

September 7, 2022

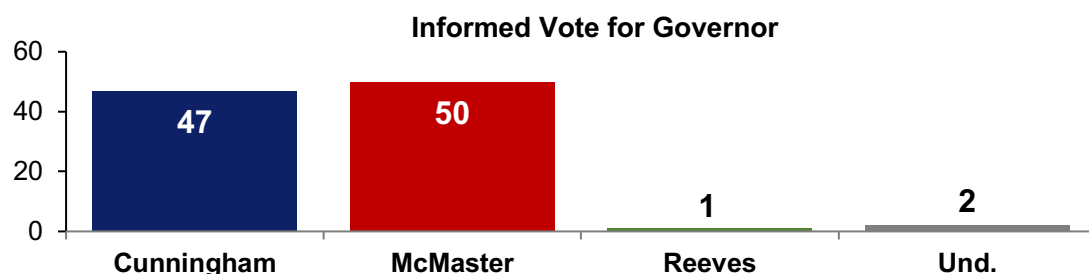
To: Interested Parties

Fr: Impact Research

Re: SC Gov. Poll: Joe Cunningham Within Striking Distance of Henry McMaster

A new statewide survey of likely voters in South Carolina finds the race for Governor within single digits, with former Congressman Joe Cunningham once again outpacing the state's political landscape. While Henry McMaster has a modest 7 point lead, his margin shrinks to just 3 points after balanced positive information about each candidate. And encouragingly, Cunningham leads among the voters who know both candidates today. Detailed findings from this survey are below.

- **Joe Cunningham is within striking distance.** Incumbent Governor McMaster has less than 50% of the vote and leads by just 7 points against Cunningham (42% Cunningham / 49% McMaster / 4% Reeves). Interestingly, this is a similar margin to the one Cunningham initially faced against Katie Arrington in 2018 Congressional polling (then Arrington +8). 2018 polling also showed how Joe's message moved voters, and leading to him pulling one of the biggest upsets for Democrats in 2018.
- **Joe leads among key subgroups.** Cunningham leads by double digits among Independent voters (39% Cunningham / 28% McMaster) and by 9% among women (50% Cunningham / 41% McMaster). And importantly, Joe leads by +8 among the voters who know both him and McMaster (51% Cunningham / 43% McMaster).
- **Cunningham is within the margin of error following equal positives.** The race tightens to just 3 points (within the survey's margin of error) when voters hear balanced positive bios about both Cunningham and McMaster.



- **The issue of abortion is impacting this race.** McMaster's radical position to ban abortion with no exceptions puts him at odds with a majority of South Carolinians. A message attacking McMaster on this issue concerns moderate and Independents, pushing them further into Joe's corner.

These findings are based on the results of a multi-modal survey conducted by Impact Research from August 24-30, 2022, in South Carolina among N=700 likely 2022 general election voters. The margin of error is +/- 3.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Poll Takeaways

With a track record of outpacing partisanship, this poll shows Joe Cunningham has a real opportunity to carve his own path and compete statewide. Joe begins within single digits and picks up ground – even with positive intro for his opponent. If Cunningham has the necessary resources to communicate statewide in this affordable state, he is positioned to potentially shock the country once again.

Appendix I: Informed Vote Language Tested

Democrat Joe Cunningham is a former Congressman from Charleston who is running for Governor because he believes South Carolinians deserve more freedoms, not less. That's why he wants to eliminate the state income tax, protect a woman's right to choose, legalize marijuana and sports betting, and use that money to give South Carolina teachers a raise and finally fix our roads.

Republican Henry McMaster is the current Governor. A trusted conservative and public servant, McMaster has spent his career fighting for South Carolina families and seniors. As a proven leader, McMaster has worked to create good-paying jobs and cut taxes for small businesses. We can count on him to defend families from Washington overreach and woke corporations who try to tell us how to live our lives.

Appendix II: Survey Demographics

South Carolina Survey Demographics			
Men	44%	White	73%
Women	56%	Black	23%
		Hispanic	1%
Age 18-34	16%	Other	1%
Age 35-49	23%		
Age 50-64	29%	Greenville-Spartanburg Market	28%
Age 65+	32%	Columbia Market	21%
		Charleston Market	19%
Democrats	36%	Florence / Myrtle Beach Market	12%
Republicans	47%	Charlotte, NC Market	9%
Independents	16%	Savannah, GA Market	6%
Other	1%	Augusta, GA Market	5%