

# Charleston Exit Poll Technical Report

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## Executive Summary

To study the choices voters make between various federal, state, and local electoral contests, we conducted an in-person exit poll ( $n = 845$ ) during the November 2018 midterm elections in Charleston County, South Carolina. This report describes our implementation and the main findings from the poll. The election turned out to be historic in several ways. In Congress, Joe Cunningham became the first Democrat to be elected to its first Congressional District since 1980. The election recorded the highest midterm turnout in the history of both South Carolina and Charleston County. Our poll also **recorded** voter's choices for Governor, State House, County Council, Probate Judge, and the Public Service Commission, as well as their views on potentially cross-cutting partisan issues. The poll **shows** an electorate that is mixed in their partisan identity and ideology, relatively highly educated, and largely disapproving of Donald Trump. For the most part, voters were opposed to offshore drilling, moderately supportive of extended highway construction, and supportive of some tax increases to fund public infrastructure.

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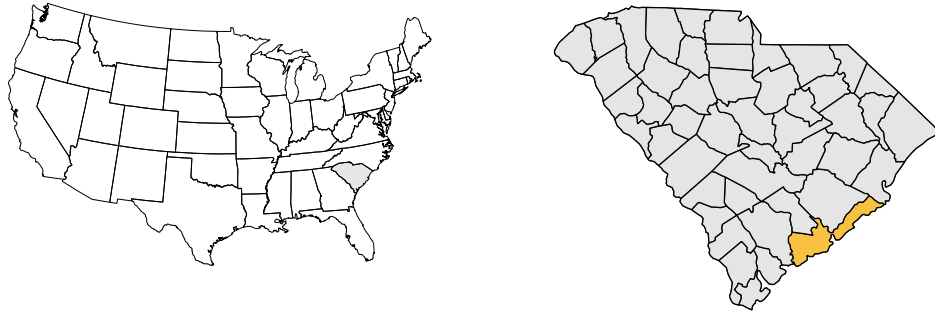
# 1 Setting and Issues Asked

Charleston, South Carolina (Figure 1) is a relatively Democratic county in a generally Republican state. Obama carried the county twice, but Republicans carried the county for seven consecutive Presidential elections since Reagan in 1980. The 2018 election once again revealed the mixed partisan breakdown of the county: A Democrat won the Congressional District for the first time, also since 1980, replacing Mark Sanford, who had lost the primary election.

This historic trend, as well as the variety of contests that were up for election in 2018, made the county an instructive case to study voter's choices for state and local issues in a backdrop of a nationalized partisan politics. Our exit poll was planned ahead of the November 2018 election and contained around 35 to 40 questions, covering respondents' vote choice, issue positions, and the perceived ideology of candidates. These included the following races:

- The race for Governor, where incumbent Henry McMaster (R) won over State Senator James Smith (D).
- The race for U.S. Congress in the first district<sup>1</sup> where Joe Cunningham (D) edged out Katie Arrington (R). Arrington herself had defeated former South Carolina Governor and three-term incumbent Mark Sanford in the primaries.
- The race for State House, spanning three districts. The incumbent won in all three districts, with Peter McCoy (R) defeating Carol Tempel (D) in District 115, Robert L Brown (D) defeating Carrol O'Neal (R) in District 116, and Leon Stavri-nakis (D) defeating Paul Sizemore (R) in District 119.
- The race for the Probate Court Judge of Charleston, where Irv Condon (R) was re-elected against challenger Stephanie Ganaway-Pasley (D).
- The race for the County Council District, either in District 8 where incumbent Anna Johnson (D) defeated Joe Boykin (R), or in District 9 where Jenny Honey-cutt (R), who had unseated the incumbent Joe Qualey in the Republican Primary, defeated Joel Milliken (Green). No Democrat ran in District 9.
- The nonpartisan race for the James Island Public Service Commissioner. In a field of nine candidates vying for four spots, only one out of four incumbents was re-elected.
- The statewide constitutional referendum to have the Superintendent of Educa-tion be appointed by the Governor. Although both Democratic and Republican state superintendents endorsed this measure, which would have allowed Gov-ernors to appoint their own superintendent, the measure failed statewide 60 to 40.

**Figure 1** – Charleston County. Left map shows South Carolina (in gray). The right map of South Carolina shows Charleston County (in yellow).



We also asked voters about their views on policy issues that appeared to be relevant in the race. To select issues, we conducted research on candidate and party statements, and investigative articles from state newspapers such as *The Post and Courier*, *The State*, and *The Island Packet*. In parallel, we conducted direct interviews with the candidates in the election, journalists, and political scientists at the University of South Carolina and College of Charleston. For example, we met with three of the four candidates for county council the week before the election, each for about an hour. The final questionnaire included questions on three specific local issues:

- Offshore drilling, which became a well-covered issue in the Congressional race after Katie Arrington stated that she supported President Trump’s decision to lift the ban on offshore drilling at a forum during her primary campaign (Byrd, 2018). Arrington later qualified her statement, saying she did not support offshore drilling off the coast of South Carolina. Opposition to offshore drilling enjoyed support from members of both parties<sup>2</sup>, with opponents believing that it would lead to damaging the environment and negatively impacting the tourism industry.
- The proposal to extend Interstate 526 (I-526) to James Island, which for years has been a central issue in the County Council. The extension would connect the highway from West Ashley through Johns Island, to James Island (Darlington, 2018). Proponents of the construction argued that it would help development of the greater Charleston area by alleviating traffic, connecting suburbs, and enhancing economic growth. Opponents argued that the construction would

<sup>1</sup> More than 88% of respondents in our sample voted for the open race of Congressional District 1. The remainder is contained in District 6, represented by Jim Clyburn.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Tom Rice (R), Henry McMaster (R), James Clyburn (D) and Mark Sanford (R) wrote a bipartisan letter to the Secretary of the Interior against offshore drilling in South Carolina (Rice et al., 2018)

damage the surrounding environment, uproot local communities, and add a large cost to the county budget.

- For the James Island area of the county, the Public Service District's property tax raise was another issue. In June 2018, a majority of the nine-person James Island Public Service Commission, which provides waste water, solid waste and fire protection services to the special purpose district, voted to raise the property tax for homes in the area by 13 percent (Naranjo, 2018).<sup>3</sup> The commissioners who voted for the tax raise defended their position on the grounds that new funding for public goods such as a new fire department and raising wages for firefighters was necessary. Others believed that the large and sudden tax raise was unwarranted. The Mayor of James Island openly criticized the commission's decision (Slade, 2018), leading to a series of critical discussions between members of the commission and the Mayor.

## 2 Survey Design

Our target population was the Charleston 2018 electorate, i.e. all Charleston voters who turned out to vote in the November 2018 election. In total, we collected 845 non-refusal responses, and computed post-stratification weights to balance the sample to the Charleston electorate. Combined, our poll sample has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.4$  percentage points. The general procedure followed the methodology of the University of South Carolina Aiken exit poll (Botsch and Thornburg, 2018).

### 2.1 Precinct Selection

We chose a manageable set of polling places that resemble Charleston voters as a whole. The final precincts are shown in Figure 2 and information about the polling places that cover these precincts are detailed in Table 1.

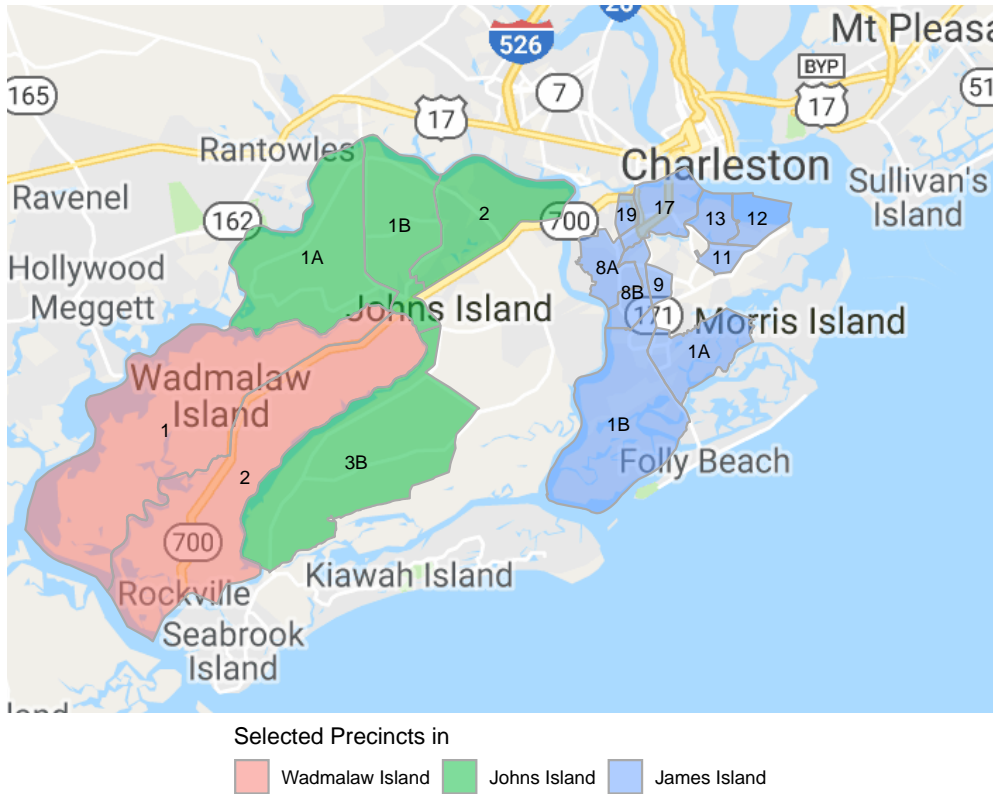
We measured similarity based on the following six variables: the percentage of voters in the precinct who voted for Trump in 2016, the percentage of voters who voted for the half-cent sales tax referendum in 2016, the percentage of female, non-white, and senior (over 65) voters in 2014, and the number of voters who turned out in 2014. We used two data sources to estimate the precinct-level values of the target variables: the South Carolina Election Commission's participating voter demographics<sup>4</sup> and the ballot image log database (Kuriwaki, 2019).

We started with all possible combinations of up to four precincts in James Island

<sup>3</sup> For the owner of a \$350,000 home, this tax increase would add \$105 to a property tax bill.

<sup>4</sup> For example, <https://www.scvotes.org/cgi-bin/scsec/vothist?election=vhgen14&regvote=VOT>

**Figure 2** – Selected Precincts, James Island, Johns Island, Wadmalaw Island, and the I-526 in Charleston County. Each polygon shows the boundaries of the precincts sampled for this study. Colors refer to the neighborhood and alphanumeric labels to the precinct code. Polling places often combine multiple precincts together (see Table 1). The extension of Interstate 526, shown to the North, was a focal debate in the county.



Public Service District and up to three polling places in County Council District 8.<sup>5</sup> We then computed the aforementioned statistics for each combination, and calculated the discrepancy between the same statistics countywide, both in terms of the absolute difference and the root mean squared difference. Out of the few combinations of polling places that showed the smallest discrepancy, we chose the most reasonable allocation given physical and logistical constraints on Election Day.

## 2.2 Post-stratification Weighting

Although precincts were chosen to resemble the target population, various factors such as non-response bias may lead to an unrepresentative surveyed sample. We constructed post-stratification weights to weight the sample to the Charleston county

<sup>5</sup> Some polling places include precincts from both County Council District 8 and 9.

**Table 1** – Polling Places Sampled. Each row shows the polling place (named by the precincts covered by them) selected for this study, with statistics used to compare with Charleston county before the election. Election statistics are from the 2016 electorate. See Table 35 for more statistics.

Precincts	Polling Place	Pct. Trump	Pct. White
James Island 1A, 1B	James Island	0.34	0.73
James Island 8A, 8B, 9	St James Church	0.42	0.90
James Island 11, 12, 13	Stiles Point Elementary	0.49	0.97
James Island 17, 19	Harbor View Elementary	0.40	0.92
Johns Island 1A, 1B, 2	St. John’s High School	0.50	0.85
Johns Island 3B	Mt. Zion Elementary	0.46	0.74
Wadmalaw Island 1, 2.	Edith Frierson Elementary	0.38	0.65

electorate, based on election outcomes, education, race, gender, and age. Estimation followed a two-step procedure involving rake weights and entropy balancing weights, to make use of both vote choice and demographic data. Details for estimation are provided in Appendix Section B.

These weights successfully adjust the survey sample to the target population, especially on observable demographics. Table 2 compares our survey sample with both the population values of the seven polling places we surveyed and Charleston in general. While the unweighted sample (first column) tends to be more male, younger, and more Democratic than the target population, weighted estimates are much closer to both the polling places we sampled and the county as a whole.

While weighted proportions on demographics match almost perfectly with the population, the weighted sample still overestimates support for Democratic candidates countywide.<sup>6</sup> Discrepancies in the vote share of state and local candidates can partly be explained by the fact that precincts do not neatly overlap with all districts, and so in polling places covering multiple districts we cannot classify each respondent into their particular district.<sup>7</sup>

In the Appendix Section A, we examine these differences between sample and population at the polling place level, along with further details on data sources.

<sup>6</sup> Voteshares within a district within Charleston county were computed from precinct-level tallies provided by the State Election Commission (<https://www.scvotes.org/election-results>).

<sup>7</sup> In these cases, we simply estimate the two-party vote share in the survey, excluding “not sure” and missing responses from the denominator.

**Table 2** – Comparison of Survey Sample and Population. The first two columns show the demographic characteristics of the exit poll sample, both before and after post-stratification weighting. The next two columns show population statistics of the polling places chosen, and Charleston county as a whole. All values are of the November 2018 (voting) electorate.

	Survey		Population	
	Unweighted	Weighted	Precincts	Charleston
Percent Female	0.52	0.56	0.57	0.56
Percent White	0.78	0.74	0.78	0.75
Percent Black	0.20	0.23	0.20	0.22
Percent 65+	0.22	0.32	0.32	0.30
Smith (D, Governor)	0.64	0.57	0.57	0.57
Cunningham (D, SC-1)	0.68	0.61	0.61	0.57
Johnson (D, CC-8)	0.59	0.57	0.49	0.52
Honeycutt (R, CC-9)	0.53	0.62	0.61	0.64
Observations	845	845	15,223	148,335

### 3 Survey Implementation

Election day voting was open from 7 AM to 7 PM statewide, and we interviewed voters throughout the course of the day. Interviewers approached 1,361 voters walking out of the polling place with a paper survey on a clipboard. 845 agreed to fill out our survey (a 62% response rate). Voters were asked if they could fill out the survey on the spot on a voluntary basis. We employed several strategies to ensure that sampling was systematic. Appendix C provides further details, including separate refusal rates by demographics.

We conducted the exit poll on-site, with the permission of the Charleston County Election Commission. We recruited 21 students from the College of Charleston to serve as exit poll interviewers. Interviewers were instructed to approach the first voter they saw of a gender pre-specified on each survey, and approach another voter only after the first respondent completed their survey. In other words, sampling was stratified by gender. Interviewers were also asked to mark the perceived race of the voter on the questionnaire as they approached them. Therefore, race and gender were only recorded by observation, not by self-report. This allowed the survey to measure the gender and race of even those who refused to answer the survey (Table 38).

## 4 Results

In the following figures and tables, we show toplines of all major questions asked in the survey. The wording of each question is shown in the caption. All proportions are weighted using the survey weights described above, and rounded to a percent. Item-non response entries are dropped.

### 4.1 Vote Choice

The majority of Charleston voters disapproved of President Trump's presidency. 90% of respondents who indicated they voted for Clinton in 2016 strongly disapprove of President Trump, but only 70% of respondents who voted for Trump answered they strongly approved.

The Democratic candidates in both the Congressional and Gubernatorial races gained majority support in Charleston. Cunningham received 61% of the two-party vote in the county, which was 5 percentage points more than Smith (with 57% of the two-party vote). When examining their support by partisan identification, party allegiance remained relatively high at 80 - 95 percent, while self-identified independents swung overwhelmingly for the Democratic candidate.

**Table 3** – Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President?

Strongly Approve	29%
Somewhat Approve	10%
Somewhat Disapprove	6%
Strongly Disapprove	53%
Not Sure	1%
n	838

**Table 4** – In the 2016 election for President, I voted for...

Hillary Clinton	50%
Donald Trump	37%
I did not vote in 2016	7%
Other	5%
n	819



**Table 5** – Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President? [By 2016 Presidential Vote]

(a) Voted for Clinton		(b) Voted for Trump	
Strongly Approve	2%	Strongly Approve	70%
Somewhat Approve	1%	Somewhat Approve	21%
Somewhat Disapprove	4%	Somewhat Disapprove	7%
Strongly Disapprove	90%	Strongly Disapprove	2%
Not Sure	2%		
	n 405		n 304

**Table 6** – In your voting today, did you choose to cast your ballot using the straight party option?

Democratic	29%
Republican	27%
No	44%
	n 845

**Table 7** – In today's race for Governor, I voted for...

James Smith (Democrat)	56%
Henry McMaster (Republican)	42%
Not Sure	1%
Didn't vote for this office	1%
	n 834

**Table 8** – In today's race for Governor, I voted for... [By Partisan Self-Identification]

(a) Among Democrats	(b) Among Independents	(c) Among Republicans
Smith 95%	Smith 80%	Smith 4%
McMaster 3%	McMaster 17%	McMaster 96%
Not Sure 2%	Not Sure 3%	
	n 93	n 271

**Table 9** – In today’s race for the US House of Representatives, I voted for...

Joe Cunningham (SC-1 Democrat)	57%
Katie Arrington (SC-1 Republican)	36%
Jim Clyburn (SC-6 Democrat)	3%
Gerhard Gressmann (SC-6 Republican)	2%
Not Sure	2%
n 829	

**Table 10** – In today’s race for the US House of Representatives, I voted for... [By Partisan Self-Identification]

(a) Among Democrats	(b) Among Independents	(c) Among Republicans
Cunningham 90%	Cunningham 78%	Cunningham 8%
Arrington 1%	Arrington 13%	Arrington 88%
Clyburn 6%	Clyburn 2%	Gressmann 3%
Not Sure 3%	Gressmann 2%	
n 326	Not Sure 6%	n 265
	n 95	

**Table 11** – In today’s race for the State House of Representatives, I voted for...

Carol Tempel (SH-115 Democrat)	24%
Peter McCoy (SH-115 Republican)	18%
Robert L. Brown (SH-116 Democrat)	24%
Carroll O’Neal (SH-116 Republican)	15%
Leon Stavrinakis (SH-119 Democrat)	9%
Paul Sizemore (SH-119 Republican)	4%
Not Sure	4%
Didn’t vote for this office	2%
n 811	

**Table 12** – In today’s race for Probate Judge, I voted for...

Stephanie Ganaway-Pasley (Democrat)	44%
Irv Condon (Republican)	50%
Not Sure	4%
Didn’t vote for this office	2%
n	813

**Table 13** – In today’s race for County Council, I voted for...

Anna Johnson (CC-8 Democrat)	34%
Joe Boykin (CC-8 Republican)	26%
Joel Milliken (CC-9 Green)	11%
Jenny Honeycutt (CC-9 Republican)	18%
Not Sure	6%
Didn’t vote for this office	6%
n	809

**Table 14** – In today’s constitutional amendment referendum to have the Superintendent of Education be appointed by the Governor, I voted ...

Yes (Governor appoints)	37%
No (Voters elect)	58%
Not Sure	3%
Didn’t vote for this contest	2%
n	815

**Table 15** – In the 2016 referendum to raise the county sales tax by a half-cent, I voted ...

For	37%
Against	37%
Not Sure	17%
I did not vote in 2016	8%
n	808

## 4.2 Issues

We asked respondents their stances on the state and local issues outlined in Section 1. Voters opposed offshore drilling (64%) and supported the I-526 extension (62%). Residents in the Public Service District were split in their support of the tax increase, with 27% opposed, 36% undecided or with no preference, and 38% against.

We also tabulated the weighted breakdown of opinion by self-identified partisanship (Section 4.3). We grouped strong, moderate, and lean partisans together, and kept a third category of independents who did not lean towards either party. Although estimates among subgroups are necessarily more noisy given the smaller sample size, these generally show that party does not perfectly predict issue positions.

The opposition to off-shore drilling is in stark contrast with national numbers. In a 2012 Suffolk University poll with similar wording but not indicating any particular coast for drilling, 78% of the nationally representative sample *approved* of offshore drilling.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 16** – Would you support these hypothetical tax increases?

(a) Increase the <u>federal</u> income tax to fund roads and schools		(b) Increase the <u>state</u> income tax to fund roads and schools	
Yes	39%	Yes	44%
No	43%	No	39%
Not Sure	17%	Not Sure	16%
n	726	n	767

**Table 17** – Should the U.S. increase its domestic oil production, even if that includes offshore drilling in South Carolina?

Yes	23%
No	64%
Not Sure	14%
n	815

<sup>8</sup> Question wording: “Should the United States explore options to increase its domestic oil production, even if that includes more offshore drilling?” Retrieved from iPoll, USSUFF . 032612 . R42.

**Table 18** – Should the U.S. increase its domestic oil production, even if that includes offshore drilling in South Carolina? [By Partisan Self-Identification]

(a) Among Democrats		(b) Among Independents		(c) Among Republicans	
Yes	10%	Yes	16%	Yes	44%
No	77%	No	76%	No	39%
Not Sure	13%	Not Sure	8%	Not Sure	17%
n	323	n	97	n	269

**Table 19** – Do you support or oppose the Interstate 526 extension through Johns Island and James Island?

Strongly Support	39%
Support	23%
Neither Support nor Oppose	8%
Oppose	11%
Strongly Oppose	13%
I have not had time to think about this issue	6%
n	828

**Table 20** – Do you support or oppose the Interstate 526 extension through Johns Island and James Island ? [By Partisan Self-Identification]

(a) Among Democrats		(b) Among Independents		(c) Among Republicans	
Strongly Support	32%	Strongly Support	25%	Strongly Support	58%
Support	25%	Support	29%	Support	15%
Neither	11%	Neither	10%	Neither	5%
Oppose	12%	Oppose	11%	Oppose	10%
Strongly Oppose	14%	Strongly Oppose	12%	Strongly Oppose	12%
Unsure	7%	Unsure	13%	Unsure	1%
n	324	n	97	n	273

**Table 21** – Do you support or oppose the James Island Public Service District Commission increasing the property tax by 13% to fund fire protection?

Strongly Support	9%
Support	17%
Neither Support nor Oppose	20%
Oppose	24%
Strongly Oppose	14%
I have not had time to think about this issue	16%
n	374

**Table 22** – Do you support or oppose the James Island Public Service District Commission increasing the property tax by 13% to fund fire protection? [By Partisan Self-Identification]

(a) Among Democrats		(b) Among Independents		(c) Among Republicans	
Strongly Support	9%	Strongly Support	5%	Strongly Support	19%
Support	27%	Support	13%	Support	11%
Neither	16%	Neither	28%	Neither	19%
Oppose	19%	Oppose	28%	Oppose	28%
Strongly Oppose	13%	Strongly Oppose	16%	Strongly Oppose	16%
Unsure	16%	Unsure	10%	Unsure	8%
n	133	n	51	n	101

### 4.3 Demographics

A plurality of voters (46%) identified as a Democrat, 14% identified as “pure” independents and 38% identified as Republican. Self-identified ideology was distributed almost symmetrically, with 13% identifying as very Liberal, 13% as very Conservative, and 20% as neither. The median respondent’s annual income bracket was \$75-100,000 and 68% have received more than a high school education. More than 70% of voters lived in Charleston County for more than 10 years, and 78% of voters were homeowners.

**Table 23** – Perceived Gender

Male	44%
Female	56%
n	845

**Table 24 – Perceived Race**

White/Caucasian	74%
Black/African American	23%
Hispanic/Latinx	1%
Other	2%
n	812

**Table 25 – Which of the following best describes your party identification?**

Strong Democrat	32%
Moderate Democrat	10%
Lean Democrat	4%
Independent	14%
Lean Republican	6%
Moderate Republican	11%
Strong Republican	21%
Other	3%
n	717

**Table 26 – Which of the following best describes your political ideology?**

Very Liberal	13%
Liberal	21%
Neither	24%
Conservative	24%
Very Conservative	13%
Not Sure	6%
n	700

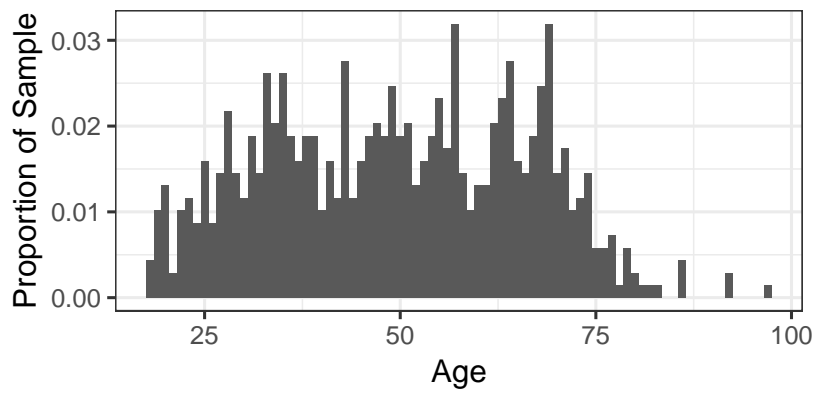
**Table 27 – Would you say you follow...**

(a) <u>national</u> politics		(b) <u>state and local</u> politics	
Most of the time	65%	Most of the time	41%
Some of the time	27%	Some of the time	43%
Only now and then	5%	Only now and then	12%
Hardly at all	3%	Hardly at all	4%
n	719	n	715

**Table 28** – Are you the parent or guardian of any children under the age of 18?

Yes	24%
No, but I have been	49%
No, never	26%
n	713

**Table 29** – What year were you born? [Recoded to age, unweighted]



**Table 30** – What is the highest level of education you have completed?

High School or Less	32%
2-year College	25%
4-year College	17%
Post-Graduate Degree	26%
n	712

**Table 31** – Do you own your home or pay rent?

Own	78%
Rent	16%
Other	7%
n	703



**Table 32** – What is your current religion, if any?

Evangelical Christian	20%
Mainline Protestant	17%
Roman Catholic	13%
Other	30%
None	20%
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n	704

**Table 33** – How long have you lived in...

(a) South Carolina		(b) Charleston County		(c) Your Neighborhood	
Under a year	2%	Under a year	2%	Under a year	6%
1-5 years	11%	1-5 years	13%	1-5 years	26%
5-10 years	10%	5-10 years	12%	5-10 years	13%
10 years or more	76%	10 years or more	73%	10 years or more	54%
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n	711	n	711	n	711

**Table 34** – Which of the following groups best describe your family income this year?

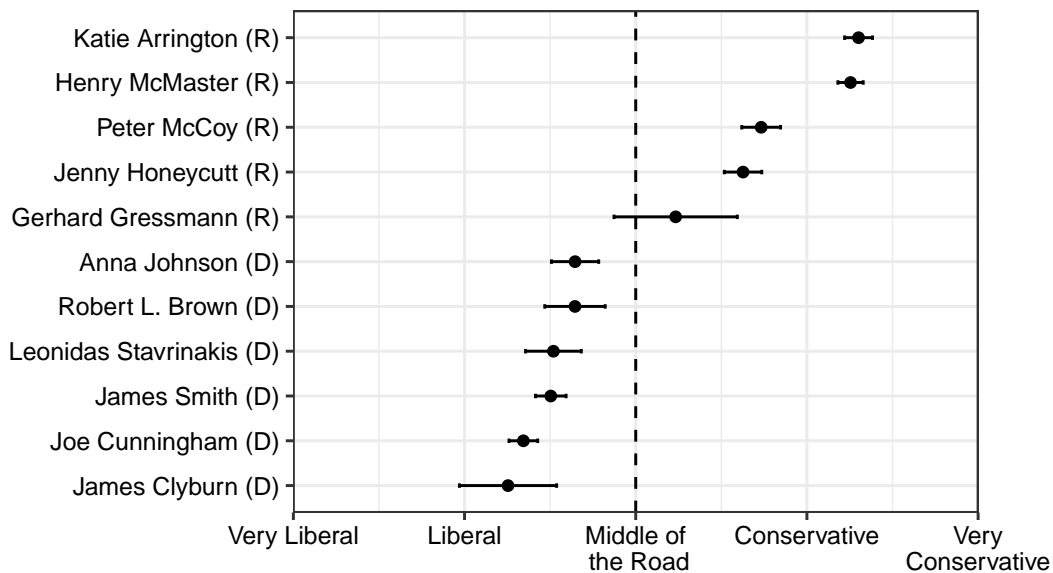
<15,000	4%
15-20,000	2%
20-25,000	5%
25-30,000	3%
30-40,000	9%
40-50,000	7%
50-75,000	16%
75-100,000	21%
100-125,000	5%
125,000+	28%
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n	681

#### 4.4 Perceived Candidate Ideology

Figure 3 shows the average response for voters' ideological placements of candidates, with 95 percent confidence intervals. Voters rated the relevant Gubernatorial, Congressional, State House and County Council candidates on a Likert scale of "Very Liberal" to "Very Conservative." Party labels and district information were not provided. We then changed these categories into numeric values.

Respondents categorized Republican candidates as conservative and Democratic candidates as liberal, absent an explicit party cue. Katie Arrington and Henry McMaster were seen as the most conservative, while Jim Clyburn and Joe Cunningham were seen as the most liberal.

**Figure 3** – How would you rate each of the following individuals?



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## Appendix

### A Comparison with Population Turnout

In the following tables, we show statistics at the polling place level. In Table 35 we show the demographics and vote shares of four candidates at the polling place level. Table 36 shows weighted estimates from the exit survey. Table 37 shows unweighted estimates.

### B Post-stratification Weighting

First, we estimated rim weights to weight the survey sample to match the final vote share of James Smith (Democratic Candidate for Governor), the three-way vote share for the straight party ticket option, and estimated education. The two contests were those which applied to our entire survey sample. For education, we used the validated vote sample of Charleston County in the cumulative Cooperative Congressional Election Study (2006-2016).<sup>9</sup> We used the `iterake` package in R to generate weights that balanced the sample on these marginal distributions.

We then used these these rim weights as starting values for entropy balancing on demographic variables. We acquired the 2018 voter file from the State Election Commission. The voter file includes official information about the districts, sex, date of birth, and race of the voter.<sup>10</sup> We then used entropy balancing by Hainmueller (2011), implemented in `ebal`, to construct sample weights, that, when applied, show the same covariance structure as the population.<sup>11</sup> Although we cannot incorporate election results in entropy balancing because the joint distribution between demographics and vote choice is unknown, we used the rim weights discussed earlier as base weights.

Both algorithms converged easily. Missing values in the voter file data was negligible. Self-reported age on the survey had a non-negligible item non-response, so we imputed missing values by the sample average of the non-missing values.

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<sup>9</sup> CCES estimates that the education among voters in Charleston county are 28% high school or less, 37% 2-year college, 14% 4-year college, and 20% post-graduate degree. The ACS estimates the education among the entire population (not voters) in the county to be 32% high school or less, 27% 2-year college, 27% college degree, and 15% post-graduate degree. The CCES estimate restricts the sample from validated voters, but on the other hand is only based a small sample itself ( $n \approx 75$ ).

<sup>10</sup> South Carolina is one of several states that records race in registration. It does not record party affiliation

<sup>11</sup> Specifically, we match on the following numeric transformations: Race = White, Race = Black / African American, Gender = Female, Age (continuous), Race  $\times$  Gender interaction, Race  $\times$  Age interaction, Gender  $\times$  Age interaction

**Table 35 – Population Demographics and Election Results, by Polling Place**

Polling Place	Electorate Demographics				Election Results					Turnout
	Percent Female	Percent White	Percent Black	Percent 65+	Smith (D, Governor)	Cunningham (D, SC-1)	Johnson (D, CC-8)	Honeycutt (R, CC-9)		
James Island 1A & 1B	0.58	0.60	0.37	0.30	0.69	0.72	0.86	0.58	1,727	
James Island 8A & 8B & 9	0.59	0.83	0.15	0.34	0.63	0.65	0.71	0.54	2,615	
James Island 11 & 12 & 13	0.55	0.96	0.03	0.34	0.50	0.54		0.66	2,719	
James Island 17 & 19	0.58	0.88	0.09	0.22	0.59	0.63	0.67	0.58	1,783	
Johns Island 1A & 1B & 2	0.57	0.77	0.21	0.30	0.53	0.57	0.39	0.66	3,945	
Johns Island 3B	0.56	0.66	0.32	0.45	0.51	0.56	0.50	0.81	1,038	
Wadmalaw 1 & 2	0.55	0.53	0.46	0.39	0.61	0.71	0.52	0.81	1,396	
7 Polling Places	0.57	0.78	0.20	0.32	0.57	0.61	0.49	0.61	15,223	
Charleston	0.56	0.75	0.22	0.30	0.57	0.57	0.52	0.64	148,335	

Note: SC-1: First Congressional District. CC: County Council, Districts 8 and 9.

**Table 36 – Weighted Survey Estimates of Demographics and Vote Choice**

Polling Place	Electorate Demographics				Election Results					Sample Size
	Percent Female	Percent White	Percent Black	Percent 65+	Smith (D, Governor)	Cunningham (D, SC-1)	Johnson (D, CC-8)	Honeycutt (R, CC-9)		
James Island 1A & 1B	0.59	0.63	0.35	0.50	0.69	0.74	0.82	0.69	90	
James Island 8A & 8B & 9	0.58	0.82	0.11	0.33	0.63	0.65	0.76	0.59	114	
James Island 11 & 12 & 13	0.58	0.99	0.01	0.31	0.61	0.64		0.56	145	
James Island 17 & 19	0.61	0.81	0.11	0.28	0.57	0.60	0.76	0.74	91	
Johns Island 1A & 1B & 2	0.53	0.79	0.19	0.25	0.48	0.52	0.41	0.73	223	
Johns Island 3B	0.52	0.58	0.42	0.52	0.51	0.60	0.62	0.76	76	
Wadmalaw 1 & 2	0.56	0.47	0.51	0.26	0.62	0.68	0.59	0.62	106	
Total	0.56	0.74	0.23	0.32	0.57	0.61	0.57	0.62	845	

Note: Not Sure responses are excluded. Cells with n < 20 are not shown.

**Table 37 – Unweighted Survey Estimates of Demographics and Vote Choice**

Polling Place	Electorate Demographics				Election Results					Sample Size
	Percent Female	Percent White	Percent Black	Percent 65+	Smith (D, Governor)	Cunningham (D, SC-1)	Johnson (D, CC-8)	Honeycutt (R, CC-9)		
James Island 1A & 1B	0.54	0.72	0.25	0.38	0.73	0.77	0.75	0.63	90	
James Island 8A & 8B & 9	0.56	0.83	0.12	0.15	0.73	0.76	0.81	0.47	114	
James Island 11 & 12 & 13	0.52	0.99	0.01	0.19	0.68	0.71	0.78	0.49	145	
James Island 17 & 19	0.51	0.87	0.10	0.18	0.64	0.69	0.60	0.60	91	
Johns Island 1A & 1B & 2	0.52	0.79	0.19	0.16	0.55	0.60	0.45	0.58	223	
Johns Island 3B	0.47	0.61	0.38	0.44	0.54	0.59	0.59		76	
Wadmalaw 1 & 2	0.54	0.49	0.50	0.18	0.66	0.73	0.62		106	
Total	0.52	0.78	0.20	0.22	0.64	0.68	0.59	0.53	845	

Note: Not Sure responses are excluded. Cells with n < 20 are not shown.

## C Interview Details

Over three time periods while polls were open (7AM-10AM, 11AM-2PM, 3PM-6PM), students were assigned to multiple shifts, each about 3 hours.

All workers were instructed to follow the following protocol, modeled from the longstanding practice at the University of South Carolina, Aiken exit poll. To the extent of our knowledge, this guideline was adhered to throughout the day.

- Each instrument was randomly assigned voter gender.
- Each interviewer took a survey, and approached the first voter they saw walking out of the voting booth of the assigned (perceived) gender.
- The interviewer introduced themselves, noting the perceived race of the voter on the form. If the voter refused to answer, the survey was marked as refused and stored with the voter's perceived race and gender.
- If the voter accepted to fill in the survey, the interviewer waited until the voter finished, then took the next sheet, repeating the procedure.

For each shift and polling place, we assigned an initial quota of surveys to be filled out, estimated at 12% of the total votes in the 2014 midterm elections. However, given the unexpectedly large turnout, some polling places ran out of surveys much earlier than we expected. Some of these polling places received up to 1.3 times more survey responses than original estimates.

Because the gender and perceived race of voters were recorded for all voters interviewers approached, we can compute the refusal rate among these groups. Table 38 shows refusal rates among the four major demographic groups. White men were the most likely to refuse an interview.

**Table 38** – Refusal Rate by Perceived Demographics.

Gender	Race	Refusal Rate	Attempted
Male	White/Caucasian	42%	537
Male	Black/African American	39%	108
Female	White/Caucasian	36%	499
Female	Black/African American	32%	146

*Note:* Groups with  $n < 20$  are not shown.