



West Virginia



2026 general election poll: State Senate District 1

Likely-voter survey of the November 3, 2026 general election | Northern Panhandle (Hancock, Brooke, Ohio & Marshall Counties)

SD-1 **D** Shawn Fluharty **R** Laura Wakim Chapman

At a glance

ELECTION DATE

November 3, 2026

FIELD DATES

September 28-29, 2026

SAMPLE SIZE

884 likely voters

MARGIN OF ERROR

±3.3 points

Methodology

State Navigate surveyed 884 likely voters in West Virginia's 1st State Senate District from September 28-29, 2026. Text messages were sent to voters by AllianceForge, which directed them to an online survey hosted on the SurveyMonkey platform. The sample was drawn from a voter file provided by i360 and results were weighted by gender, race, age, education, party registration, and State House district to reflect the likely November 2026 general electorate. The margin of error is 3.3% at a 95% confidence level. This survey was designed and conducted by the State Navigate Polling Team, and was not sponsored by any candidate or candidate's committee.

District DNA | SD-1 (LV)



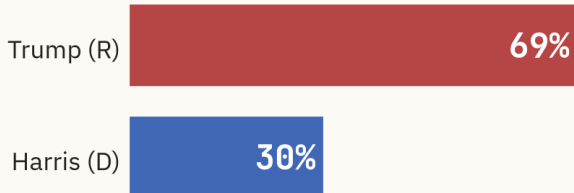
STATE SENATE DISTRICT 1

A State Senate district in West Virginia's Northern Panhandle, anchored by Wheeling and covering Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, and Marshall Counties. Republican incumbent Laura Wakim Chapman is running for re-election against Democrat Shawn Fluharty; both are from Wheeling.

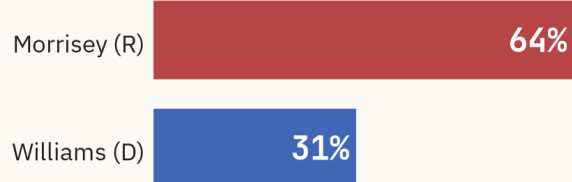


Recent election results in SD-1

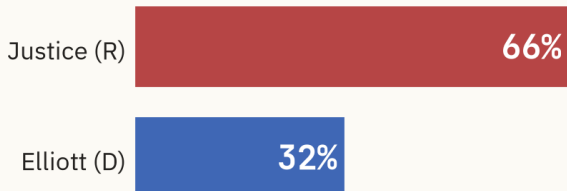
2024 President: Trump +39



2024 Governor: Morrisey +33



2024 U.S. Senate: Justice +34

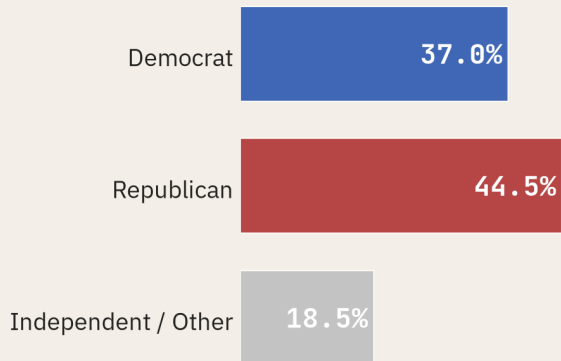


2022 State Senate: Chapman +20

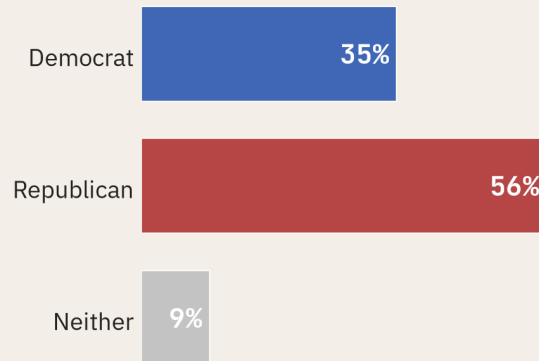


District DNA | Survey demographics

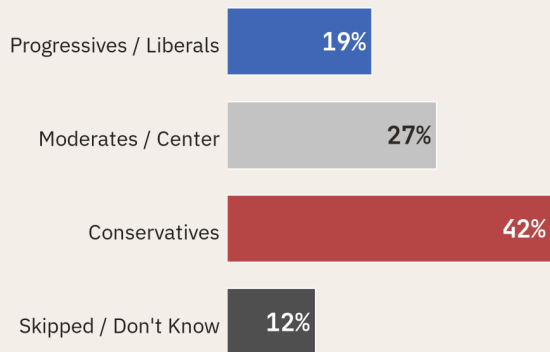
PARTY REGISTRATION



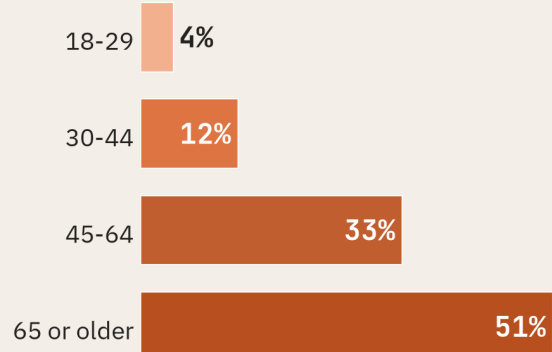
PARTY ID (WITH LEANERS)



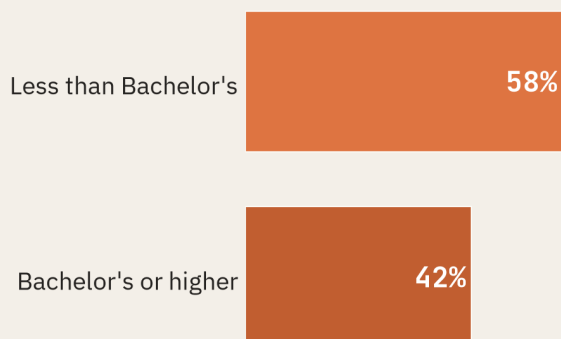
IDEOLOGICAL SELF-ID (0-10)



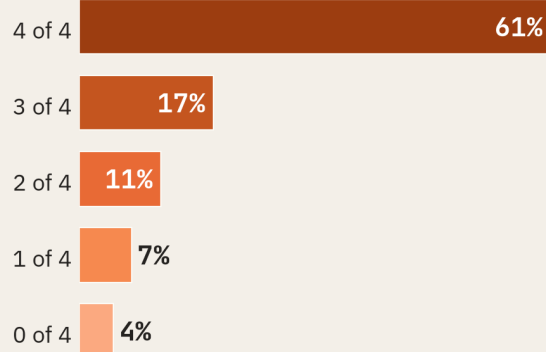
AGE



EDUCATION



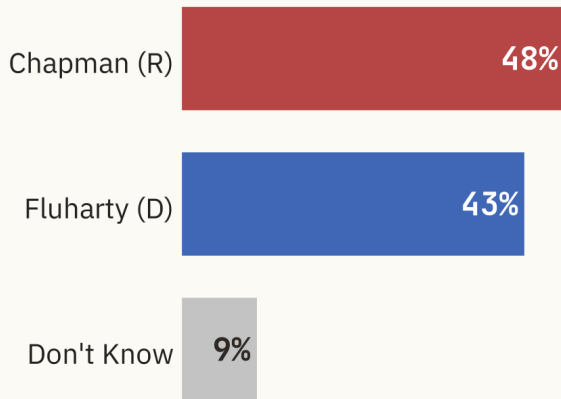
VOTE HISTORY (LAST 4 GENERALS)



The snapshots

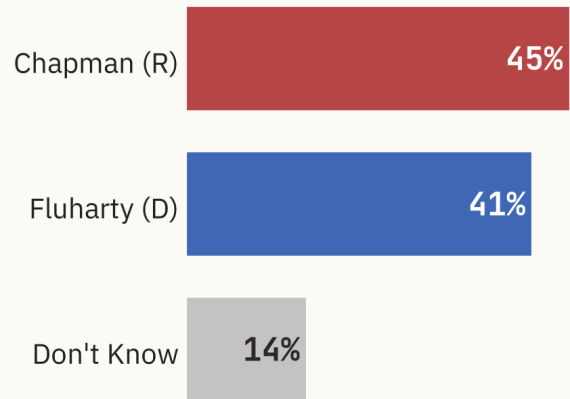
SD-1 with leaners

If the election for West Virginia State Senate District 1 were held today, which candidate would you vote for: Laura Wakim Chapman, the Republican of Wheeling, or Shawn Fluharty, the Democrat of Wheeling? (undecideds allocated via leaner follow-up)



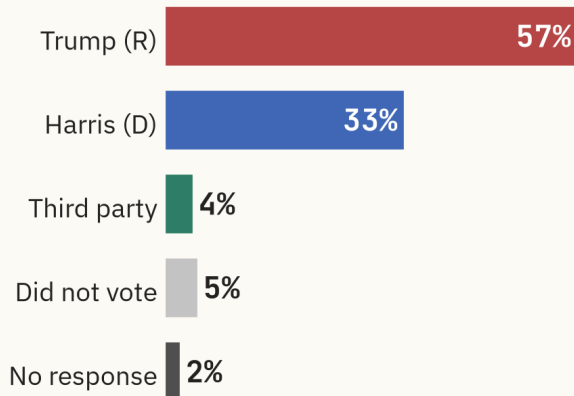
SD-1 before undecided push

If the election for West Virginia State Senate District 1 were held today, which candidate would you vote for: Laura Wakim Chapman, the Republican of Wheeling, or Shawn Fluharty, the Democrat of Wheeling? (initial ballot, before leaner follow-up)



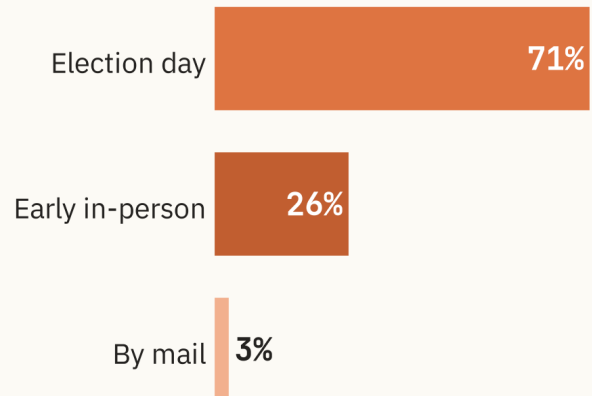
2024 presidential vote (recalled)

In the 2024 presidential election, which candidate did you vote for?



Planned vote method

If you choose to vote in the 2026 general election, how would you cast your vote?

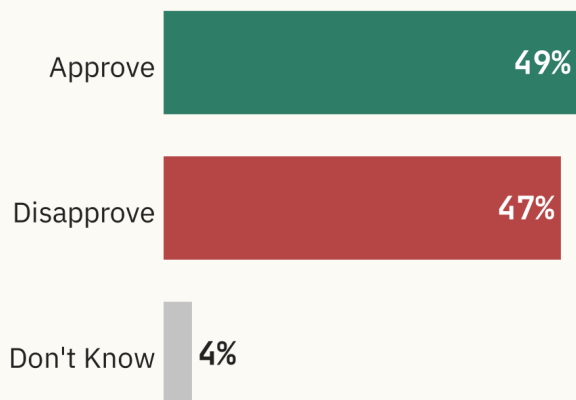


Laura Wakim Chapman (R) leads 48-43 with leaners in SD-1, with 9% undecided. Respondents recall backing Trump over Harris by 24 points in 2024, so Fluharty is running well ahead of the top of the Democratic ticket.

Executive approvals

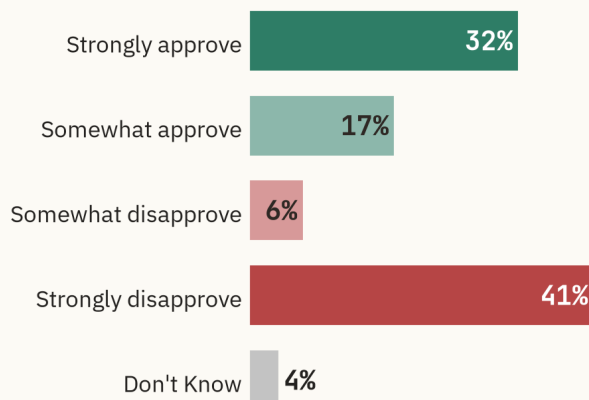
President Trump job approval

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Donald Trump is doing as President?



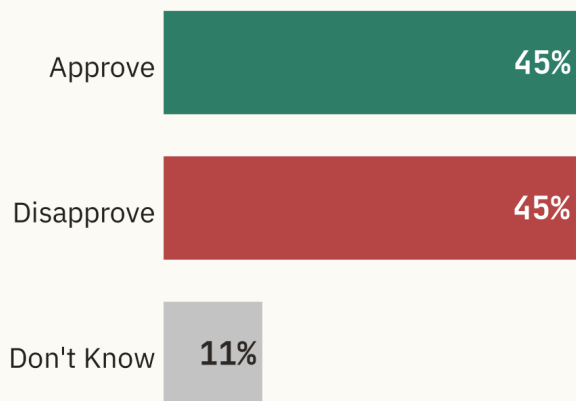
President Trump job approval (detailed)

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Donald Trump is doing as President?



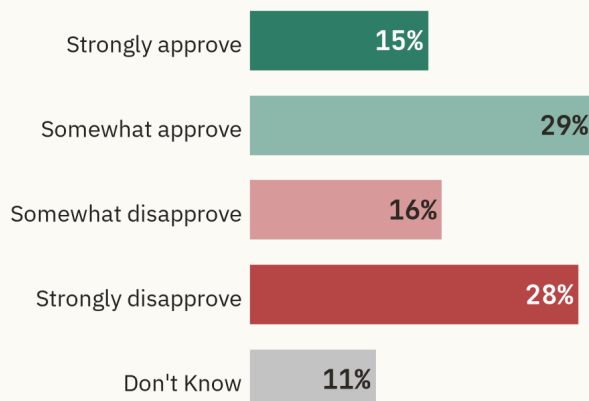
Gov. Morrisey job approval

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Patrick Morrisey is doing as Governor?



Gov. Morrisey job approval (detailed)

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Patrick Morrisey is doing as Governor?

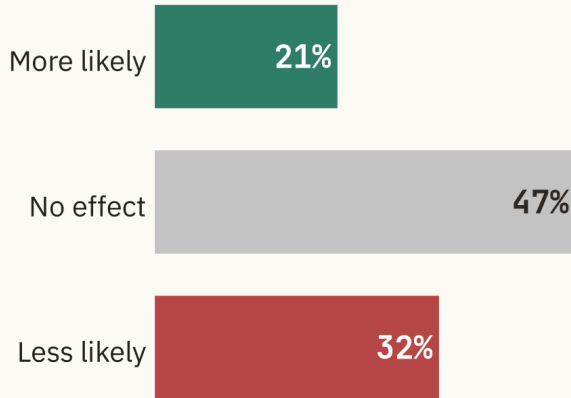


President Trump is above water in SD-1 (49% approve / 47% disapprove), while Gov. Morrisey sits at 45% approve / 45% disapprove. The detailed breakdowns show how much of each number is strongly held versus soft.

The Morrissey factor

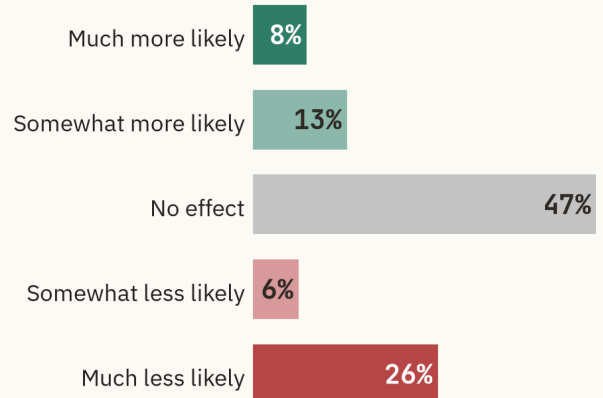
Morrissey endorsement effect

If Governor Morrissey endorsed a candidate in the general election, would that make you more or less likely to vote for that candidate?

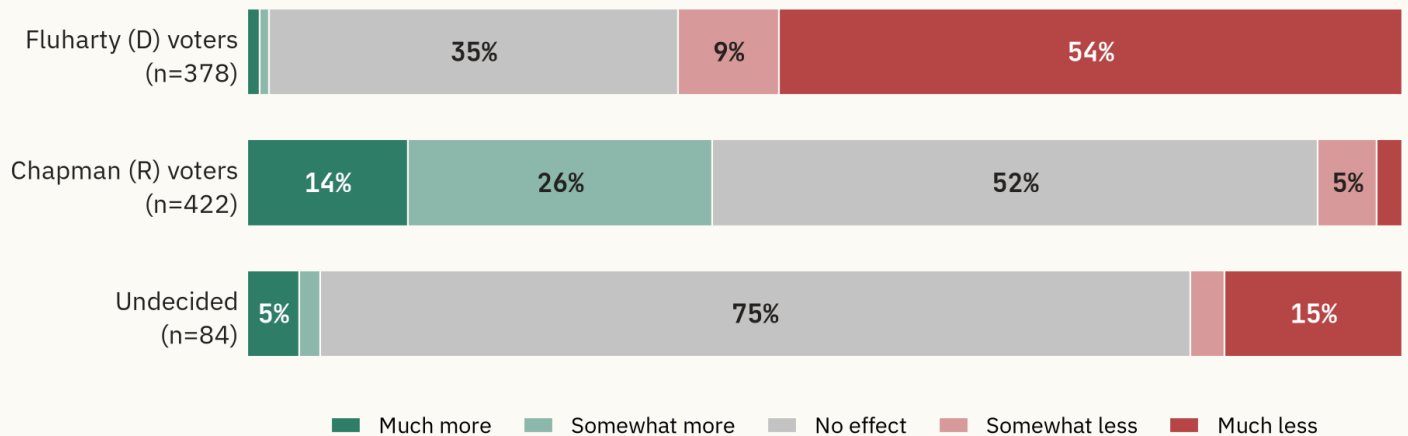


Morrissey endorsement (detailed)

If Governor Morrissey endorsed a candidate in the general election, would that make you more or less likely to vote for that candidate?



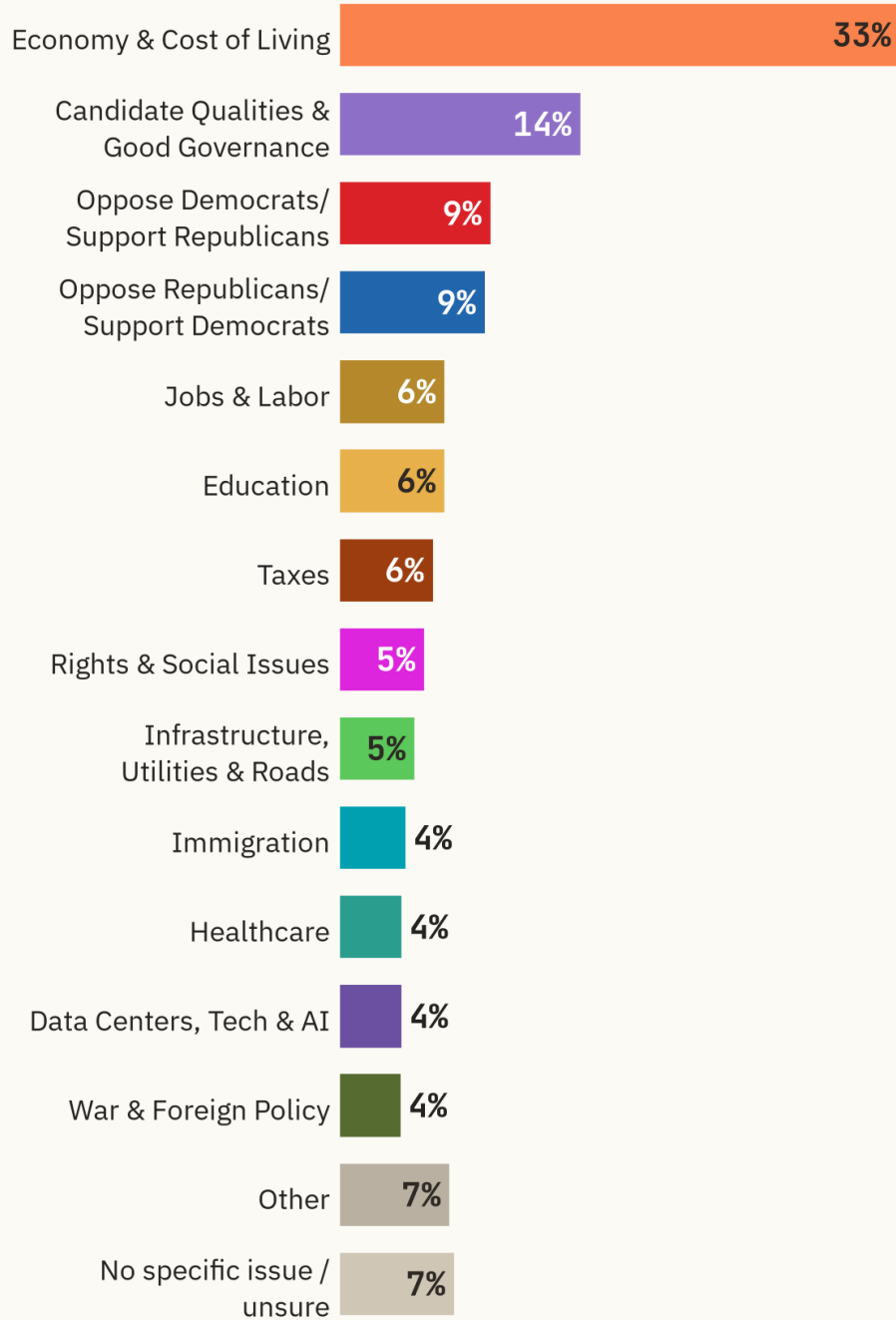
Endorsement effect by SD-1 vote choice (with leaners)



A Morrissey endorsement is a net negative in SD-1: 32% say it would make them less likely to back a candidate, versus 21% more likely, while 47% say it would not affect their vote.

If you choose to vote in November, what is the number one issue that will impact who you vote for?

By theme | Share mentioning (weighted)



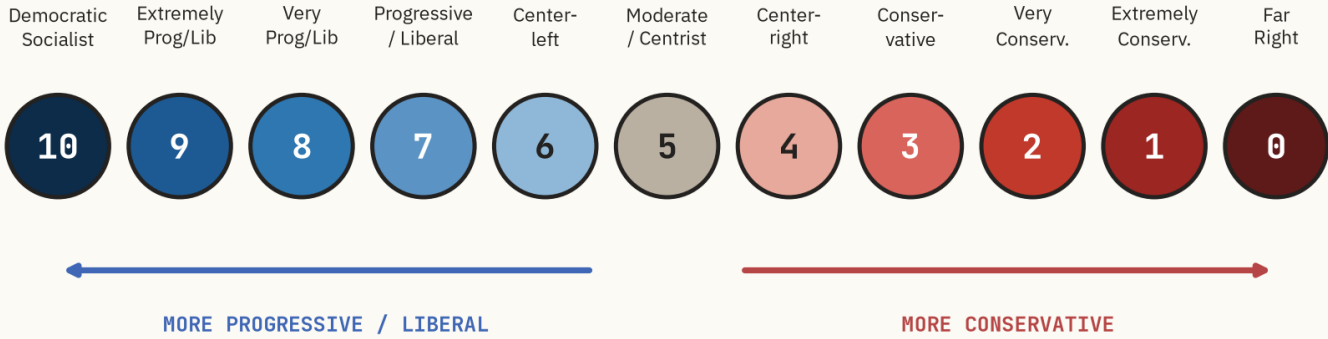
Open-ended responses from 823 respondents (669 weighted LV) who answered. Responses naming more than one issue count toward each theme, so shares sum to more than 100%. Themes follow the State Navigate issue taxonomy.

Survey ideology

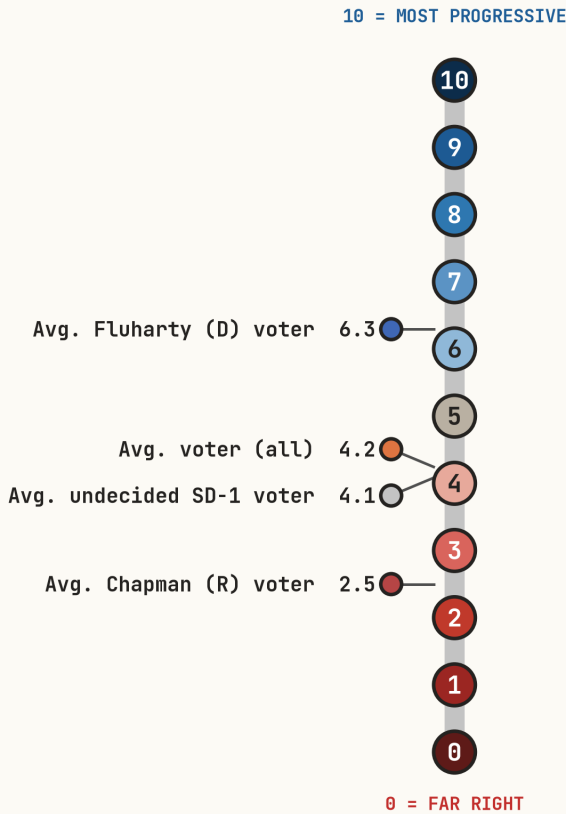
The self-placement scale

IDEOLOGICAL SELF-PLACEMENT SCALE

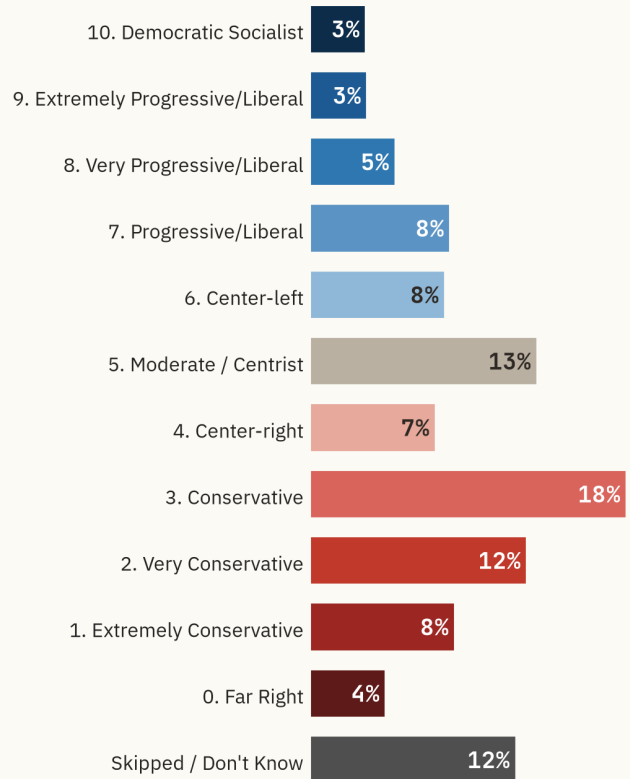
Place yourself — and each candidate — somewhere on the 0–10 scale.



AVERAGE BY VOTER GROUP



DETAILED SELF-PLACEMENT (ALL RESPONDENTS)

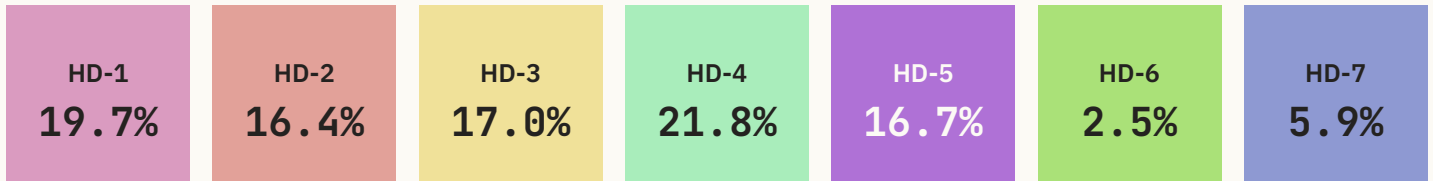


Ideology is respondents' self-placement on a 0-10 scale (10 = most progressive, 0 = far right). Detailed shares are of all respondents; 11.6% skipped the question. Group averages are weighted and computed among those who placed themselves (overall mean 4.2).

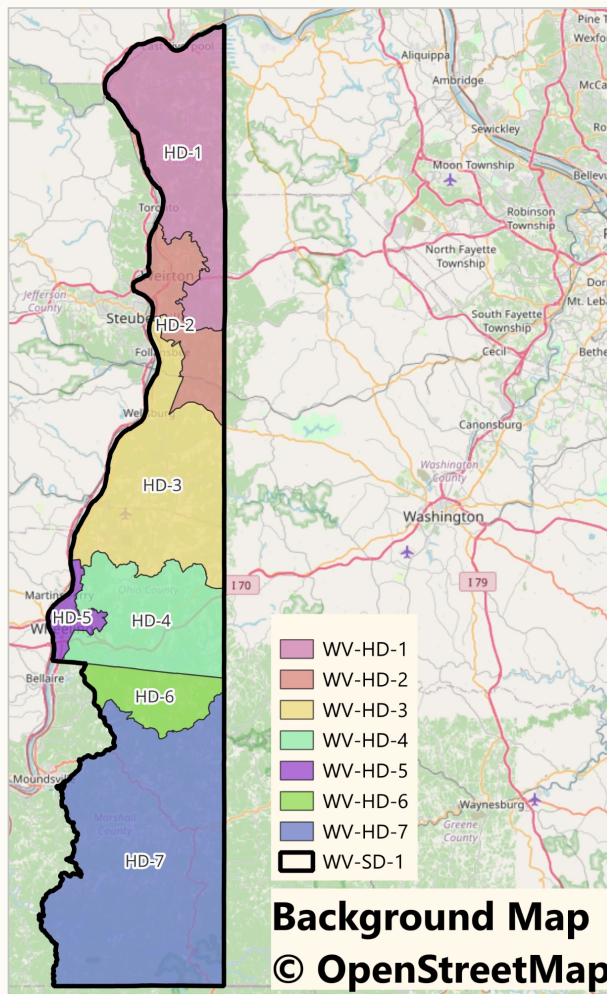
Appendix | Regions & weights

State Senate District 1 was weighted by State House district. Cards show each district's share of the weighted likely-voter sample.

Region weights | Share of weighted sample



SD-1 by region



Team notes & analysis

The following analysis from the State Navigate polling team examines the forces shaping this race.

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE | ON FLUHARTY'S PATH

If Fluharty wins, call it an upset.

Laura Wakim Chapman leads Shawn Fluharty by 5 points with leaners (48% to 43%), and while Fluharty has a path to victory, it's a narrow one. Start with the most motivated voters: among likely voters who say they are definitely voting in November, 84% of our sample, the race tightens to 47% to 45%, but Chapman still holds the edge. Fluharty's coalition also looks close to its ceiling, as 89% of his supporters say they are definitely voting and 75% say they will definitely vote for him, compared with 63% of Chapman's supporters who say the same about her. That leaves the undecideds, just under 10% of likely voters, and they skew Republican. Only 16% recall voting for Kamala Harris in 2024, half of her 33% share districtwide, while 57% recall voting for Donald Trump. Democrats make up 35% of likely voters by party ID but just 25% of undecideds, while 46% of undecideds identify as Republicans; most look like Republican-leaning voters who simply haven't come home to Chapman yet. To reach a majority, Fluharty would need to win roughly three out of every four of them (assuming all of Chapman's current support doesn't waver). His path requires three things to go right at once: he has to peel off soft Chapman supporters, as 31% of her voters say they are only probably voting for her; he has to win most of the remaining undecideds, where his best opening is tying Chapman to Governor Morrissey (34% of undecideds approve of the Governor, 44% disapprove); and the less motivated voters in Chapman's camp have to stay home, since voters who say they are only probably voting back her 54% to 30%. Even if only the most motivated voters turn out, Fluharty would still need about 62% of the remaining undecideds. That's possible, but in a district where Chapman starts as the clear favorite, a Fluharty win would be an upset. With only around 118 undecided respondents, the undecided figures should be read as a directional signal rather than a firm conclusion.

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE | ON TRUMP'S APPROVAL

Our poll and our model agree on Trump.

Donald Trump's job approval in our polling of West Virginia's State Senate districts lines up almost exactly with State Navigate's new interactive model of Trump's approval in every state legislative district in the country. In SD-8, our poll finds 45.2% of likely voters approve of the job Trump is doing and 52.0% disapprove, a net approval of -6.8; our model estimates -6.6. In SD-1, our poll has Trump at 49.2% approve and 47.3% disapprove, a net of +1.9, compared to +1.5 in our model. That's a difference of less than half a point in both districts, even though the model was built independently of these surveys: it applies the patterns from national and state polling going back to early 2025 to each district's demographics and past election results, using multilevel regression and poststratification (MRP). Two very different methods landing in the same place gives us confidence in both the model and our polling. It also lets us look back in time: given how closely the model matches our poll, we can say with a reasonable degree of certainty that Trump's net approval in SD-8 has been negative since June 30. You can explore Trump's approval in every West Virginia State Senate district at projects.statenavigate.com/interactives/us/trump-approval.

Team notes & analysis

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE | ON INDEPENDENT TURNOUT

Independents are the least likely to show up, and they lean Fluharty.

Registered independents and third-party registrants make up 20% of SD-1's electorate in our weighting targets, but only 18.5% once we account for how likely each respondent says they are to vote. Just 62% of independents say they are definitely voting in November, compared with 82% of Democrats and 77% of Republicans, and fewer than half have voted in all four of the last four general elections, compared with 61% of all likely voters. That matters for Fluharty: independents who do plan to vote back him 47% to 38% over Chapman, with 15% undecided. Something that may motivate them after our poll went in the field are the actual results of this survey: in our August survey of registered independents statewide, 39% said they'd be more likely to vote if they saw polls showing a close race in their district, the biggest motivator of any scenario we tested, and 51% of that group planned to vote for Democrats for state legislature, 11 points more than independents overall. With our poll showing Chapman ahead by just 5 points, SD-1 is exactly the kind of close race that could activate these voters, if they hear about it. There's a catch for Fluharty, though: his edge with independents comes from those who are already certain to vote, who back him 53% to 37%. Independents who say they are only probably voting or less lean the other way, favoring Chapman 41% to 29% with 30% undecided, and half of them identify as Republicans. That group is small, around 76 respondents, so the finding is directional, but it suggests that a close-race message could bring out Chapman-leaning independents as readily as Fluharty-leaning ones.

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE | ON GEOGRAPHY

SD-1 is a Wheeling race.

Both candidates are from Wheeling, and Ohio County, which makes up 42% of the likely electorate, is where Fluharty is winning, 51% to 42%. In his own House district, HD-5, which covers most of the city of Wheeling, Fluharty leads by 12 points, 53% to 41%, which tracks closely with the 15-point margin he won re-election by there in 2024. That subsample is only around 170 respondents, though, with a margin of error of roughly 8 points, so it shouldn't be treated as a precise read of his home base. Outside of Ohio County, Chapman leads comfortably: she's ahead by 13 points in both Hancock and Brooke Counties and by 24 points among Marshall County voters. Fluharty's path runs through running up the margin in Wheeling while keeping his losses elsewhere in the Northern Panhandle close. Area codes tell a similar story about who's local: voters with a 304 area code are split almost evenly, 45% Fluharty to 46% Chapman, while voters with an out-of-state area code, about a fifth of the sample, favor Chapman by 22 points.

State Navigate is a nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to becoming a compass for state legislatures everywhere. Our bipartisan polling team consists of alumni of FiveThirtyEight, political scientists, and polling experts. Last year, State Navigate was the most accurate pollster in the country for the 2025 election cycle. To learn more about our poll sponsorship opportunities, [click here](#)! Public polling on state governance, especially state legislatures, is rare, so we try to make our polling as affordable as possible for sponsors to help fill this gap.

Our polling team

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE

FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chaz was the Director of CAnalysis.com, the only website dedicated to state legislative election forecasting. He has successfully forecasted thousands of state legislative elections since 2017 during his senior year in high school. Chaz leads the polling team and works with them on survey design, field work, weighting, and written analysis.

MICHAEL FOLEY

ELECTIONS COORDINATOR

Michael is an expert in GIS technology and has experience in coding and scraping technology. He is a graduate of Fordham University and the University of Chicago Law School. In our polling, Michael conducts fieldwork, setting up surveys and texts, and exports/designs crosstabs.

MARY RADCLIFFE

DATA MANAGER

Mary Radcliffe is a mathematician and data analyst from Pittsburgh. She earned a PhD in Mathematics from the University of California, San Diego in 2012. Mary has previously worked as a Teaching Professor at Carnegie Mellon University and Researcher at FiveThirtyEight. In our polling, Mary helps with survey design, keeps our polling operations ethical, creates topline, and writes analyses of results.

G. ELLIOTT MORRIS

POLLING COMMITTEE MEMBER

Elliott Morris is a data-driven journalist and author living in Washington, DC. He's the author of STRENGTH IN NUMBERS: How Polls Work and Why We Need Them. Elliott was most recently the Editorial Director of Data Analytics at ABC News, where he developed polling aggregation and election-forecasting models and managed the research and data visualization teams for ABC's data-journalism website FiveThirtyEight/538. In our polling, Elliott helps with survey design and writing weighting scripts.

NICHOLAS GOEDERT

POLLING COMMITTEE MEMBER

Nicholas / "Nick" is an assistant professor of Political Science at Virginia Tech with expertise focused on legislative elections and American politics. He is the author of GROUND WAR: Courts, Commissions, and the Fight over Partisan Gerrymanders (Oxford, 2022). He served as an expert witness in the Wisconsin redistricting case Whitford v. Gill. He holds a Ph.D. in Politics from Princeton and a J.D. from Georgetown Law. In our polling, Nick helps with survey design and gives academic feedback.