



Memorandum

To: Interested Parties
From: Beck Research LLC
Date: March 20, 2013

Re: Virginia Women's Health Care Survey Research Results

Our new survey demonstrates that Virginians strongly oppose changing the building requirements for women's health care centers that offer first-trimester abortions, the subject of final decision-making by the Virginia Board of Health on April 12. The majority opposition to the new regulations carries across partisan boundaries – most Republicans, Independents and Democrats disapprove of the regulations. Further, an overwhelming majority of Virginians say they trust doctors and medical experts about health care, not politicians (including the Virginia legislature, Governor Bob McDonnell and Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli).

This survey demonstrates that Virginians want doctors and medical experts, not elected officials, to make medical decisions and set health regulations. The majority of Virginians (58%) oppose the new building requirements for first-trimester abortion services, compared to 35% who favor them. Three-quarters of Virginians (75%) agree that private medical decisions should be made by women, their families and doctors. Doctors and medical experts are trusted sources of information on health care in Virginia, while Virginians are reluctant to look to their elected officials for health guidance.

These results are based on a survey fielded February 20-24 among a total of 500 Virginia adults, aged 18 and over. The margin of error is +/- 4.4%. The survey employed a random digit dial (RDD) sample and contains landline and cell phone interviews. The margin of error is +/- 4.4%.

- **Virginians do not want elected officials to overstep and prefer that medical experts set medical regulations.** Doctors and medical experts are universally trusted about health care in Virginia; 95% of Virginians trust doctors (56% very much) and 93% trust medical experts (51% very much). In contrast, Governor McDonnell and Attorney General Cuccinelli are the least trusted sources on health care in Virginia. Just 41% of Virginians trust the governor and 38% trust the AG; 52% do not trust McDonnell or Cuccinelli very much or at all on health care.
 - Virginians also agree by a wide 69%-to-23% margin that *“medical experts should set all medical regulations, including those regarding first trimester abortion”* over *“elected officials should contribute to medical regulations, especially those regarding first trimester abortion.”*

- **By a two-to-one margin, Virginians oppose changing the building requirements for women’s health centers that offer first-trimester abortions.** When asked with no explanation of the regulations (see question 7), 46% of Virginians oppose the proposal, including 33% that strongly oppose it. In contrast, only 22% favor it, including just 11% who strongly favor the proposal. An equal proportion of Virginians are unsure about the proposal; 22% are either undecided or unable to answer the question.

Initial Opposition to Building Requirement Proposal	
Strongly oppose	33%
Somewhat oppose	13%
Somewhat favor	11%
Strongly favor	11%
(Undecided)	14%
(Don’t know/refused)	18%

A broad coalition of Virginians opposes the proposal from the outset. Democrats, older women (women 50 and over), and African-Americans are some of the strongest opponents, but Republicans oppose the proposal by 24-points and Independents by 13-points (see Appendix A for full results).

- After additional information explaining the proposal in more detail (see question 8), a majority (58%) of Virginians opposes the measure and 35% support it; just seven percent are undecided or unsure (see Appendix B for question wording). The proposal continues to be opposed by a 23-point margin. At the end of the survey, after arguments for and against the proposal, opposition grows, with 62% opposing the proposal and 31% supporting it.

Building Requirement Proposal (Percentage Oppose – Favor)	
Initial	46% - 22%
Informed	58% - 35%
Final	62% - 31%

At the conclusion, the proposal remains unpopular across demographic groups and by self-identified partisanship. Democrats oppose it by a wide margin (71% oppose), but a majority of Republicans (57%), Independents (59%), conservatives (57%), and white Born Again Christians (57%) also dislike the proposal.

- **Virginians are not eager to restrict abortion; majority think abortion should be legal.** A majority of Virginians thinks abortion should be legal, including 28% who think it should be legal in all cases. Only 38% think abortion should be illegal and just 15% report that abortion should be illegal in all cases. In addition, Virginians see abortion as a private matter. By a wide three-to-one margin (75%-to-22%), Virginians agree “*private medical decisions should be made by a woman, her family and her doctor*” over “*abortion is bigger than any single woman’s medical decision.*”

**Appendix A –
Initial and Informed Opposition to
Changing the Building Requirements for Women's Health Centers**

Building Requirement Proposal (Percentage Oppose – Favor)		
	<i>Initial (Blind Test)</i>	<i>Informed (With Explanation)</i>
All Adults	46% - 22%	58% - 35%
Democrats	56% - 20%	63% - 32%
Independents	38% - 25%	53% - 38%
Republicans	46% - 22%	61% - 34%
Men	43% - 25%	58% - 35%
Women	48% - 20%	58% - 35%
Young women	43% - 20%	55% - 42%
Young men	41% - 24%	53% - 40%
Older women	55% - 21%	63% - 28%
Older men	46% - 28%	65% - 28%
Non-College	44% - 25%	57% - 38%
College Graduates	49% - 19%	59% - 32%
White	45% - 21%	61% - 32%
African-American	54% - 23%	55% - 38%
Born Again	43% - 23%	58% - 37%
Metro DC	48% - 20%	60% - 32%
Outer DC	38% - 28%	53% - 42%
Norfolk Media Market	48% - 23%	63% - 28%
Richmond Media Market	46% - 23%	51% - 40%
Roanoke Media Market	46% - 25%	63% - 31%

Appendix B – Questionnaire

Virginia Coalition to Protect Women's Health Frequency Questionnaire

February 20-24, 2013
500 Respondents

Q.5 Do you think abortion should be legal in all cases, legal in most cases, illegal in most cases, or illegal in all cases?

	Total
Legal in all cases	28
Legal in most cases.....	28
Illegal in most cases.....	23
Illegal in all cases	15
(Don't know/refused).....	6
Total Legal.....	56
Total Illegal	38
Legal - Illegal	17
(ref:CHOICE)	

Q.6 Thinking about the last year, how much have you seen, read or heard about proposed changes to regulations governing Virginia's women's health centers that provide first-trimester abortions? (IF YES:) Is that a lot, some or just a little?

	Total
No	47
Yes, a lot	18
Yes some	20
Yes, a little	13
(Unsure, don't know)	3
(Refused)	0
Total Yes	51
(ref:HEARD)	

Q.7 Based on that you know right now, do you favor or oppose changing the building requirements for women's health care centers that offer first-trimester abortions?

	Total
Strongly oppose.....	33
Somewhat oppose.....	13
Somewhat favor	11
Strongly favor	11
(Undecided).....	14
(Don't know/refused).....	18
Total Oppose.....	46
Total Favor	22
Oppose - Favor	23
(ref:VAVOTE1)	

Q.8 Now let me tell you more.

As you may or may not now, Virginia is considering new, permanent regulations for all women's health care centers that provide at least five first-trimester abortions - which are outpatient procedures -- per month. These new regulations would require all of Virginia women's health care centers to be re-constructed as new hospitals, instead of outpatient facilities. The health facility requirements include mandating five-foot wide public hallways, covered entry ways, constructing larger hospital-like treatment rooms, and incorporating new, stand-alone ventilation systems.

Now that you have heard more, do you favor or oppose changing the building requirements for women's health care centers that offer first-trimester abortions?

	Total
Strongly oppose.....	44
Somewhat oppose.....	14
Somewhat favor	16
Strongly favor	19
(Undecided).....	4
(Don't know/refused).....	3
Total Oppose.....	58
Total Favor	35
Oppose - Favor	23
(ref:VAVOTE2)	

Q.9 The following are several pairs of statements related to women's health. For each pair, please indicate which statement is closer to your point of view.

	1 st	2 nd	DK/ Ref	1 st - 2 nd
9 Changes to building regulations for women's health centers are really a backdoor way to restrict abortions.				
<i>OR</i>				
Changes to building regulations for women's health centers reflect legitimate health concerns.	52	38	10	15
10 Medical experts should set all medical regulations, including those regarding first trimester abortion.				
<i>OR</i>				
Elected officials should contribute to medical regulations, especially those regarding first trimester abortion.....	69	23	9	46
11 First trimester abortion is a safe, outpatient procedure so additional building regulations are NOT necessary.				
<i>OR</i>				
First trimester abortion is NOT a safe procedure so additional building requirements are necessary.	54	31	15	23
12 Private medical decisions should be made by a woman, her family and her doctor.				
<i>OR</i>				
Abortion is bigger than any single woman's medical decision..... (ref:PAIR1)	75	22	3	54

Virginia Women’s Health Care Survey

Page 7

Q.13 Now let me read you a short list of people and organizations, and please tell me how much you would trust what each one had to say about health care in Virginia. Please tell me if you would trust what they had to say very much, somewhat, not very much or not at all.

	Very Much	Some what	Not Very Much	Not at All	DK/ Ref	Very/ Smwt	Total Not
13 The Virginia state legislature in Richmond.....	4	33	26	33	4	37	59
14 Doctors	56	38	3	2	0	95	5
15 The Virginia Board of Health	28	53	9	6	5	81	15
16 Medical experts	51	42	3	3	2	93	5
17 Governor Bob McDonnell.....	10	31	19	33	7	41	52
18 Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli..... (ref:TRUST)	8	30	16	36	10	38	52

Q.19 The following arguments are AGAINST the new women's health center regulations that would require them to be retrofitted as new hospitals. For each statement, please use a 0-10 scale to indicate whether or not you think it is a convincing argument AGAINST the new women's health center regulations. A 0 indicates that it is not at all convincing and a 10 means it is an extremely convincing argument.

	Mean	% 10	% 8-10	% 6-10	% 0-5	DK/ Ref
19 These new regulations are another attempt by Virginia politicians to limit women's access to safe, legal first-trimester abortion. Governor Bob McDonnell and Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli continue to try to drive ideologically-driven laws through state regulations.....	6.2	30	45	56	40	4
20 These new regulations single out women's health centers in an unfair manner. The regulations do not apply to other outpatient medical services, such as vasectomies, dental surgery, or liposuction.....	6.0	28	43	54	42	3
21 Prominent Virginia medical experts and practicing OB-GYN's have denounced the regulations publically. Dr. Karen Remley, the Virginia Health Commissioner, resigned in protest of the political intrusion and one prominent doctor on the medical advising committee for the regulations said quote, "the building requirements... didn't have anything to do with patient care and safety."	6.7	34	51	64	33	3
22 The new requirements will make the procedures much more expensive, putting an additional burden of women, especially low-income women who rely on these facilities. By some estimates, the new requirements may increase the cost of a first-trimester abortion by about two-hundred and fifty dollars, representing a seventy-one percent increase.....	5.9	26	41	54	42	4
23 According to Virginia law, the Virginia Board of Health can only create regulations for health care facilities that conform solely to standards established by medical and health professionals. Since medical and health professional said that these regulations are unnecessary, these regulations go beyond the Board of Health's authority and are not						

appropriate..... 6.0 23 40 55 42 3

	Mean	% 10	% 8-10	% 6-10	% 0-5	DK/ Ref
24 These women's health centers offer a wide range of essential women's health services, including cancer screenings, annual check-ups for reproductive health, and pap smears. First-trimester abortions are a small portion of the services offered at these health care centers.	6.4	27	48	59	37	4
25 Many long-operating women's health facilities will be impacted by the new requirements. Although the facilities are safe and legal, they will be forced to undergo extensive renovations, rebuild or may even close as a result of these regulations.	6.2	27	43	59	36	4
26 Women's health facilities will be required to install specialized sink handles, additional drinking fountains, and covered entry ways. These frivolous requirements are unnecessary and are completely unrelated to protecting women's health. (ref:CONVNG2)	6.1	33	47	54	43	3

Q.27 The following arguments are in support for the new women's health center regulations that would require them to be retrofitted as new hospitals. For each statement, please use a 0-10 scale to indicate whether or not you think it is a convincing argument FOR the new women's health center regulations. A 0 indicates that it is not at all convincing and a 10 means it is an extremely convincing argument.

	Mean	% 10	% 8-10	% 6-10	% 0-5	DK/ Ref
27 These regulations will increase the safety of women's health centers. The health and wellbeing of patients should be put above all else. These regulations will protect women by making sure the centers have adequate facilities.....	5.2	21	37	48	51	1
28 Since the women's health centers have time to make the architectural adjustments to their buildings, the regulations are not burdensome. The new regulations are simple changes to modernize the facilities.	4.2	12	22	35	63	2
29 Abortion is immoral so we should try to restrict access to abortion as much as possible. We should do everything we can promote to the sanctity of human life.....	4.6	29	36	40	57	3
30 Women's health centers that offer first-trimester abortion should be treated like hospitals since the procedure is a major, invasive surgery. We need more oversight of out-patient surgeries in Virginia.....	5.1	21	33	46	50	3
31 All of the women's health centers will have ample time and money to make the necessary adjustments. The facilities impacted are for-profit businesses and will be given two years to make the changes..... (ref:DOUBTS)	4.4	12	22	34	64	2

Q.32 Let me ask you one more time, do you favor or oppose changing the building requirements for women's health care centers that offer first-trimester abortions?

	Total
Strongly oppose.....	50
Somewhat oppose.....	12
Somewhat favor	15
Strongly favor	16
(Undecided).....	5
(Don't know/refused).....	3
Total Oppose.....	62
Total Favor	31
Oppose - Favor	31
(ref:VAVOTE4)	

Q.33 Finally, a few more questions for statistical purposes. Do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, or what?

	Total
Strong Democrat	22
Weak Democrat.....	9
Independent-lean Democrat.....	11
Independent.....	14
Independent-lean Republican.....	13
Weak Republican.....	10
Strong Republican	18
(Don't know/Refused).....	3
(ref:PTYID1)	

Q.36 In what year were you born?

	Total
18 - 24.....	9
25 - 29.....	4
30 - 34.....	12
35 - 39.....	12
40 - 44.....	9
45 - 49.....	9
50 - 54.....	7
55 - 59.....	8
60 - 64.....	9
65 and over	18
(No answer).....	3
(ref:AGE)	

Q.37 Thinking in political terms, would you say that you are Conservative, Moderate, or Liberal?

	Total
Liberal.....	17
Moderate	38
Conservative.....	38
(Don't know/refused).....	6
(ref:IDEO1)	

Q.38 What is the last year of schooling that you have completed?

	Total
1 - 11th grade	5
High School graduate	21
Non-college post H.S.	1
Some college	25
College graduate	29
Post-graduate school	19
(Don't know/Refused).....	1
(ref:EDUC)	

Q.39 Are you married, single, separated, divorced, or widowed?

	Total
Married.....	60
Single	22
Separated/Divorced	10
Widowed	8
(Don't know/Refused).....	1
Sep/Div/Wid	17
(ref:MARITAL)	

Q.40 Are you a current or retired member of a labor union or an employee association? (IF NO)
Is any member of your household a union member or retired member?

	Total
Yes	6
Yes, household member.....	3
Yes, retired member.....	6
Yes, retired household member.....	2
No member belongs.....	82
(Don't know/refused).....	1
Union Household.....	17
(ref:UNION)	

Q.41 What is your religion -- Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Mormon, another Christian religion, another non-Christian religion, or do you not have a religious affiliation?

	Total
Protestant.....	37
Catholic.....	16
Jewish	1
Muslim/Islam.....	-
Mormon	2
Other Christian	23
Other non-Christian religion	3
Not affiliated or nothing in particular (Atheist, Agnostic).....	19
Total Christian	78
(ref:RELIG1)	

[388 Respondents]

Q.42 (SKIP IF JEWISH, MUSLIM, ATHEIST, AGNOSTIC, OR OTHER NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGION)

Would you describe yourself a born-again Christian, or no?

	Total
Yes	49
No	49
(Don't know/refused).....	2
(ref:BORN)	

Q.43 What is your race?

	Total
White.....	67
Black	20
Hispanic	6
Native American.....	2
Asian	3
(Other).....	1
(Don't know/refused).....	1
(ref:RACE)	

Q.45 Last year, that is in 2012, what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes?

	Total
Less than \$25,000.....	12
\$25,000 to under \$50,000.....	18
\$50,000 to under \$75,000.....	10
\$75,000 to under \$100,000.....	12
\$100,000 to under \$150,000.....	15
\$150,000 or more.....	10
(Don't know/refused).....	22
Up to \$50,000.....	30
\$50,000 to \$100,000	23
\$100,000 or more	25
(ref:INCOME)	

Q.4 Respondent Gender

	Total
Male	47
Female.....	53
(ref:GENDER)	