



TO: Republican Study Committee

FROM: Chairman Jim Banks

DATE: November 2, 2021

Subject: Lessons From Virginia

After watching tonight's election returns, one thing is abundantly clear: **Voters have rejected the Biden agenda.** They have rejected Biden and the Democrats because they, and the legacy media, are fixated on things in the past instead of the real issues facing Americans today and in the future.

There are **four** lessons learned from Glenn Youngkin's victory in Virginia:

First, the concerns of parents need to be a tier 1 policy issue for Republicans: Youngkin's success reveals that Republicans can and must become the party of parents. There is real energy from parents that we need to understand. The good news is RSC has been working for months to build out an agenda in education that will fight for and empower parents. This will include needed oversight of the Biden administration. Here is sample of some of the ideas in the pipeline:

- Rescind President Biden's harmful Title IX guidance that hurts girls dreams to achieve excellence in sports;
- Ensure schools are funding Gifted & Talented and AP programs instead of exploding Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion administrators;
- Expanding 529 plans to include homeschooling expenses and alternative career pathways;
- Giving low-income families school freedom from low performing schools;
- Allow the Department of Justice to ensure federal funds are not being used to fund racist CRT curricula in violation of the Civil Rights Act;
- Passing Rep. Owens' H.R. 4698 to ensure federal funds are not being used to separate students based on their skin color or assigning assumptions or characteristics of students based on their skin color;
- Promoting a fair and accurate historical curriculum based on the success and faults of our country's founding;
- Passing Rep. Hartzler's H.R. 4821, NO CRT for our Military Kids Act to ensure military schools are not using CRT;
- Maintain the Trump Administrations school safety guidelines to ensure schools won't face retribution for suspending or expelling dangerous and violent students;
- Ensuring the hundreds of billions of dollars sent to States and local school districts through the CARES Act and other pandemic related legislation are being used to help students succeed after many spent a year in Zoom school;
- Investigate the origins of the infamous letter from NBSA calling concerned parents "domestic terrorists," and the role the Biden White House played in its crafting;
- Passing Rep. Fitzgerald's H.R. 5162, the CRT Transparency Act to ensure parents have access to the curriculum their children are being taught.

More to come on this soon!

Second, we need to end the mandates. In a [Washington Post Op-ed](#) Youngkin wrote, "Most important, we will never lock down our economy again." And it's not just business restrictions. Youngkin [opposes](#) vaccine mandates and mask

mandates in public schools. We've been doing this at the federal level already: Claudia Tenney and I introduced a [bill](#) to prevent OSHA from instating its unconstitutional vaccine mandate.

Third, we must continue to back the blue. Youngkin pledged to increase funding for police departments and protect "Qualified Immunity for our Law Enforcement Heroes," which House Democrats [tried to end](#) through their police reform bill.

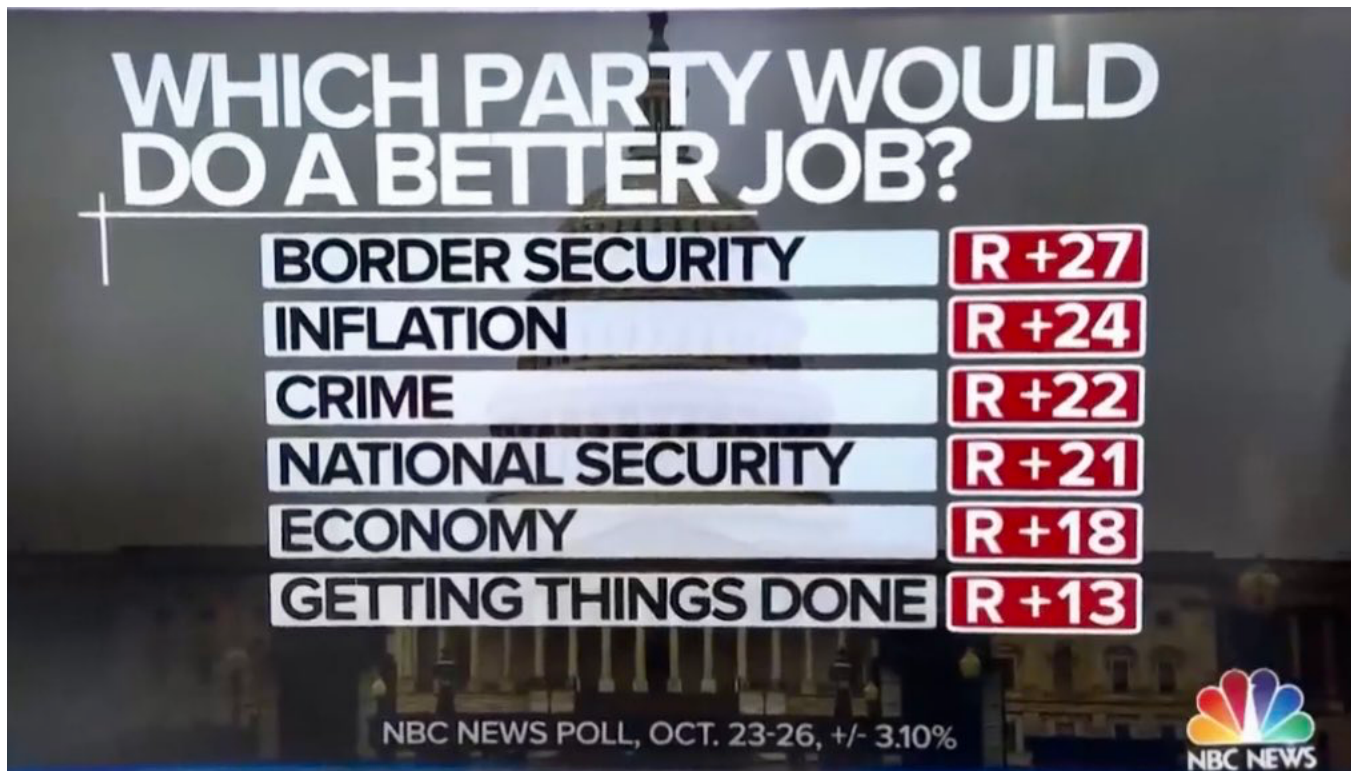
Crime, and particularly homicides, have spiked in Virginia and in every other state. In July, a USA Today poll [found](#) that crime, ahead of everything else, was the number one issue Americans were most concerned about.

Fourth, we must continue to focus on the failures of the Biden economy. Youngkin focused on providing relief to runaway inflation caused by the Biden economy and on not locking down the economy again. Our early focus on [runaway inflation](#) and the [growing supply chain crisis](#) is hitting home with voters. We need to keep hammering away and work on bringing solutions to the table to address their concerns.

In 2020, Biden won Virginia by 10 points and the year before Democrats took over both chambers of Virginia's statehouse.

Youngkin's victory is a devastating reversal for the Democrat Party. Worse; it reveals that **a conservative agenda trumps Biden's agenda among swing voters.**

An NBC News poll from Oct 23-26 reveals how far off they are on the issues that matter most.



Youngkin turned out the Republican base in southern Virginia, kept working class voters in the fold, and made big gains in suburban, immigrant-heavy, college-educated and wealthy northern Virginia. The exact group that supposedly "disowned" the GOP.

He expanded the GOP tent and he did it by *focusing on the issues*, just like the RSC.

In fact, Youngkin ran on the same set of issues that the RSC has been touting since January. And none mattered more in Virginia than the concerns of parents.

The polling in the final weeks of the election bares this out too. A [Washington Post survey](#) found that education was the number one issue for voters and education voters favored Youngkin by 9 points after favoring McAuliffe by 33 just a few months prior. [Another survey](#) found Youngkin leading McAuliffe 56% to 39% among parents with children in K-12.

This is a moment of reckoning for the Democrat party. Youngkin's success reveals that Republicans can and must become the **party of parents**.

The defining moment of the campaign was when Terry McAuliffe said the quiet part out loud. When he said, "I don't think parents should be telling schools what they should teach," he was voicing a view the Left has held for a long time.

Parents brought real energy in Virginia and we would be wise to listen and seek to understand their concerns. Those concerns cannot be addressed only with policies we traditionally associate with "education."

Consider the things that parents across the country are fed up about:

- Parents have had enough of school closings at the behest of radical teacher unions.
- They have had enough of the [forced masking](#) of their children despite all the science that indicates the risks to their children's development and health far outweigh any sort of rewards.
- They have had enough of radical transgender policy in our schools that endanger girls and undermine the accomplishments of girls playing sports.
- They have had enough of Critical Race Theory being pushed onto their children. Only [16%](#) of Americans want their children taught Critical Race Theory, but Democrats are siding with Randi Weingarten, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, who [threatened](#) "You can't keep us" from teaching Critical Race Theory.
- They have had enough of falling test scores and failing government schools and the responses to these problems from politicians like Terry McAuliffe, who said a curriculum based on [diversity, inclusion, and openness is just as important as math and science](#).
- And they are angry about the clear collusion between the National School Boards Association, the White House, and the Department of Justice to crack down on parents raising legitimate issues at school board meetings.

Democrats are attacking our schools in new ways, and conservatives must adjust.

Glenn Youngkin understood this. He knew parents weren't just concerned about traditional education issues, but rather viewed education as an extension of the culture war, which I suggested we lean into in a [memo](#) back in June. For example, his campaign website promised to rid "Political Agendas from Classroom by Banning Critical Race Theory."

In conclusion: We should expect more Democrat retirements in the weeks ahead--Democrats can't deny the writing on the wall. But do not underestimate their commitment to try and pass their socialist agenda...

That's why Republicans must seize on the moment, learn from Glenn Youngkin and champion an America First agenda to win back the House in 2022.