

VIRGINIA
Winner: Republican

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The state of Virginia has not chosen a democratic candidate as their presidential nominee since 1964 with Presidential candidate Lyndon B. Johnson. Over the years, Virginia has been a highly Republican state, especially when it comes to voting for the President of the United States. Though this year, with talks about hope, change, and making a difference, it is uncertain whether or not it is safe to assume that this election has a possibility to turn out different and the state of Virginia possibly finding a change of its own. Because at this time there is not a certain democratic candidate, it makes the process of deciding who will get the nomination a little more complicated. I believe that if Senator Clinton gets the Democratic presidential nomination for the party, that Virginia, who tends to vote Republican, will strongly vote for Senator John McCain. With Senator Obama, I feel like there is a better chance of him becoming Virginia's next presidential nominee more so than Senator Clinton. Overall, whether it is Senator Obama or Senator Clinton chosen to be the democratic nominee, I believe that Senator John McCain will be the next Presidential nominee from the state of Virginia.

A lot of emphasis, as in years before, has been put on the youth vote. Though it shows that there is an increased interest among the youth this year, mainly who support Obama, I do not believe that this will be sufficient enough to make a significant difference in Virginia or any other state. This year in Virginia's primary, the Democratic exit polls showed that 14% of people from the ages of 17-29 years came out to vote in the primary in February ("Election Center 2008 Primaries and Caucuses"). I do believe that it will play a part in the Obama campaign, but I do not believe it will be the deciding factor that wins him enough votes in states like Virginia.

Overall though, Virginia has been mainly a republican state for several years, especially when it comes to voting for the President of the United States. Though in the other categories like the US House or Senate or the State offices, like the State Senate or House or governor, the results and party winners are mixed. Since 2001, there has been a democratic governor in office in Virginia ("The Green Papers: Virginia 2005 Off-Year Elections"). This is why I believe that if Senator Obama gets the Democratic nomination, that he will have a very likely chance of winning the state because it does have mixture of political parties among the states' politicians. Though because of it having a strong history of voting Republican, it will be a hard race to run. If Senator Clinton gets the democratic nomination, I certainly believe that McCain will win the Virginia presidential nomination because of it being such a Republican state and Republicans just do not support the Clintons. As seen in the Virginia Primary on February 12th, Obama also had a strong lead over Clinton with 64% to 35% ("Election Center 2008 Primaries and Caucuses").

The state of Virginia is different from most other states in that it does not currently register voters by party affiliation. Currently, there are Virginia politicians, like Virginia's Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling, trying to change that. Virginia does not have people registered to vote by their party because, as current

Governor Kaine of Virginia said, he believes “the citizens like to be viewed as independents” (Craig 2008). The Republicans are mainly the ones pushing this cause to be changed. Because of this, data could not be found on how each party votes for what candidate in Virginia.

With factors like voting age, mixed state legislature, and voters’ personal political opinions and affiliation coming into play, it is hard to determine who will be the next Presidential nominee from Virginia. Because of Virginia’s past history and its tendency to lead towards Republican, I do believe that Senator John McCain will be the next Presidential nominee from the state of Virginia.

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