



**University of North Florida**  
Public Opinion Research Lab  
[www.unf.edu/coas/porl/](http://www.unf.edu/coas/porl/)

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**New UNF Poll Shows Florida Governor Candidates Lack Name Recognition**  
*Respondents Show High Support for Restoring Felon Voting Rights*

The Public Opinion Research Lab at the University of North Florida has a new poll that reveals an overwhelming lack of name recognition among Democratic candidates and Republican candidates running for Florida governor. The survey also shows that a majority of respondents support restoring the voting rights of individuals with felony convictions.

The poll, comprised of Florida registered voters, asked respondents to give their opinion on Andrew Gillum, Gwen Graham, Phillip Levine, Richard Corcoran, Ron DeSantis and Adam Putnam, all candidates running for Florida governor. Concerning the Democratic candidates, the percentage of respondents who had never heard of them ranges from 73 percent for Levine to 81 percent for Gillum. Graham had the highest favorability of the three Democratic candidates, with 11 percent viewing her favorably and 4 percent unfavorably, while 78 percent had never heard of her.

The Republican candidates didn't fare any better as 67 percent had never heard of Putnam, 72 percent never heard of DeSantis and 78 percent never heard of Corcoran. Putnam received the highest favorability among Republicans, with 14 percent viewing him favorably and 7 percent unfavorably.

"It's a little surprising that so few people have heard of the candidates, particularly Adam Putnam who has won two statewide races, and Gwen Graham, who is a former member of Congress and the daughter of former Gov. and Sen. Bob Graham," said Dr. Michael Binder, faculty director of the Public Opinion Research Lab at UNF. "These results highlight both the opportunities for the candidates to shape the voters' perception of them and the challenges they face in getting out their message."

The poll also shows that respondents show high support for restoring felon voting rights. When asked whether they would vote yes or no on a proposition to restore the voting rights of Floridians with felony convictions, 71 percent of registered voters claimed they would vote “yes” on the proposition, with 22 percent who would vote “no.”

“Amendment 4, the voting rights restoration measure, facing voters in the fall is so widely supported, even a majority of Republicans support it. What remains to be seen is whether or not an influx of money opposing this ballot measure will knock off enough support to prevent it from reaching the 60 percent necessary to pass,” Binder said.

When asked whether they support or oppose lifting the bans on offshore oil drilling, 55 percent of registered Florida voters polled either strongly or somewhat oppose, while 37 percent strongly or somewhat support lifting the bans. Regarding DACA, respondents were asked about their views on illegal/undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children. A large majority, 82 percent, supported letting them stay in the U.S. to eventually apply for citizenship, while 5 percent stated they could stay but not apply for citizenship. Nine percent claimed they should be required to leave the U.S.

“Even though DACA and offshore oil drilling will likely get sorted out at the national level, Floridians have strong opinions on these issues—very supportive of a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers and opposed to opening up offshore oil drilling—and these opinions could very well influence the upcoming senate and gubernatorial elections,” noted Binder.

Regarding some policies facing Florida’s legislature, 59 percent of respondents strongly or somewhat oppose allowing concealed weapons to be carried on university and college campuses, with 35 percent in support. When asked about removing Florida’s home rule, 47 percent strongly or somewhat oppose giving the state government additional power over local government decisions, while 30 percent support it either strongly or somewhat. A majority of respondents, 62 percent, strongly or somewhat support legalizing and regulating recreational marijuana, with 35 percent in opposition.

“This is the third time over the past year we’ve asked about concealed weapons on college campuses, and the results are remarkably consistent. Voters are opposed to changing the current restrictions, and it will be interesting to see if the legislature listens to their electorate,” Binder said. “There is also opposition, though not nearly as strong, in scaling back Florida’s home rule, something legislators may want to pay attention to before acting to fundamentally alter governance in Florida.”

When asked about the most important problem facing Florida today, the most popular response was education at 20 percent, followed closely by health care, 16 percent, and crime, 15 percent. Out of all respondents, 52 percent either strongly or somewhat approve of the way that the Florida legislature is handling its job, with 33 percent disapproving either strongly or somewhat.

For details about the methodology of the survey and additional crosstabs by partisanship, sex, education, race and age go to:  
<http://www.unf.edu/coas/pori/2018FLSpringPoll2.aspx>.

## Survey Results

We'd like to get your overall opinion of some people in the news. As I read each name, please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of that person, or if you've never heard of them.

### **Democratic Candidates**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Andrew Gillum n=619</b>	<b>Gwen Graham n=619</b>	<b>Phillip Levine n=619</b>
Favorable	7%	11%	8%
Unfavorable	4%	4%	5%
Never heard of him/her	81%	78%	73%
Don't Know	8%	6%	12%
Refusal	1%	1%	1%

### **Democratic Candidates Only Among Democratic Respondents**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Andrew Gillum n=232</b>	<b>Gwen Graham n=232</b>	<b>Phillip Levine n=232</b>
Favorable	10%	15%	14%
Unfavorable	4%	3%	6%
Never heard of him/her	78%	75%	65%
Don't Know	8%	7%	15%
Refusal	1%	<1%	<1%

### **Republican Candidates**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Richard Corcoran n=619</b>	<b>Ron DeSantis n=619</b>	<b>Adam Putnam n=619</b>
Favorable	5%	10%	14%
Unfavorable	6%	5%	7%
Never heard of him/her	78%	72%	67%
Don't Know	11%	12%	11%
Refusal	<1%	1%	1%

### **Republicans Candidates Only Among Republican Respondents**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Richard Corcoran n=218</b>	<b>Ron DeSantis n=218</b>	<b>Adam Putnam n=218</b>
Favorable	6%	14%	22%
Unfavorable	5%	3%	2%
Never heard of him/her	78%	71%	66%
Don't Know	10%	11%	10%
Refusal	1%	1%	1%

Amendment Four, on the statewide ballot for 2018, is called “Voting Rights Restoration for Felons Initiative.” This Amendment would restore the voting rights of Floridians with felony convictions after they complete all terms of their sentence, including parole or probation. The amendment wouldn’t apply to those convicted of murder or sexual offenses. If the election were held today, would you vote “yes” or “no” for this proposition?

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>February 2018 Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
Yes	71%
No	22%
Don't Know	6%
Refusal	<1%

Lifting bans on offshore oil drilling and allowing new offshore oil and gas drilling in the United States coastal waters.

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>February 2018 Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
Strongly Support	18%
Somewhat Support	19%
Somewhat Oppose	14%
Strongly Oppose	41%
Don't Know	7%
Refusal	1%

Which comes closest to your view about illegal/undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children, aged 16 and under?\*

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>February 2018 Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
They should be allowed to stay in the United States and to eventually apply for U.S. citizenship	82%
They should be allowed to remain in the United States, but not be allowed to apply for U.S. citizenship	5%
They should be required to leave the U.S.	9%
Don't Know	3%
Refusal	1%

\*This question was a split sample with half the sample being read “illegal” and half the sample being read “undocumented”. There was only one percentage point difference between the two different question wordings.

Allowing licensed individuals to carry concealed handguns into a college or university facility.

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>February 2018 Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>	<b>October 2017 Florida Registered Voters n=611</b>	<b>February 2017 Florida Registered Voters n=969</b>
Strongly Support	20%	21%	20%
Somewhat Support	15%	16%	15%
Somewhat Oppose	11%	13%	14%
Strongly Oppose	48%	46%	48%
Don't Know	5%	4%	3%
Refusal	<1%	3%	-

Removal of Florida's home rule, which grants additional power to the state government over local government decisions?

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>February 2018 Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
Strongly Support	11%
Somewhat Support	19%
Somewhat Oppose	21%
Strongly Oppose	26%
Don't Know	21%
Refusal	2%

Legalizing and regulating marijuana in a manner similar to alcohol, limiting its sale to residents 21 years of age or older.

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>February 2018 Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
Strongly Support	45%
Somewhat Support	17%
Somewhat Oppose	8%
Strongly Oppose	27%
Don't Know	3%
Refusal	<1%

What do you think is the most important problem facing Florida today?\*

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>February 2018 Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>	<b>February 2017 Florida Registered Voters n=972</b>
Education	20%	20%
Economy/Jobs/Unemployment	13%	20%
Healthcare	16%	15%
Crime	15%	13%
Environment	10%	11%
Immigration	14%	10%
Terrorism	2%	2%
All of the Above (volunteered)	3%	-
Drugs/Opioids (volunteered)	1%	-
Other (volunteered)	4%	7%
Don't Know	2%	3%
Refusal	<1%	-

Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the Florida Legislature is handling its job?

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>February 2018 Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>	<b>February 2017 Florida Registered Voters n=959</b>
Strongly Approve	9%	7%
Somewhat Approve	43%	32%
Somewhat Disapprove	18%	21%
Strongly Disapprove	15%	19%
Don't Know	13%	21%
Refusal	2%	-

#### Survey Demographics

<b>Party Registration</b>	<b>Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
Republican	35%
Democrat	37%
NPA and other	27%

<b>Age</b>	<b>Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
18 to 24	9%
25 to 34	15%
35 to 44	14%
45 to 55	16%
56 to 64	18%
65 and older	28%

<b>Race</b>	<b>Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
White (not Hispanic)	64%
Black (not Hispanic)	13%
Hispanic	16%
Other	7%

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
Male	46%
Female	54%

<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
Landline	27%
Cell phone	73%
Don't Know	<1%
Refusal	<1%

What is the highest grade in school or year of college you have completed?

<b>Education</b>	<b>Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
Less than high school	3%
High school graduate	20%
Some college	41%
College graduate	21%
Post graduate degree	14%
Don't Know	<1%
Refusal	1%

What is your annual household income?

<b>Income</b>	<b>Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
Less than \$25,000	14%
\$25,000 to \$50,000	16%
\$50,000 to \$75,000	17%
\$75,000 to \$100,000	12%
Above \$100,000	22%
Don't Know	7%
Refusal	14%

What language was this survey completed in?

<b>Survey language completed in...</b>	<b>Florida Registered Voters n=619</b>
English	97%
Spanish	3%

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