

Methodology: The Citadel Poll

February 5 – 11, 2024

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## Survey description

The Citadel Poll is a survey of registered voters in South Carolina. A sample of registered voters were contacted to take the survey between Sunday February 5 and Sunday February 11, 2024. A total of 1,000 respondents were interviewed by Promark Research or contacted through SMS messages by Verasight, as well as emails to some eligible respondents in Verasight's national panel. In total 405 surveys were completed with live telephone interviews (40.5%), 538 respondents responded to an SMS invitation (53.8%), and 57 respondents were from the Verasight Community (5.7%).<sup>1</sup>

The margin of sampling error is +/- 4.1% for the full sample. This number is slightly larger than the margin of error of 3.1%, because we account for the difference between who was invited to take the survey and who responded. The Republican Primary likely voter subsample has a size of 505 respondents who said they would "definitely vote" in this year's primary. The margin of sampling error for this smaller population is 5.7%, again a bit larger than its 4.4% margin of error.

The sample is weighted to reflect demographic and geographic parameters known from South Carolina's voter file (link to [scvotes.gov](https://www.scvotes.gov)). These include gender, race, age, residence in a media market (Charleston, Columbia, Florence-Myrtle Beach, Upstate, or other – Augusta, Charlotte, Savannah), and 2020 presidential vote choice. Weights also allow the sample to reflect the education attainment of the adult population in South Carolina as reported by the U.S. Census's American Community Survey (link to [rfa.sc.gov](https://www.census.gov/rfa/sc.gov)).

Individuals were included in the poll's target population if they were registered to vote in South Carolina before January 11, 2024. The sampling approach allowed voters in the state to be randomly contacted to ensure a representative sample and probability-based design.

### Live telephone interviews:

Our list of registered voters was drawn from L2, a company which consistently updates its file (January 11, 2024) and provides accurate matches of telephone numbers to the registered voter.

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<sup>1</sup> Verasight's online respondents are recruited via random address-based sampling, random person-to-person text messaging, and dynamic online targeting. All Verasight community members are verified via multi-step authentication, including providing an SMS response from a mobile phone registered with a major U.S. carrier (e.g., no VOIP or internet phones) as well as within-survey technology, including verifying the absence of non-human responses with technologies such as Google reCAPTCHA v3. Those who exhibit low-quality response behaviors over time, such as straight-lining or speeding, are also removed and prohibited from further participation in the community. Verasight Community members receive points for taking surveys that can be redeemed for Venmo or PayPal payments, gift cards, or charitable donations. Respondents are never routed from one survey to another and receive compensation for every invited survey, so there is never an incentive to respond strategically to survey qualification screener questions.

We reached the named voter 76% or another registered voter in the home 24% of the time. All numbers of the telephone sample were dialed a maximum of three times. Cell phone numbers that were not reached on the first attempt received a text introducing the survey after before the second call.

## Verasight Panel:

Additional respondents received a link to take the survey through Qualtrics via SMS messages and emails. These respondents were verified as registered voters by Catalyst, another firm that provides up-to-date contact information for verified registered voters. In addition to verifying the identity of a person taking the survey, Verasight is also committed to the data quality of surveys from its platform. Respondents who exhibit low-quality response behaviors over time, such as straight-lining or speeding, are removed and prohibited from further participation in the community. Verasight Community members receive points for taking surveys that can be redeemed for Venmo or PayPal payments, gift cards, or charitable donations. Respondents are never routed from one survey to another and receive compensation for every invited survey, so there is never an incentive to respond strategically to survey qualification screener questions. To further ensure data quality, the Verasight data team implements several post-data collection quality assurance procedures, including confirming that all responses correspond with U.S. IP addresses, confirming no duplicate respondents, verifying the absence of non-human responses, and removing any respondents who failed in-survey attention and/or straight-lining checks. Respondents that completed the survey in less than 30% of the median completion time were removed.

## AAPOR Transparency Initiative Information:

The Citadel Poll follows the guidelines for disclosure of the American Association for Public Opinion research Transparency Initiative. Details from this inaugural poll will be used to apply for certification.

1. The poll is sponsored by the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at The Citadel, Military College of South Carolina.
2. The Citadel Poll, under the direction of Profs. DuBose Kapeluck and Mark Owens, designed the survey instrument and performed all statistical analyses and writing The data collection was administered by Promark Research and Verasight based on instructions sent by The Citadel.
3. Funding for this study was provided by the School of Humanities and Social Sciences as an initiative to enhance public conversations about civics participation and leadership.
4. The full survey instrument and accompanying information is available at [poll.citadel.edu](http://poll.citadel.edu).
5. The population surveyed includes registered voters in the state of South Carolina.
6. The sampling frame is a blend of a registration based sample (94.3%) and Verasight's panel of respondents (5.7%).
7. Details of design and response rates are given below.
8. The sample was designed to mirror registered voters in South Carolina. The sample size is 1,000. The margin of sampling error is +/- 4.1% for the full sample. The Republican Primary likely voter subsample has a size of 505 respondents who said they would "definitely vote" in this year's primary. The margin of sampling error for the likely primary voters is 5.7%.

9. The design effect for this survey is 1.73, which is incorporated into the margin of sampling error.
10. The survey was administered in English only on the phone and text-to-web.
11. Results for all items in the survey, including the full instrument, topline results, and cross-tabs are available at [poll.citadel.edu](http://poll.citadel.edu).
12. For more information about how the survey was conducted contact Mark Owens at [mowens6@citadel.edu](mailto:mowens6@citadel.edu).

## Comparison of population and sample parameters

	SC Voters	Phone	Text	Phone (WGT)	Text (WGT)	WGT
Female	55.2	42.2	52.3	54.8	55.0	54.9%
Male	44.8	57.8	47.4	45.2	44.7	44.9
Black	24.4	12.8	12.8	23.8	25.9	25.0%
White	71.0	83.4	83.2	71.6	71.2	71.3
All Other	4.6	3.7	4.0	4.6	3.0	3.6
18-44	37.8	16.3	21.2	36.1	31.7	33.5%
45-64	33.2	27.9	35.1	32.7	27.9	29.8
65 and over	28.9	55.8	27.6	31.3	24.3	27.1
Refused		0	16.1	0	16.1	9.6
No college degree	72.4	48.9	45.9	71.4	72.5	72.0%
College degree	27.6	50.4	54.1	27.9	27.6	27.7
Refused		0.7	0	0.8	0.0	0.3
Media Markets						
Charleston	18.2	20.5	19.7	18.4	18.2	18.3%
Columbia	21.0	18.0	24.0	21.2	21.0	21.1
Myrtle Beach-Florence	13.2	10.4	10.1	13.3	13.2	13.2
Upstate	27.9	30.4	26.9	28.2	27.9	28.0
Others (Aug/Char/Sav)		20.7	19.3	19.0	19.7	19.4
Joe Biden in 2020	43.4	33.1	38.3	37.8	38.9	38.5%
Donald Trump in 2020	55.1	52.4	49.9	47.3	49.4	48.5
Cannot recall/Did not vote/Refused	1.5	14.6	11.8	14.9	11.8	13.0
Percentages for education attainment for the state of South Carolina reflect the American Community Survey's 5-year estimates for the state's adult population (Source: U.S. Census Bureau). Percentages for all other estimates come from the South Carolina Election Commission.						