



## NEWS

### FOR RELEASE

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### **Jim Justice Leads in Race for West Virginia Governor**

**Cincinnati, Ohio** – Democrat Jim Justice leads Republican Bill Cole by a 14-point margin in the race for governor of West Virginia, according to results from the latest edition of the MetroNews West Virginia Poll.

Justice leads Senate president Cole by a 46-to-32 percent margin. Charlotte Pritt, the nominee of the Mountain Party would receive eight percent of the vote if the election were held today, while Libertarian David Moran would receive five percent. Pritt was the Democratic nominee for governor in 1996. Nine percent are undecided.

“As the fall campaign for governor gets underway next week, Jim Justice has a commanding lead over Bill Cole,” Rex Repass CEO of REPASS Research and director of the MetroNews West Virginia Poll said.

“The critical variable for Cole is marshaling the support of his base, including independents,” Repass added. Cole leads Justice among Republicans by a 62-to-20 percent margin, and among independents by a 35-to-28 percent margin. However, about 20 percent of Republicans are supporting Justice, while only 11 percent of Democrats are supporting Cole.”

The economy and jobs appear to be the most important issue facing state voters. More than six-in-10 (62 percent) said they are “very worried” about the health of West Virginia’s economy and an additional 32 percent said they are “somewhat worried,” according to poll results.

A methodology statement and additional findings follow.

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## **Methodology Statement**

Results of this edition of MetroNews West Virginia Poll are the result of interviews conducted between August 9-28, 2016 (presidential and gubernatorial questions fielded August 18-28, 2016) with a sample of 386 and 435 registered, likely voters in W.Va. including registered Democrats, Republicans, Libertarian, Mountain Party, and unaffiliated or independent voters. Data collection methods used included landline phone, cell phone, and opt-in Internet panel. Each data collection method has inherent strengths and weakness.

Respondents answered screening questions to qualify for participation in the poll including West Virginia residency, current voter registration, and likelihood to vote in the November 8, 2016 primary election. All 55 counties in West Virginia were represented in the survey proportionate to the number of registered voters by party based on 2016 data from the W.Va. Secretary of State's office.

When using multiple data collection methods, it is not appropriate to apply a probability-based margin of error to interviews completed. However, applying statistical tests of significance to each question asked at the 95 percent confidence interval yields an overall statistical error of +/- 4.7 percentage points based on the 435 ballot questions asked of registered likely voters. The 95 percent confidence interval varies by question.

The purpose of the MetroNews West Virginia Poll is to provide a snapshot of opinion and timely voter views in the Mountain State. The media sponsor of the West Virginia Poll is MetroNews, the statewide radio network owned by West Virginia Radio Corporation.

REPASS is responsible for questionnaire design, the respondent screening and selection process, data tabulation, statistical analysis, and reporting of results. The firm's data collection partner, McMillion Research Services, conducts the data collection. Data collection for this issue of the poll was conducted from the firm's Charleston, W.Va. data collection facilities for telephone, mobile, and online surveys. Both the REPASS and McMillion firms are members of the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO).

Data as reported has been statistically weighted based by Census estimates of voter participation by age, party affiliation, and gender.

The MetroNews West Virginia Poll is a non-partisan survey of public opinion owned and conducted by the REPASS firm. The West Virginia Poll has been conducted periodically since January 21, 1980. The name The West Virginia Poll is a registered trademark of R.L. Repass & Partners, Inc., dba REPASS, all rights reserved. For more information, see [www.wvpoll.com](http://www.wvpoll.com).

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REPASS is a custom survey research and strategic consulting firm. The firm's services range from consulting with clients to identify research objectives, through study design, data collection, analysis, and research-based strategy recommendations. The company is headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio with offices in metro Washington, DC and Charleston, W.Va. For more information, see [www.repassinc.com](http://www.repassinc.com).

### Topline Results Follow

### Respondent qualifications:

- Age 18 or older
- Resident of West Virginia
- Registered in current precinct or election district
- Absolutely certain or very likely to vote in May primary election

### Respondent Profile

- Gender
  - Male 48%
  - Female 52%
  
- Age
  - 18-24 8%
  - 25-34 13%
  - 35-44 17%
  - 45-64 33%
  - 65+ 29%
  
- County of residence
  - Northern 48%
  - Southern 52%

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## Findings

- If the election for Governor of West Virginia were being held TODAY, would you vote for **(ROTATE ORDER OF NAMES)** [Jim Justice, the Democratic Party candidate / Bill Cole, the Republican Party candidate / Charlotte Pritt, the Mountain Party candidate / David Moran, the Libertarian Party candidate]? *Base: All respondents, n=435*

46% Jim Justice, the Democratic Party candidate  
 32% Bill Cole, the Republican Party candidate  
 8% Charlotte Pritt, the Mountain Party candidate  
 5% David Moran, the Libertarian Party candidate  
 9% Not sure

- Thinking about the West Virginia Legislature, what is your preference for the outcome of next year's state house and senate elections **(ROTATE ORDER)** [A Republican-controlled WV Legislature / A Democrat-controlled WV Legislature]? *Base: All respondents, n=386*

40% A Republican-controlled WV Legislature  
 43% A Democrat-controlled WV Legislature  
 17% Not sure

- And, do you approve or disapprove of the way the following **(ROTATE ORDER OF NAMES)** [The West Virginia House of Delegates / The West Virginia Senate / The US Senate / The US House of Representatives] are handling their job . . .? *Base: All respondents, n=386*

	Approve	Disapprove	Not Sure
The West Virginia House of Delegates	29%	41%	30%
The West Virginia Senate	34%	40%	26%
The US Senate	20%	59%	21%
The US House of Representatives	20%	57%	23%

- How worried are you about the direction of West Virginia's economy in the next few years? *Base: All respondents, n=386*

62% Very worried  
 32% Somewhat worried  
 5% Not very worried  
 1% Not at all worried

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- How satisfied are you with the quality of West Virginia's public education system? *Base: All respondents, n=386*

7%	Very satisfied
45%	Somewhat satisfied
32%	Not very satisfied
15%	Not at all satisfied

- For these next few questions please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the given statement: West Virginia needs to cut state spending by consolidating counties and services. *Base: All respondents, n=386*

10%	Strongly agree
26%	Agree
29%	Neither agree nor disagree
26%	Disagree
9%	Strongly disagree

- For these next few questions please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the given statement: West Virginia's law that allows people to carry a concealed firearm without a special permit was a good decision. *Base: All respondents, n=386*

24%	Strongly agree
18%	Agree
13%	Neither agree nor disagree
18%	Disagree
28%	Strongly disagree

- For these next few questions please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the given statement: The recently passed Right-to-Work law will strengthen West Virginia's economy. *Base: All respondents, n=386*

12%	Strongly agree
24%	Agree
33%	Neither agree nor disagree
12%	Disagree
19%	Strongly disagree

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## Respondent Demographics

These last few questions are for statistical purposes only.

- Which of the following best describes your level of education? *Base: All respondents, n=386*

1%	Some high school or less
25%	High school graduate or equivalent (GED)
8%	Technical school graduate
23%	Some college
13%	Associate's degree
17%	Bachelor's degree
13%	Graduate or professional degree
	<i>26% NET HS grad or less education</i>
	<i>44% NET Tech school, some college, Associate's degree</i>
	<i>30% NET College degree or graduate degree</i>

- Are you or anyone else in your immediate household a member of a labor union organization?  
*Base: All respondents, n=386*

15%	Yes
84%	No

- Finally, into which of the following categories does your total annual household income happen to fall? *Base: All respondents, n=386*

7%	Less than \$10,000
5%	\$10,000 - \$14,999
11%	\$15,000 - \$24,999
14%	\$25,000 - \$34,999
18%	\$35,000 - \$49,999
18%	\$50,000 - \$74,999
9%	\$75,000 - \$99,999
8%	\$100,000 - \$149,999
1%	Over \$150,000
9%	Refused