

Key Numbers To Know Out of Tuesday's Elections

Tuesday was not a good night for Republicans, with the results indicating some vulnerabilities being similar to 2018. But the silver lining is that after this wakeup call, Republicans have a year to course correct. Here are the key numbers to know from the latest exit polls from Virginia and New Jersey.

1.) Independents: In Virginia, independents made up 33 percent of the electorate. Spanberger won them by 19 points, (59-40), the same margin as Biden's in 2020 and a major reversal of Glenn Youngkin's 9-point margin (54-45) in 2021. In New Jersey, Sherrill carried independents by 13 points (56-43).

In 2018, Republicans lost independents by 12 (42-54).

2.) Women: A second major factor was a huge shift by women toward Democrats. In Virginia, Spanberger won women by 30 points (65-35), a remarkable margin outdoing Biden's 2020 effort, when he won women in the state by 23. Youngkin closed the margin to 7 points, but Spanberger turned that around.

Sherrill carried women by 25 points (62-37) in New Jersey.

In 2018, House Republicans lost women by 19 points (40-59) but made up ground during the Biden term, losing women by only 6 points nationally (46-52) in 2024, while Trump lost them by 8 (45-53). Tuesday's result shows the vote among women being closer to 2018.

3.) Candidate vs. party brands: Spanberger and Sherrill outperformed their party brands. Spanberger was able to **win 20 percent** of those voters who had an unfavorable view of the Democratic Party. In New Jersey, Democrats were at 49-48 (favorable-unfavorable), while Republicans were relatively close at 46-51. Much like Spanberger, Sherrill was able to **win 17 percent** of the voters who had an unfavorable view of the Democratic Party. For both of them, the ability to separate themselves somewhat from their party's unfavorable brand was clearly an asset.

It's worth noting that Spanberger's favorable-unfavorable was at 54-43 and Earle-Sears' was at 43-53, very similar to Sherrill's favorable-unfavorable at 56-43 and Republican candidate Jack Ciattarelli's at 45-54.

4.) Democrats improved with economy voters: Virginia voters identifying the economy as their top issue, 48 percent, voted for Spanberger 63-36.

In terms of issues, taxes took the top spot in New Jersey at 35 percent, with the economy a close second at 32 percent. Among those citing taxes, an issue of particular focus to Ciattarelli, he won them 62-37. Those who focused on the economy favored Sherrill 66-33.

For more on Tuesday's elections, see David's Roll Call column: [This election was the wakeup call Republicans needed for 2026.](#)

Have a good weekend.

David & Myra