkin has insisted all along that he is focused entirely on Virginia, despite hectic cross-country political travel throughout his first 20 months in office and his PAC's naked efforts to stoke the White House buzz — including the release of a video that cast him as the successor to Ronald Reagan.

Last month, Youngkin courted billionaire Republican megadonors in the Hamptons at the home of Trump's former commerce secretary, Wilbur Ross. The guest list was private but among those the New York Post reported attending was Stephen Ross, owner of the Miami Dolphins, who held a fundraiser for Trump's reelection effort in 2019.

Stephen Ross later gave \$25,000 to Youngkin's PAC. Another New York billionaire, Stanley Druckenmiller, gave \$75,000 to the PAC in August.

[Republican megadonors wait for their anti-Trump champion | Financial Times | September 12, 2023](#)

Billionaire Republican donor Thomas Peterffy wants to bet on someone he thinks can win the White House in 2024. But this year, he gave \$2mn to a political action committee supporting Virginia's governor Glenn Youngkin — who is not running for president.

Like other Republican megadonors, Peterffy fears frontrunner Donald Trump would lose in another run-off with Joe Biden. He does not love the former president's primary rivals either. He told his friends not to back any other candidates until January, by which time he hopes the Virginia governor has changed his mind.

"We're hoping for Glenn Youngkin," Peterffy, who founded Interactive Brokers, told the Financial Times.

The yearning for Youngkin is a sign of the donor dilemma: for some deep-pocketed Republicans, no single, compelling alternative to Trump has emerged in the primary. And while the billionaires want to see such a candidate break from the pack before giving, the candidates need the money first to help them make that break.

"Is Trump beatable? Yes, but the first step is the field consolidating," said an adviser to one donor. "Without consolidation, there's not a viable path."

Several big GOP donors — from billionaire hedge fund bosses such as Paul Singer and Ken Griffin, to Miriam Adelson, the wife of the late casino emperor Sheldon Adelson — are now on the sidelines. Peter Thiel, who gave \$35mn to two Senate candidates in 2022, "does not plan to donate to any 2024 race", said a person familiar with his thinking.

Traditional conservatives in the party are urging both donors and contenders to face reality before it is too late, fearing that the hesitancy could help pave the way for Trump to win the nomination.

Utah senator Mitt Romney, the 2012 GOP presidential nominee, has said donors must push underperforming contenders out of the race by late February, but has been discouraged by donors' reaction.

"They all think it should be someone else's candidate that makes that decision," Romney told the FT. "Some candidates ought to be able to see the writing on the wall at this point."

Romney's call comes at a crucial period for the anti-Trump wing of the party, with the second Republican primary debate scheduled for September 27, and a deadline for donors to file their contributions with federal authorities at the end of the month.

None of the alternatives to Trump has made much of a dent on the former president's lead, despite the criminal charges against him, including those related to his effort to subvert the 2020 election he lost.

"I just refuse to believe that Donald Trump is our inevitable nominee," said Bobbie Kilberg, a Republican donor supporting former New Jersey governor Chris Christie, one of the few GOP candidates who has said he would not support Trump as the party's nominee if he were convicted of a crime.

Trump presents "a clear and present danger to the rule of law and to the future of our democracy", Kilberg said.

But like other contenders, Christie has struggled to break out from a pool of six serious candidates vying to catch Trump, who leads polling in Iowa and New Hampshire, the first two primary contests, by well over 20 points, according to Real Clear Politics' polling averages.

"I don't know who I would vote for right now," Chris Sununu, governor of New Hampshire, told the FT.

Florida governor Ron DeSantis was "probably the number two" in New Hampshire, but he could still be "overtaken" by up to five candidates, Sununu said.

The donor class appears just as scattered.

Richard and Elizabeth Uihlein, the shipping and packaging billionaires who once funded Trump, back DeSantis. Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison is for South Carolina senator Tim Scott. Jan Koum, the co-founder of WhatsApp, supports former UN ambassador Nikki Haley, whose strong performance in the debate garnered some interest from other donors.

Poultry magnate Ronald Cameron and retail baron Art Pope are helping to fund vice-president Mike Pence. The private investment banker Warren Stephens has donated to former Arkansas governor Asa Hutchinson. Biotech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy and North Dakota's governor Doug Burgum are largely self-funded.

Some donors are also splitting their cash. Federal filings show that billionaire investors Stanley Druckenmiller, Jeff Yass and Cliff Asness have each given \$250,000 to a political action committee supporting Christie, as well as to other candidates. Yass has given at least \$600,000 to a super Pac backing Scott, whose supporters are also about to unleash a \$30mn ad blitz.

But the big donors have reason to be cautious about how their money is spent.

DeSantis was once seen as Trump's biggest threat, given his convincing 2022 re-election in Florida, pandemic-era leadership, military background and backing from a \$130mn super Pac.

Since then, he has lost the support of some donors for signing a six-week abortion ban bill, fighting Disney and calling Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine a "territorial dispute". His campaign has gone through staff cuts and replaced its manager.

Jay Zeidman, who is fundraising for DeSantis in Texas, said the Florida governor was still "clearly" in second place. DeSantis has continued to raise lots of money, including more than \$1mn since last month's debate. Never Back Down, a super Pac supporting DeSantis, had exceeded its August fundraising goal of \$10mn, Zeidman said.

But DeSantis's national polling numbers have dwindled from more than 40 per cent before the primary race to 13 per cent now, according to the most recent average from FiveThirtyEight — putting him squarely among the pack chasing Trump.

The distance of those contenders to the frontrunner leaves anti-Trump GOP donors wondering why they should bother, suggested Francis Rooney, a former congressman who was a big donor to Romney's 2012 campaign.

"As long as Trump owns so much of our base, what is there to coalesce around?"

While donors wait for an alternative to Trump, Youngkin remains focused on a battle for control of Virginia's legislature this November, his senior adviser said. But the governor "greatly appreciates" Peterffy's support.

['Virginia Is the Test Case': Youngkin Pushes for G.O.P. Takeover This Fall | The New York Times | September 11, 2023](#)

Virginia, whose off-year elections are usually closely watched as an indicator of the national mood, has been mostly out of the spotlight this year, overshadowed by the Republican presidential primary and the looming general election clash.

But with every seat in the Legislature up in eight weeks, the stakes are unusually high, with Republicans in position to swing the entire state, just four years after Democrats did the same. The effort, led by Gov. Glenn Youngkin, a popular Republican with national ambitions, is likely to serve as an early read on the politics of 2024, spinning out lessons for both parties, especially on abortion.

Democrats have made abortion rights their top issue, warning that if Republicans win full control of the General Assembly, then Virginia will join other Southern states by sharply restricting abortion access.

A winning night for Democrats on Nov. 7, however, will show that abortion remains just as potent a get-out-the-vote issue for the party as it has been in a string of state elections since the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*.

With Mr. Youngkin overseeing his party's message, the Republican pitch to turn out voters is less conservative red meat than roast chicken — a Republican comfort menu of tax cuts, job creation and parental influence over schools, which the governor labels "common-sense conservative policies."

On abortion, Mr. Youngkin, who is not on the ballot, wants to ban the procedure after 15 weeks with exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the mother. If Republicans take majorities in both legislative chambers — and both are in play — the takeaway is likely to be that the party cracked the code with suburban swing voters on abortion by offering a more middle-of-the-road position than the near total bans passed in deep-red states.

"This election is going to matter, it's going to set things up for 2024," said Don Scott, the Democratic leader of the Virginia House of Delegates, who is one of his party's lead strategists. "If Virginia goes the wrong way, the narrative is going to be the Republicans have figured out the right election combination to overcome their extremism on abortion."

All 40 seats in the Virginia Senate and all 100 in the House are on the ballot. Republicans hold a slim majority in the House and Democrats narrowly control the Senate. Strategists on both sides agree that each chamber is up for grabs.

"Folks, hold our House and flip our Senate, we know how to do this," Mr. Youngkin urged a crowd on Saturday in a swing House district south of Richmond. He added: "Virginia is the test case."

He did not mention that another upshot of Republicans' taking full control of state government is that Mr. Youngkin would further ascend as a national figure. Although he earlier teased a presidential run for 2024 — encouraged by many wealthy out-of-state donors and conservative media outlets who still yearn for him to get in the race — he has batted away the calls for months, saying his sole focus is turning the state.

Although he has not ruled out a late entry into the primary, the political calendar and the polls argue strongly against such a move. Filing deadlines for the ballot in the early primary states of South Carolina and Nevada will have passed by November.

In a recent Roanoke College Poll, 51 percent of Virginians approved of Mr. Youngkin's job as governor, but only 9 percent of Republicans in his home state want him to be the 2024 nominee, versus 47 percent who favor Donald J. Trump.

Mr. Youngkin, a wealthy former financial executive, has raised record sums for the Spirit of Virginia, his political committee supporting legislative candidates. The group says it pulled in \$3.3 million in August and has raised \$12 million since March. It is underwriting a tour of swing districts with Mr. Youngkin urging supporters to sign the side of a bus to show their commitment to voting early starting Sept. 22 — a practice that Mr. Trump had made toxic with the G.O.P. base, but has recently embraced.

With Democrats lacking a comparable state leader this year, Virginia's Democratic U.S. senators, Mark R. Warner and Tim Kaine, have raised alarms in recent weeks that the party was falling behind in fund-raising and mobilization.

The White House heard the pleas, and President Biden directed the Democratic National Committee to funnel \$1.2 million to the Majority Project, the Democratic group in Virginia coordinating door-knockers and other voter outreach in key districts.

During Mr. Trump's presidency, Virginia Democrats won full control of state government in elections in 2017 and 2019. In 2021, Mr. Youngkin and down-ballot Republicans profited from a backlash over pandemic-era school closures as well as rising inflation under Mr. Biden.

"I'd love to have said that Virginia is solidly blue; that's clearly not the case," Mr. Warner said in an interview. Control of each chamber is likely to come down to a handful of races: four seats in the Senate and seven in the House that are considered tossups, according to an analysis by the nonpartisan Virginia Public Access Project.

Many of the seats are in the exurbs of Virginia's metropolitan areas — greater Washington, Richmond and Hampton Roads — a frontier of swing voters, many college-educated, the kind of voters who have had starring roles in elections across the U.S. in recent years.

Democratic strategists said they needed to win only one of the four tossup Senate seats to hold their current majority. They are encouraged that Democratic congressional candidates carried all

of the districts in the 2022 midterms. Republicans counter that Mr. Youngkin won the same districts in his 2021 election, and that he remains popular.

One of the most closely watched races is between two first-time Senate candidates in Loudoun County, a Washington exurb that became a national flashpoint in 2021 after conservative attacks on its public school policies on diversity and transgender students.

Mr. Youngkin seized on those cultural issues to brand himself the “parents’ rights” candidate, which helped power his victory. In office, he banned critical race theory in K-12 schools (although educators said C.R.T. had no influence on curriculums), set up a tip line for parents to report about teachers and gave parents control of the names and pronouns their children used in school.

Whether these issues still motivate voters is one of the unknowns in this year’s election. Mr. Youngkin is betting that they do and is holding a “Parents Matter” town hall-style event in Loudoun County on Tuesday. Over the weekend, the governor went on “Fox News Sunday” to announce he had pardoned a father arrested in a 2021 incident at a Loudoun County School Board meeting where the father had criticized officials after his daughter was sexually assaulted in school.

Russet Perry, the Democrat running for the open Senate seat in the county, said that when she knocks on the doors of swing voters, the top education issue she hears is concerns over school shootings, not culture-war matters.

“Parents are a little tired of the politics intentionally injected into the schools by people who do not live here, including Glenn Youngkin,” said Ms. Perry, a former prosecutor with a daughter who is a high school freshman in public school.

Across the state, the Democratic message is that Republicans are “extremists” and if they win full control in Richmond, they will seek strict abortion limits.

But Mr. Youngkin has mostly focused his message elsewhere. In his 18-minute speech to rally Republicans on Saturday in Prince George, Va., he did not utter the words “abortion” or “pro-life,” instead stressing “common sense” policies.

After a half-hour of greeting supporters, as aides hustled him to his car, he responded to a reporter’s shouted question about whether he would sign a six-week abortion ban.

“Virginians elected a pro-life governor,” he said. “At the end of the day, I think we can ask all kinds of hypothetical questions. What I’ve been very clear on — and I’d appreciate you writing it clearly — is that I support a bill to protect life at 15 weeks.”

[Rupert Murdoch encouraged Virginia’s Glenn Youngkin to seek presidency | The Washington Post | August 18, 2023](#)

Media mogul Rupert Murdoch has repeatedly encouraged Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) to run for president in 2024, according to two people familiar with entreaties made in at least two face-to-face meetings.

The previously unreported meetings took place months ago, but Murdoch's ask has taken on fresh relevance as Youngkin continues to lay the groundwork for a potential last-minute White House bid and as Murdoch outlets hyped his presidential prospects this month with a mix of sober Wall Street Journal analysis and buzzy Page Six blurbs.

The New York Times reported in July, in a story on how Fox News coverage of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) turned tougher as his presidential campaign began struggling, that Murdoch had privately told people that he would like Youngkin to enter the race.

It was not publicly known until now that the New York billionaire, whose family owns a controlling stake in News Corp. and Fox Corp., had personally encouraged Youngkin to jump in, although the Virginia governor is thought to be waiting to see if his party prevails in the November state election before making a decision on whether to run.

The two men have spoken on at least two occasions in person about a possible Youngkin run, according to two people familiar with the ongoing discussion between them. The more recent of the two discussions took place in the spring and the timing of the first was unclear, according to a third person familiar with their interactions who, like the others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

A Fox spokesman said Murdoch was not available for an interview. Dave Rexrode, chairman of Youngkin's Spirit of Virginia PAC, did not respond to questions about Murdoch but said the recent flurry of attention from his media empire stems from Youngkin's success in Virginia. "Virginia's getting attention because parents still matter and Governor Youngkin's commonsense conservative leadership is working," Rexrode said in a written statement to The Washington Post. "There's more to do, so the governor's not taking his eye off Virginia. These races are too important."

Murdoch has long felt that the seeming obsession of former president Donald Trump with the results of the 2020 election will only serve to drag the Republican Party down in a general election. He is also keenly aware of the damage that Trump's message about the election cost his own company, which was forced to pay nearly \$788 million to Dominion Voting Systems in a settlement in a defamation action earlier this year.

One of the people familiar with the conversations between Murdoch and Youngkin cautioned that Murdoch has previously urged others to get into the ring with Trump, as he did with former New York mayor Mike Bloomberg during the 2016 Republican primary. "Not everyone listens to Rupert, and Rupert's instincts are not always perfect," this person said. "But he has always believed that some competition is better than none at all, and he would like to see some debate about the issues in the primary."

Support from Murdoch could be a great asset to any White House hopeful given the reach his media empire has with conservative audiences, but it is no golden ticket. In addition, Murdoch is ultimately a pragmatist and the people familiar with the Youngkin discussions said Murdoch could once again throw his support behind Trump. But given the Fox settlement with Dominion, the media mogul is more tentative than ever about the former president, these people said.

As Murdoch outlets started to turn on Trump — the New York Post famously covered his 2024 campaign kickoff with the headline “Florida man makes announcement” — their conservative audience largely stuck with the former president. The praise and attention that Fox showered on DeSantis as he first emerged as the chief rival to Trump did not forestall the governor’s more recent fall in the polls.

A political newcomer and former Carlyle Group executive who plowed \$20 million of his own money to fund his 2021 gubernatorial campaign, Youngkin swiftly vaulted from national obscurity to lists of potential Republican presidential contenders the moment he flipped seemingly blue Virginia red.

A recent Virginia Commonwealth University survey found Virginians favor Youngkin over President Biden for president 44 percent to 37 percent in a hypothetical head-to-head contest, but Youngkin barely registers in national Republican primary polls. Nevertheless, White House buzz around him has persisted.

Some political insiders see a path for Youngkin based on his ties to the donor class and a personal fortune that Forbes estimated at \$470 million at the time of his election; appeal to evangelicals as someone who started a church in his basement; and ability to wage MAGA culture wars in the style of the friendly dad next door.

Yet Youngkin would face tremendous logistical hurdles if he sticks with his plan to stay out of the race until after the Virginia General Assembly races on Nov. 7 that have the potential to boost or dim his national prospects. The candidate filing deadlines for presidential primaries or caucuses will have passed by that date in some key states, including Nevada on Oct. 15 and South Carolina on Oct. 31. The deadlines in a host of other states fall soon after that.

Youngkin has two missions, winning the statehouse and the White House, which are intertwined. Virginia Republicans must hold the House and flip the Senate to preserve the very thing that launched Youngkin to national prominence: his reputation for energizing MAGA voters without alienating suburban moderates.

As he focuses on the Virginia elections, Youngkin continues to prepare for a potential White House run. The governor courted billionaire Republican megadonors early this month in the Hamptons at the home of former commerce secretary Wilbur Ross. He is due in Atlanta on Saturday to serve as the closing speaker at a conference that Republican commentator Erick Erickson has organized to showcase several declared Republican presidential candidates.

One major Republican donor is openly pushing for Youngkin. Thomas Peterffy told the Financial Times in April that he was putting his contributions to DeSantis “on hold” to protest what he perceived as the governor’s extreme positions on some social issues. “Because of his stance on abortion and book banning,” Peterffy and “a bunch of friends, are holding our powder dry,” he told the newspaper.

Peterffy donated \$1 million to Youngkin’s Spirit of Virginia PAC as he backed away from DeSantis in April and followed up this month with another \$1 million contribution. The Florida resident of Palm Beach raved about Youngkin’s presidential prospects on Fox Business in late July and on Fox News this month. Peterffy declined an interview with The Post.

“Definitely he could beat Donald Trump. He could beat anybody,” Peterffy told Fox News host Steve Doocy last week. Doocy introduced Peterffy as “one of those mega donors who hopes that Glenn Youngkin gets into the race.” “A million bucks to a guy who is not even in yet. How are you going to get him to run?” Doocy asked.

“Well, he is running,” Peterffy began before clarifying, “I mean, he is fighting in Virginia for these elections that are coming up this November and that is what the money is for, to help him turn the state Republican.” Doocy pegged the segment on the gathering at the home of Stephen Ross days earlier, quoting from a Page Six item that said “the governor impressed the crowd with his pitch.”

The New York Post gossip column, which in July broke news of the planned party under its “celebrity news” banner, followed up this month with a report that the “buzzy dinner” drew Ross and fellow billionaires Ronald Lauder, John Paulson and Nelson Peltz.

Ross, the Miami Dolphins owner and developer who held a fundraiser for Trump’s reelection effort in 2019, is so far the only one of the identified guests to donate to Youngkin since the event, giving \$25,000 to his PAC on Aug. 11. Another New York billionaire, Stanley Druckenmiller, gave \$75,000 to the PAC on Aug. 9, although it was not clear if he attended the event. He did not respond to messages seeking comment.

Those reports kicked off a burst of Youngkin coverage in Murdoch outlets, some of it focused on appearances the governor was making around Virginia to promote his “parents matter” agenda in schools. The New York Post and the Wall Street Journal dispatched opinion writers to cover the tour. When Youngkin staged the event in Fredericksburg on Aug. 10, Fox News shared it with viewers nationwide via live shot.

“A 6-foot-7 gentle giant with a perpetual smile, he already looks presidential,” a New York Post columnist opined on Aug. 13, using an inflated stat from his days as a Rice University basketball player. (Youngkin said he used to stand 6-foot-6 but with age has shrunk to a still-towering 6-foot-5.) “If no alternative to Mr. Trump breaks through, nervous Republican donors and voters will start looking for a lifeboat, and Glenn Youngkin just may prove seaworthy,” Wall Street

Journal editorial board member Kate Bachelder Odell wrote in a lengthy piece that also ran on Aug. 13.

Ron DeSantis launches his war on woke and what that means now

That same day, the Journal Editorial Report on Fox News featured Odell and some of her colleagues discussing Youngkin's prospects for a hefty 6½ minutes. Their assessment was mostly upbeat. "I didn't hear the word 'woke,'" Odell said, drawing a contrast with DeSantis and his aggressive declaration of "war on woke." (Youngkin has used "woke" at times, including at a rally in Northern Virginia alongside Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Tex.) ahead of the 2022 midterms, where the governor warned parents could be arrested "for not conforming to woke views.")

Former Trump White House adviser Stephen K. Bannon, grumbling in a radio interview Monday that Murdoch outlets were trying to "give some life" to Youngkin's presidential hopes, said MAGA voters in Virginia should consider staying home in November since Republican wins would make Youngkin a bigger threat to Trump.

"Why should they set up another competitor to Trump?" Bannon asked rhetorically to radio host John Fredericks, who was the Virginia chairman of the Trump campaign in 2016 and 2020. Fredericks pushed back against that strategy, calling it "crazy" and "Machiavellian" even as he echoed Bannon's complaints about glowing Youngkin coverage. Youngkin is Murdoch's "new flavor of the month after his DeSantis gamble blew up in his face," Fredericks said later in an interview with The Post.

A Trump spokesperson declined to comment on Murdoch and Youngkin but said the campaign did not support the proposal from Bannon for the Virginia elections. "Of course we support a Republican majority in the Senate and House in Virginia," the Trump spokesperson said.

Many donors who want to see a Republican nominee other than Trump have voiced interest in Youngkin as a conservative alternative who could be more palatable to suburban voters, particularly those who fled the party during the Trump years. That desire has only intensified as DeSantis has struggled to win over Republican rank-and-file voters despite his well-funded campaign, aggressive persona and his efforts to prove his conservative bona fides to the primary electorate by outflanking Trump on the right.

Many donors were initially excited about DeSantis, who had an enviable donor Rolodex and appeared to be the most formidable challenger to Trump following his landslide reelection victory in Florida in 2022. He raised \$20 million in the first six weeks of his campaign, but both national and key primary state polls suggest that his message is not connecting with a broad swath of Republican voters, many of whom still prefer Trump.

But some donors who have soured on DeSantis are not ready to turn to Youngkin, who will not hit the halfway point of his four years as governor until January. Among those who have called a Youngkin bid premature is Andrew Sabin, a New York metal recycling magnate and major

Republican donor. He backed Trump in 2016 and 2020, planned to support DeSantis this time, soured on him in the spring and next turned next to Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.).

Sabin likes what he sees so far in Youngkin. He donated \$10,000 to his gubernatorial campaign and gave the same amount to his Spirit of Virginia PAC in May. But Sabin is not ready to back him for president. “I like him a lot, but I really would like to see him finish out his term in Virginia,” he said. “Show the people of the country he is a great governor and he deserves to be president in '28.”

Print (background on Governor's race)

[Trump's false election claims in focus in Va. governor race | AP | October 7, 2021](#)

Republican Glenn Youngkin has not talked much lately about President Donald Trump's lies about voter fraud, the insurrection on Jan. 6 or his party's eroded trust in elections. But when he has, it has not gone smoothly.

The GOP nominee for governor of Virginia argued this week that the state's voting machines must be regularly audited, suggesting that would ensure “everybody can trust” the process. Left unsaid was that the machines already undergo annual audits.

The comment followed a recent interview in which Youngkin did not directly say whether he would have voted to certify Democrat Joe Biden's victory, had he been in Congress. He later followed up to say he would have.

The murky answers and clarification underscore Youngkin's dilemma when it comes to talking about last year's election. False claims and misinformation about the results are so widely believed by Republican voters that disputing the lies can be politically risky. For months, while running for his party's nomination, Youngkin declined to say whether Biden was legitimately elected.

Now, in a general election, vying for votes in a tight race in left-leaning Virginia, Youngkin has tried to resist being branded as a election denier or letting Democrats tie him to Trump's false claims.

The former president hasn't made it easy. His political action committee sent an email late Wednesday highlighting a story about Youngkin's comments, writing: “ICYMI: ‘Youngkin calls for audit of voting machines in Virginia.’”

Trump has been pushing Republicans in battleground states to stage “audits” of the results. He is unbowed by the fact that the most high-profile examination — a partisan review of ballots in Arizona's largest county — turned up no evidence that the election was stolen.

Democrats seized on the emailed remarks as a sign that the two men are aligned.

“Last night’s endorsement made the fifth time that Donald Trump has publicly endorsed Glenn Youngkin,” Democratic Party of Virginia chairwoman Susan Swecker said in a call with reporters Thursday. “Glenn just can’t get enough and he continues to be all in on Donald Trump’s baseless election conspiracy theories that erode our democratic processes and lead, as we have all seen, to violence.”

Youngkin’s opponent, former Gov. Terry McAuliffe, quickly released an ad focused on Youngkin’s remarks, which overlaid audio of the Republican with shaky video footage of the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

“Glenn Youngkin’s priorities are clear: he is running for governor to bring Donald Trump’s dangerous conspiracy theories to Virginia,” McAuliffe said in a statement.

The comments from Youngkin, a businessman and first-time political candidate, came while he was speaking to a historically Black voting rights group, the Richmond Crusade for Voters, on Monday.

Asked a question about whether he would sign legislation restricting voting rights, Youngkin responded by saying he wanted to restore trust in the election process. He proposed removing the Department of Elections from the purview of the governor’s office and making it “independent,” restoring a voter ID requirement and making sure “voter rolls are updated.”

“I think we need to make sure that people trust these voting machines. And I just think ... I grew up in a world where you have an audit every year, in businesses you have an audit. So let’s just audit the voting machines, publish it so everybody can see it. And I think when we press forward with this we’re going to just make everybody comfortable that we in fact have an election system that everybody can trust.”

Virginia already conducts annual post-election audits of ballot-scanner machines, and the one conducted after last year’s election affirmed the results accurately portrayed the winner.

McAuliffe approved a bill in 2017 that outlined procedures for the existing audits, and his campaign said Thursday he still supports the law.

Asked Thursday for additional comment about his remarks, Youngkin spokesman Matt Wolking emphasized that Youngkin has been calling for audits since February and said if elected “he will ensure Virginia continues to conduct audits going forward and that they are thorough, efficient and accurate.”

Youngkin made “election integrity” central to his campaign early on. In February, when asked by The Washington Post if Biden was legitimately elected, he declined to say.

But since winning the nomination in May, Youngkin has acknowledged Biden's win and mostly focused on other issues.

"I've said over and over again that Joe Biden's our president," Youngkin said during his first debate against McAuliffe. "I wish he wasn't."

In the second debate, he said "there wasn't material fraud" and "the election was certifiably fair."

He hasn't entirely dropped the topic, though. He spoke at an "election integrity" rally at Liberty University, the conservative, Christian campus that's a popular campaign spot for GOP candidates, in August. Earlier in the summer, he failed to refute a conspiracy theory an attendee raised during a campaign event, according to an exchange captured on audio and first reported by the Huffington Post.

After the attendee suggested Trump could be restored to office, Youngkin responded: "I don't know the particulars about how that can happen, because what's happening in the court system is moving slowly and it's unclear. And we all know the courts move slowly."

Biden was certified as the winner and sworn into office in January. There is no court case pending that would reverse the outcome.

Youngkin has also drawn criticism for welcoming the support of state Sen. Amanda Chase, who has embraced election conspiracy theories, at his campaign events. And two weeks ago, he did not directly respond when asked by an Axios reporter if he would have voted to certify the 2020 election, had he been in Congress.

A day later, he clarified and said he "absolutely" would have.

Tucker Martin, a Virginia-based Republican consultant and former communications director for former Gov. Bob McDonnell, said that with the race close and in its final stretch, the McAuliffe campaign has reason to link Youngkin to Trump — it will fire up the Democratic voters who delivered the state to Biden last year.

"This is what the Democrats are going to do to Glenn Youngkin, from here till the election ends. They need to find any possible opportunity to remind voters that Glenn Youngkin is part of Donald Trump's party."

[Glenn Youngkin, GOP nominee for Virginia governor, goes mum on guns and abortion | The Washington Post | May 26, 2021](#)

Glenn Youngkin vowed, as he pursued the GOP nomination for Virginia governor, to **steadfastly oppose abortion and roll back restrictions on gun rights.**

"We will protect the Second Amendment and our right to keep and bear arms," he told a cheering crowd on May 11, the night he was crowned the nominee. "Friends, together, all of us, we will protect the life of every Virginia child born and unborn."

But more recently, Youngkin has gone relatively mum on guns and abortion — issues that are highly animating to conservative Republicans but threaten to turn off the suburban swing voters needed to win increasingly blue Virginia.

At a rally Monday night in Prince William County, one of the Northern Virginia suburbs where Youngkin needs to hold down Democratic margins, he focused on the classic trio of kitchen-table issues: jobs, schools and public safety. He made one veiled reference to gun rights, promising to defend unspecified constitutional amendments. He said nothing about abortion.

Asked during an interview with The Washington Post on Friday how he would like to change state laws on guns and abortion, Youngkin repeatedly evaded the topics. When pressed, he noted that he is “pro-life” and that he will “stand up for our constitutional rights.” But to every request for specific policy goals on abortion and guns, two of his signature issues, Youngkin offered the same jobs-schools-safety mantra.

“I said the things I’m going to focus on right out of the box — getting our job machine cranked up, focusing on schools and focusing on law enforcement,” he said. “Right out of the box, that’s where we’re going to spend our time. And I know the media wants to absolutely try to find these wedge issues that separate people.”

Youngkin’s campaign said he remains focused on the themes rolled out in his launch video, including his up-by-the-bootstraps biography and his professional success as a former Carlyle Group executive.

“Glenn’s top priorities have remained the same since day one,” campaign spokeswoman Macaulay Porter said.

Youngkin’s move to play down abortion and guns has given Democrats, who choose their nominee in a June 8 primary, an opening.

“Youngkin must stop hiding from his extreme positions and immediately tell Virginians whether he would sign state-level protections for *Roe v. Wade* into law,” said Manuel Bonder, spokesman for the Democratic Party of Virginia.

Supreme Court to review Mississippi abortion law that advocates see as a path to diminish *Roe v. Wade*

Youngkin’s decision to steer away from polarizing social issues follows another post-convention shift: After winning the nomination, he conceded for the first time publicly that President Biden had legitimately won the White House. Before that, Youngkin had studiously avoided saying whether he believed that Democrats had stolen the election — a view that is popular among

former president Donald Trump's supporters, but not as a whole with Virginians, who gave Biden a 10-point win in 2020.

In a shift, GOP nominee for Va. governor admits Biden 'legitimately' elected

The only detailed policy proposal he has issued would promote "election integrity" by requiring the state to update its voter rolls and test its voting machines, make voters show government-issued photo ID and require a witness signature on mail-in ballots.

Like his new tack on Biden's legitimacy, Youngkin's post-convention reticence on abortion and guns has the potential to dampen enthusiasm among some conservatives. It could raise doubts, particularly for a first-time candidate with no voting record, about Youngkin's commitment to those causes, said Philip Van Cleave, president of Virginia Citizens Defense League, which advocates for gun rights.

"I think he should be coming out strongly, speaking about guns and giving exact positions on guns," Van Cleave said. "That way, you can really stir up the gun owners. If you don't talk about it, you leave people wondering."

But some conservative Republicans — hungry for a win after losing every statewide contest for the past dozen years — seem to be greeting Youngkin's messaging shift as a smart way to appeal to a wider, general-election audience.

"There are lots of people who don't care about guns or abortion, or they don't even care if you raise your child transgender," said Don Blake, president of the Virginia Christian Alliance. "They care about the economy."

Blake, who said he met privately with Youngkin for 45 minutes ahead of the convention, said he's confident that Youngkin will not abandon his commitment to "moral issues."

"He's not being squishy because we already have him on record saying this stuff," Blake said.

Victoria Cobb, president of the Family Foundation of Virginia, said conservatives do not need to see detailed policy proposals from Youngkin to prefer him over the eventual Democratic nominee.

"Pro-life Virginians have seen what the extreme left will do when it has power, and I believe they will turn out in huge numbers for anyone who will stand up to Planned Parenthood and the radical left," she said.

Ahead of the convention, Youngkin did not shrink from abortion or guns.

“I will not sign a piece of legislation that has anything to do with imposing limitations on our Second Amendment,” Youngkin said three months ago in a Facebook Live interview with the College Republican Federation of Virginia.

He also said he would support rolling back gun-control legislation passed by Democrats last year after they took control of the House of Delegates and state Senate. Those measures include a “red flag” law intended to take weapons away from people deemed by a judge to be in imminent danger of harming themselves or others. Others restrict handgun purchases to one per month and require criminal background checks for all firearms sales.

“We have to actually stand up against all of the legislation that has been passed by the Democrats,” he said. “As your governor, we will not just stand up, but we will push back — we will push back.”

On abortion, he told Breitbart News Daily in April, “I’m pro-life, and what my religious foundation in the cornerstone of my life teaches me is to protect life before birth and after birth.”

“These are not squishy issues. These are absolute issues,” Youngkin continued in the Breitbart interview. “If we don’t stand up for our Constitution, if we don’t stand up for the rights guaranteed under our Bill of Rights, if we don’t stand up for life, then who will?”

Aside from his “election integrity” plan, though, Youngkin has spoken in broad strokes. Even now, his campaign website has no “issues” page — a standard feature on the pages of all six of his Republican rivals and all five of the Democratic gubernatorial candidates.

Before the convention, Youngkin avoided getting pinned down on specifics by not answering surveys from interest groups such as the Virginia Citizens Defense League and the National Rifle Association — a first in recent memory for a successful statewide GOP nominee.

Youngkin justified the decision to skip surveys by noting that Trump refused to answer them, as well.

“We certainly weren’t happy,” said Van Cleave, of the Citizens Defense League. “Pretty much everybody [in the Republican contest] answered except for him.”

None of the Democrats filled out Van Cleave’s survey, either, but that was not a surprise since they all support gun control. Youngkin’s nonresponse has left him wary.

“We’re always on the lookout for the ‘Second Amendment-but’ people — ‘I support the Second Amendment, but nobody needs to have a rifle that holds more 10 rounds,’ ” he said. “Or, ‘I support the Second Amendment, but all guns should be licensed and registered.’ . . . We’re looking for heroes. We’re looking for people who are willing to go out and stand up for our rights and protect them. That will get people excited.”

[Glenn Youngkin, a Republican financier, defeats Terry McAuliffe in the Virginia governor's race | The New York Times | November 3, 2021](#)

Republicans claimed the governorship of Virginia for the first time in more than a decade on Wednesday, electing the businessman Glenn Youngkin and presenting their party with a formula for how to exploit President Biden's vulnerabilities and evade the shadow of Donald J. Trump in Democratic-leaning states.

Mr. Youngkin, 54, a wealthy former private equity executive making his first run for office, elevated education and taxes while projecting a suburban-dad demeanor to demonstrate he was different from Mr. Trump without saying so outright. He defeated former Gov. Terry McAuliffe, a Democrat who, with Mr. Trump out of office, struggled to generate enthusiasm among liberals at a moment when conservatives are energized in opposition to Mr. Biden.

The Associated Press called the race for Mr. Youngkin shortly after 12:30 a.m. Wednesday morning, hours after the polls closed on Tuesday night.

No less bracing for Democrats was a second gubernatorial election unfolding in New Jersey: The incumbent governor, Philip D. Murphy, was narrowly trailing a relatively obscure Republican challenger, Jack Ciattarelli, deep into the night. A mainstream liberal with ties to the White House, Mr. Murphy was staking his hopes for a comeback on a strong performance in several solidly Democratic areas where votes were slow to report.

But the unexpected closeness of the race underscored the overall vulnerability of the Democratic Party. Much like Mr. Youngkin in Virginia, Mr. Ciattarelli appeared to benefit from robust turnout in rural and conservative-leaning areas of the state while making inroads in denser areas such as Bergen County, the populous suburb of New York City.

Unlike Mr. Youngkin, Mr. Ciattarelli, a former state legislator, had no vast personal fortune to spend on his candidacy and national Republicans looked at his campaign as an extreme long shot. Even if Mr. Murphy prevails, it is certain to be by a minute fraction of the 16-point margins by which both he and Mr. Biden carried the state in their last campaigns.

The elections on Tuesday took place at a moment when voters are deeply frustrated, weary from the still-lingering coronavirus pandemic and irritated at the costs and scarcity of goods. Large majorities in polls say that the country is on the wrong track, a foreboding indicator for the party in power.

Mr. Youngkin's surprise victory in Virginia represents the starkest warning yet that Democrats are in danger. It was likely to prompt additional congressional retirements, intensify the intraparty tug of war over Mr. Biden's agenda and fuel fears that a midterm electoral wave and Mr. Trump's return as a candidate are all but inevitable.

"The MAGA movement is bigger and stronger than ever before," Mr. Trump said in a statement Tuesday night.

Addressing supporters in Northern Virginia, Mr. Youngkin said the state had reached “a defining moment.”

“Together we will change the trajectory of this commonwealth,” Mr. Youngkin said after taking the stage and clapping along to the blues-rock anthem “Spirit in the Sky.”

In the first competitive statewide election of Mr. Biden’s presidency, Mr. McAuliffe worked assiduously to link Mr. Youngkin to the previous president. Inviting a parade of prominent national Democrats to campaign with him, the former governor sought to nationalize the race and effectively transform a gubernatorial contest into a referendum on Mr. Trump in a state he lost by 10 points last year.

But voters appeared far more eager to register their frustration with the Democrats in control of Washington and Richmond, the state capital, and fissures appeared in the coalition of moderate whites, people of color and young liberals that elected Mr. Biden in 2020. In cities, suburbs and exurbs that Mr. Biden had handily carried, Mr. McAuliffe’s margins shrank dramatically.

Mr. McAuliffe never fully articulated his own vision for a second term and received no favors from Mr. Biden or his party’s lawmakers. They spent much of the fall locked in contentious negotiations over Mr. Biden’s infrastructure and social welfare proposals, failing to reach a consensus that could have at least offered Mr. McAuliffe some good news to trumpet.

Democrats in Virginia have tended to win statewide elections on a message of can-do pragmatism. The stalemate in Washington cast the party in a different light.

Taking the stage in McLean before the race was called, Mr. McAuliffe thanked his family and supporters but did not concede. “This is a different state,” he said of Virginia following his governorship and that of his successor, Gov. Ralph S. Northam. “We are going to continue that fight.”

Significantly, Mr. Trump appeared unusually content to be kept at arm’s length by Mr. Youngkin, remaining mostly silent as the Republican candidate declined to invite him to the state. Mr. McAuliffe even acknowledged to reporters on Monday that “from a political perspective” it would have been better for him had the former president not been banished from Twitter so Mr. Trump could have had a platform from which to insert himself into the campaign.

For Republicans, particularly those uneasy with Mr. Trump and battered by the party’s string of losses on his watch, Mr. Youngkin’s triumph delivered a moment of exultation. Their win in Virginia demonstrated that they can reclaim some suburban voters without fully embracing or rejecting Mr. Trump.

Clad in a fleece vest and sporting a smile on the campaign trail, Mr. Youngkin happily claimed support from so-called Never Trumpers and Forever Trumpers, while otherwise voicing a center-right agenda in a state where Republicans have not won statewide since 2009.

In part because Mr. McAuliffe was so dedicated to his strategy of inserting Mr. Trump into the race, Mr. Youngkin evaded scrutiny about his own views on policy, which on issues like abortion and same-sex marriage were to the right of most Virginia voters.

The race illustrated that voters are chiefly focused on day-to-day quality of life issues related to the economy and the pandemic, and they blame Democrats for failing to fully address these matters.

The Virginia results also suggest that Mr. Trump's exit has at least loosened the Democrats' hold on the college-educated voters who powered their gains over the last five years.

It's highly unlikely, however, that the former president will let other Republicans sidestep him in next year's midterm elections the way Mr. Youngkin did. The party's victory in Virginia may only lull Republicans into believing that Mr. Trump no longer poses a dilemma and can be indefinitely averted, the sort of thinking many party leaders have clung to for more than six years.

For now, though, it's Democrats who will suffer the most as their moderate-versus-liberal intraparty tensions flare in Washington and beyond and officials blame one another for the defeat.

Susan Swecker, the chairwoman of the Democratic Party of Virginia, was blunt in her criticism of national Democrats for their losses on Tuesday. "I would encourage those people across the river that could pass legislation to give relief to working families that maybe they better wake up and think about what next year is going to look like now," Ms. Swecker said.

However, even before polls closed Tuesday, one senior adviser to Mr. Biden was fuming over talking points issued by the Democratic Governors Association, which pointed to the president's dimming popularity. It was not Mr. Biden, this adviser said, but Mr. McAuliffe who handed Republicans a political weapon as they sought to tap into parents' anger over local school boards.

The moment came in a September debate, when Mr. McAuliffe said, "I don't think parents should be telling schools what they should teach."

For Democrats, part of the reason the loss was so painful was because it was so familiar.

The last time a Republican won the Virginia governorship, in 2009, the party's nominee rode a backlash against President Barack Obama to a 17-point victory, carrying densely populated suburbs like Fairfax County in Northern Virginia. That victory presaged a Republican wave the following year that turned over control of the House to the G.O.P. and stymied Mr. Obama for the balance of his time in office.

It was a scenario that Democrats fear could come to pass again in 2022 unless Mr. Biden regains voter confidence.