

Virginia US Governor 2025

THE ISSUES

WINSOME
EARLE-SEARS

REPUBLICAN



ABIGAIL
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DEMOCRAT

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ABORTION Ban or legal?	Ban. Opposes adding reproductive rights to the Virginia constitution. Supports a 15-week ban, after supporting a six-week ban in 2021. Voted against guaranteeing a right to contraception in Virginia law.	Legal. Supports adding reproductive rights to the Virginia constitution. Supports “the right to choose.” Says, “Congress needs to codify Roe v. Wade as federal law.”
CLIMATE CHANGE Should climate change be a top priority?	Likely no. Has supported offshore oil and gas drilling, and supports an all-the-above energy strategy: “clean coal. Oil... renewables. Nuclear. Natural gas.”	Yes. Says climate change is a “ direct threat ” to our future. Supported funding local “climate stewardship” and voted for \$369 billion in clean energy investments.
CRIMINAL JUSTICE How to ensure effectiveness and fairness in law enforcement?	Would be “ tough on crime.” Her “ position is simple: Protect innocent Virginians, prosecute criminals.”	Supports increasing officer pay and funding community policing. Says that the “Defund the Police” slogan “was a terrible idea .”
ECONOMY Decrease or increase government investment in the economy?	Likely mixed. Wants to increase rural broadband. Would “ scour the government books to cut wasteful government spending.” Would strengthen public-private partnerships.	Increase. Wants a statewide strategy on developing infrastructure, with both rural and urban development, including more broadband . Wants a push for investment in shovel-ready sites.
ECONOMY How will the DOGE layoffs and cuts affect Virginia’s economy?	Says Virginians will “be all right .” Fired federal workers should apply for private sector jobs in the Commonwealth. Says, “We don’t want folks to lose their jobs,” but losing a job “happens to everybody all the time.”	Opposes “these unprecedented attacks on the federal workforce,” and says the cuts are “terrible for Virginia’s economy and Virginia’s workforce.” Says, “Virginia is home to more than 320,000 full-time federal employees, and the impacts are dire .”
EDUCATION Use public funding for private and/or for-profit schools?	Yes. Supports using state public funds to pay for private schools. Would divert a portion of state per-pupil funds from public to private schools. Supports funding more charter schools.	No. Opposes “efforts that seek to... take public dollars out of public schools.” Sponsored a bill funding public school facilities that excluded funding for-profit schools.
EDUCATION Limit teaching about racism?	Yes. Says, “ Slavery happened , absolutely. And there are some vestiges of it. But how long are we going to go back there?” “We don’t have time to teach about oppression.... I am proof we are progressing.”	No. Says, “We [Virginia] have the greatest elements of our foundation in our country. We also have the darkest moments in our country’s history. And that history is important for us to learn from.”

ISSUES	EARLE-SEARS (R)	SPANBERGER (D)
GUN LAWS Loosen or tighten gun regulation?	Loosen. Said, “ Gun control laws infringe on the right to self-defense and deny people a sense of safety. Gun control laws DO NOT deter crime; rather it is gun ownership that deters crime.” Supports a strong Second Amendment.	Tighten. Said, “As a former federal law enforcement officer, I carried a gun I support the Second Amendment. I also believe that commonsense gun safety laws are necessary to curb the gun violence epidemic we are facing today.”
HEALTHCARE Support Medicaid and/or other healthcare expansion?	No position found on Medicaid. Supports more funding for mental health initiatives.	Yes. Sponsored a bill to expand Medicaid eligibility and federal funding. Would improve access to rural healthcare, including telehealth.
IMMIGRATION How to handle immigration?	Would make local police cooperate fully with ICE, and “ opposes sanctuary cities.” Says, “ Every state [is] a border state.” “We are finally deporting criminal illegal immigrants.”	Says, “Our immigration system is broken .” Wants to deal separately with issues of immigration and fentanyl trafficking. Voted for a pathway to permanent residency for DACA Dreamers. ICE raids are “ not about keeping communities safe.”
LABOR Make it easier or harder for unions to organize?	Harder. Is a “ staunch supporter ” of Virginia’s “ right to work” law (where employees at a unionized business are allowed to not pay union dues), to protect “workers from heavy-handed union bosses.” She opposes the PRO Act.	Easier. Sponsored the PRO Act , which would protect union organizing rights. Says, “I... strongly support organized labor.” She doesn’t support “a full repeal of our current right-to-work statute,” but “reforms may be necessary into the future.”
LGBTQ RIGHTS Limit or expand LGBTQ rights?	Limit. Is “ morally opposed ” to a bill that stops any Virginia official from denying a marriage license on the basis of sex, gender, or race. Has opposed same-sex marriage: “I emphatically support a constitutional amendment preserving the institution of marriage to be between a man and a woman.”	Expand. Supports removing “the ban on marriage equality from Virginia’s Constitution.” Voted to prohibit discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Sponsored a bill to put same-sex and interracial marriage rights into federal law.
MARIJUANA Ban or legalize recreational marijuana?	Likely ban. In 2021 opposed recreational marijuana legalization as “a gateway drug .” Said, “I’m not against medicinal marijuana.”	Legal. Says, “We need a formalized, legal, emerging cannabis market.” Voted to decriminalize marijuana at the federal level.
MINIMUM WAGE Raise the state minimum wage?	No position found.	Yes. As governor, would sign legislation to raise the VA minimum wage to \$15 an hour.
TARIFFS Support or oppose President Trump’s tariffs?	Support. Praised the Trump tariff plan. The tariffs are “to our benefit, after all.” Says, “President Trump is doing the work to put America first again.”	Oppose. Says the Trump “ tariffs are a tax on Virginians.... who will feel the sting.” Says, “There’s a cost to this chaos, and Virginia families are paying the price.”
VOTING RULES Make voting harder or easier?	Harder. Supports new Virginia voter ID requirements and strict vote-by-mail procedures.	Easier. Voted for the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. “ Supports the General Assembly’s work to add a restoration of voting rights amendment to the Virginia Constitution.”

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