



**TO: THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS**

**FROM: BILL McINTURFF/JIM HOBART – PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES  
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**RE: KEY FINDINGS – VIRGINIA STATEWIDE TELEPHONE SURVEY OF REGISTERED VOTERS  
ON THE VIRGINIA SHORELINE RESILIENCY FUND**

**DATE: JANUARY 9, 2020**

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**KEY FINDINGS:**

1. ***Virginia voters recognize the importance of making the state more prepared for storms and floods.***

Seventy percent (70%) of voters in the state say that it is important to make the state more prepared for storms and floods and exactly half (35%) of these voters view storm and flood preparedness as very important.

Not surprisingly, this issue is of the most importance to voters in the Norfolk media market, with 87% saying storm and flood preparedness is important, and a majority (58%) saying it is very important.

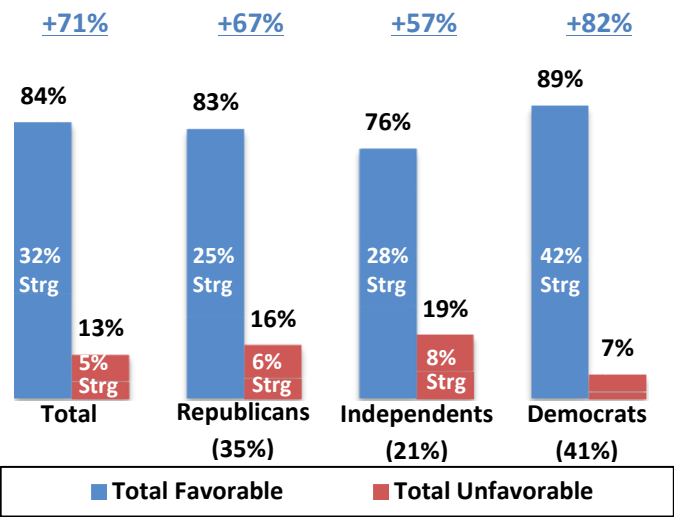
However, acknowledgment of the importance of the issue is not limited to the coast. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of voters in the D.C. media market say storm and flood preparedness is important, as do 65% in the Richmond media market and 64% in the Roanoke media market.

2. ***Eighty-four percent (84%) of Virginia voters support the state's flood preparedness fund.***

Voters were read the following description of the state's flood preparedness fund:

*"The Virginia Shoreline Resiliency Fund was created to help home and business owners in frequently flooded areas. Funds could be used for actions like moving heating and air conditioning units into attics or elevating or relocating structures. The fund could also reduce the risk of flooding by improving drainage systems, reducing paved areas, and, in areas with repeated flooding, not rebuilding but instead allowing the land to absorb floodwaters."*

Virginia Shoreline Resiliency Fund Favorability – by Party



The vast majority (84%) of voters said they had a favorable impression of the fund after hearing this description, including 32% who said they were strongly favorable.

The strong favorability numbers for the Fund cross partisan lines as 83% of Republicans, 76% of Independents, and 89% of Democrats rate the Fund favorably.

In the open-ended responses, voters favorable to the Fund said it would help communities be better prepared for flooding, which they viewed as a serious problem.

**3. A clear majority of voters also favor the Virginia State Legislature dedicating \$50 million into the Fund in 2020.**

Sixty-one percent (61%) of voters in the state support allocating \$50 million to the Fund, while just 33% of Virginia voters are opposed.

Majorities of voters in every age group back this amount of funding, as do both white and non-white voters.

This is not really a regional issue. While support is highest in the coastal media market of Norfolk (67%), support is also over 60% in the DC media market and sits at 58% in the Richmond media market. Half (50%) of voters in the Roanoke media market also support dedicating \$50 million to the Fund.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:**

Virginia voters throughout the commonwealth understand that storm and flood preparedness is important. Therefore, it is not surprising that upon hearing a description, they give the state’s flood preparedness fund extremely high marks. The strong favorability numbers for the Fund are consistent across partisan lines and with every demographic sub-group.

A strong majority of voters also support the State Legislature allocating \$50 million to the Virginia Shoreline Resiliency Fund. Support for allocating this money is highest in the Norfolk media market but is at 50% or higher in all of the state’s media markets.

## **METHODOLOGY:**

This survey was sponsored and funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts and conducted by Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Associates. The survey was conducted from December 11-14, 2019.

The analysis in this memorandum is based on N=600 telephone interviews among a statewide sample of Virginia voters. The margin of sampling error based on the full statewide sample is  $\pm 4.0$  percentage points at a confidence interval of 95 percent, not including the design effect. Sampling error is larger for other population subgroups, as well. Sample sizes and sampling errors for sub-groups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls. All percentages reported are based on weighted data. Three hundred sixteen (N=316) respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and N=284 respondents were interviewed on a cell-phone. A random sample was pulled from a list of registered voters. The survey was conducted using the CATI method. Interviews were conducted in English.

The respondents were selected using probability methods and based on a county-by-county and regional stratified sample frame. We set quotas by gender and region and sampling ranges for age, ethnicity, and education. Modest post survey weighting on age, gender, race and ethnicity was based on estimates of the Virginia voting public from the voter file and 2016 exit poll in Virginia conducted by Edison Research.

Twenty-three (23) pretest interviews were conducted prior to the field period. The live pretest of the survey instrument and survey administration procedures was conducted on December 5, 2019. Public Opinion Strategies provided a summary of pretest findings, which included feedback from the interviewers.