



STATE NAVIGATE POLL BRIEFING

WEST VIRGINIA SENATE DIST. 2
REPUBLICAN PRIMARY

Toby Heaney (National Guard veteran) vs. Robert Dobkin (Attorney)

Open seat: incumbent Sen. Charles Clements not seeking re-election

AT A GLANCE



PRIMARY DATE

May 12, 2026



EARLY VOTING BEGINS

Apr 29, 2026



FIELD DATES

Apr 27–29, 2026



MARGIN OF ERROR

± 5.0%

n = 381 likely Republican primary voters · Northwestern WV · Weighted by age, race, gender, education, county

METHODOLOGY

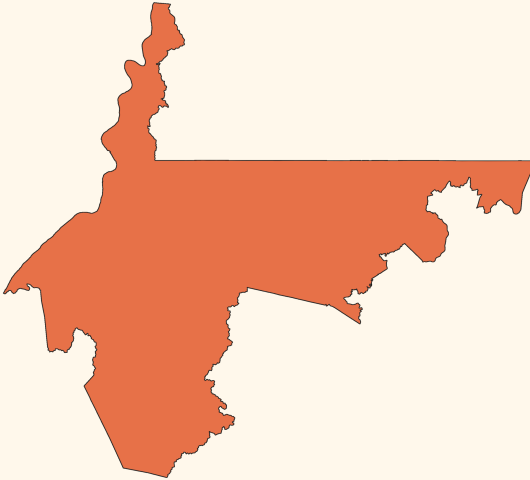
State Navigate surveyed 381 likely Republican primary voters in West Virginia's Senate District 2 from April 27 through April 29, 2026, using AllianceForge's text-to-web methodology via SurveyMonkey. The sample was drawn from the i360 voter file and weighted by age, race, gender, education, and county to reflect the likely 2026 R primary electorate. The survey carries a margin of error of ±5.0% at a 95% confidence level. This survey was not sponsored by any party, candidate, or candidate's committee.

DISTRICT DNA • SD-2



NORTHWESTERN WV

Counties: Doddridge, Tyler, Wetzel (full), Marion, Marshall, Monongalia (partial)



WHERE A FEW VOTES MATTER

~10%

OF VOTERS WILL DETERMINE WHO THE NEXT STATE SENATOR WILL BE

~70,300

registered voters in SD-2

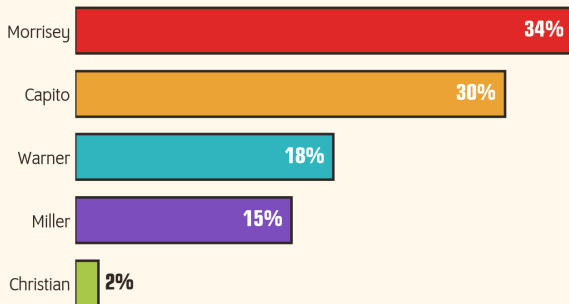
~6,800

voters cast in the 2022 GOP primary in SD-2

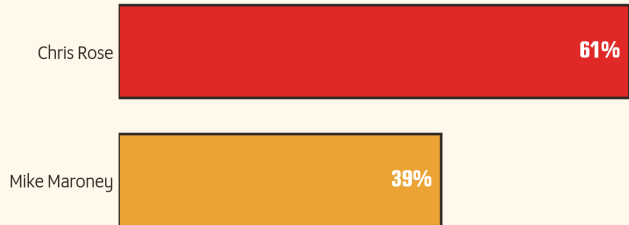
This district is safely Republican: a few voters will determine the election.

2024 PRIMARY RESULTS IN SD-2

2024 GOP Gov. Primary in SD-2 (Morrisey +5)



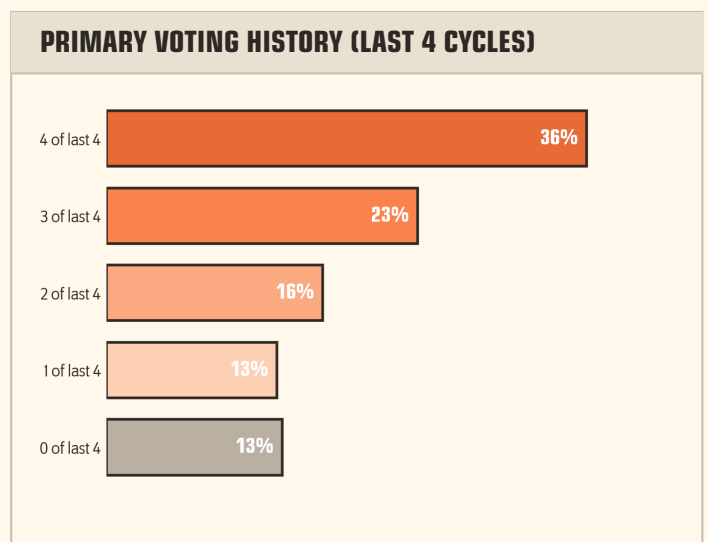
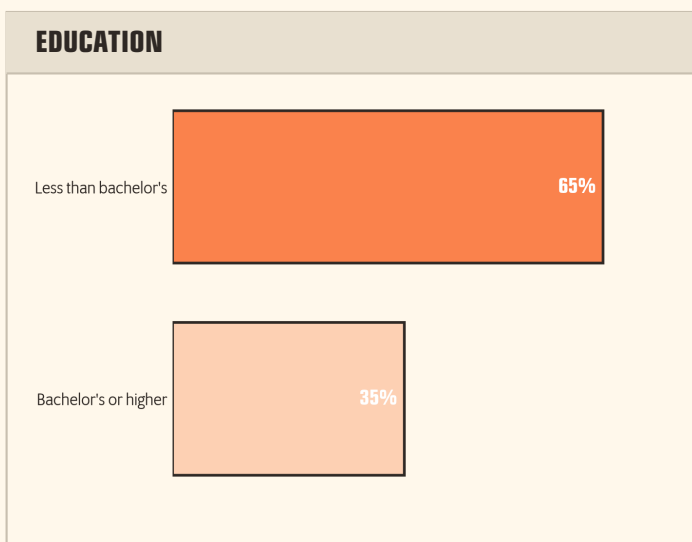
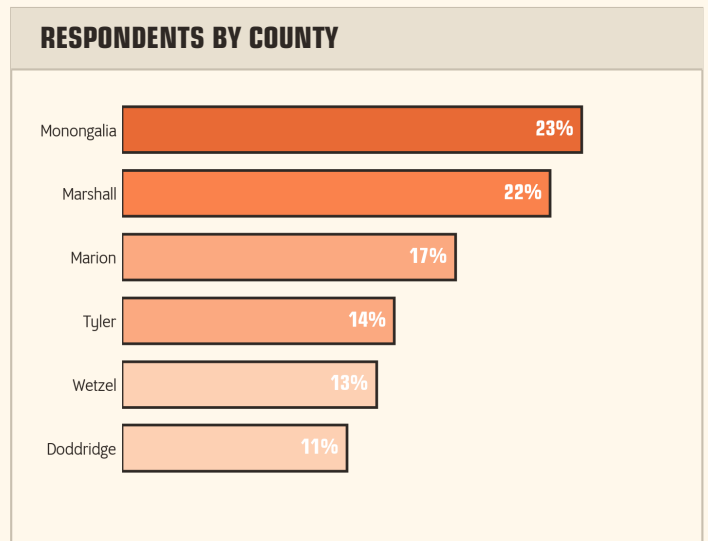
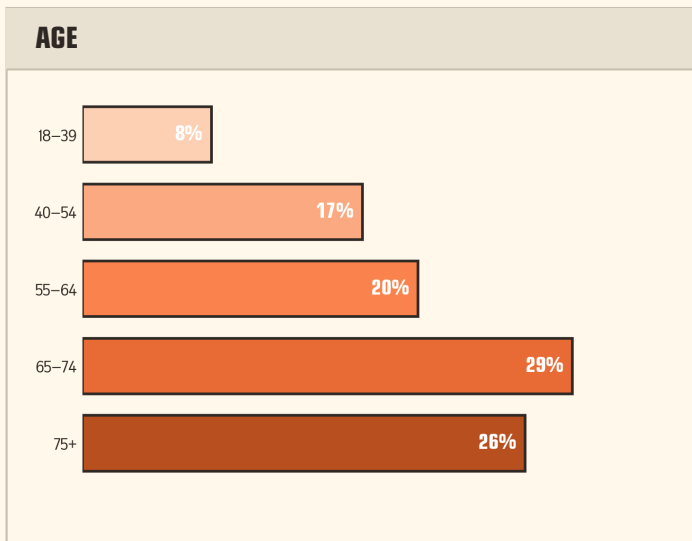
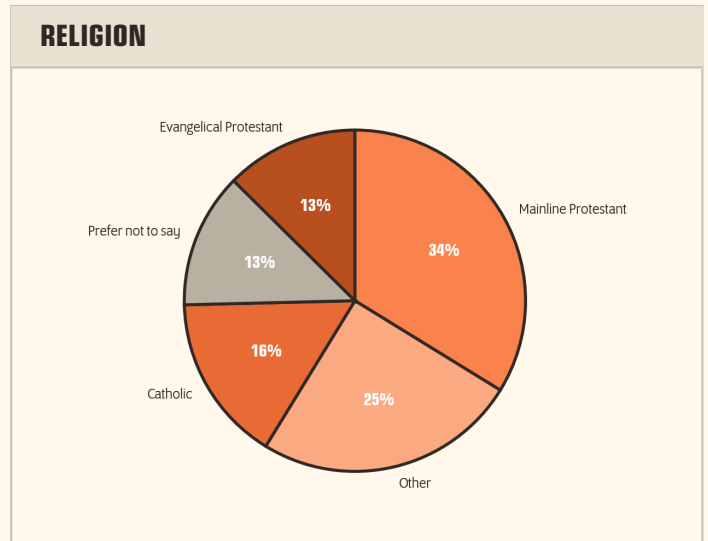
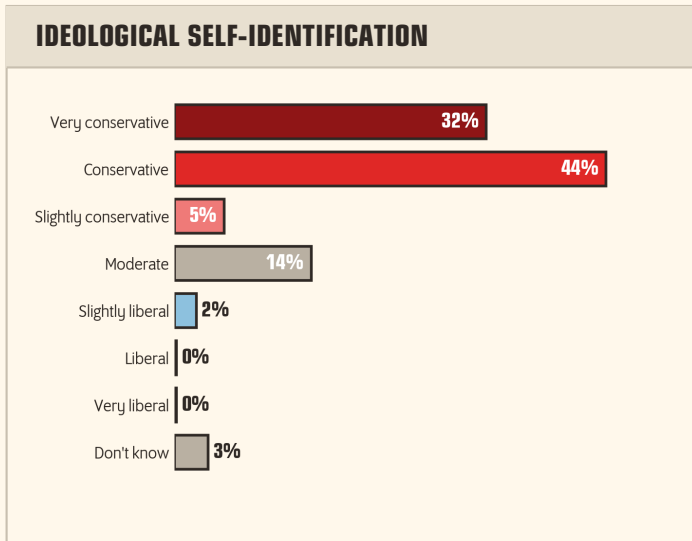
2024 GOP State Senate Primary in SD-2 (Rose +23)



A NOTE ON 2024

Patrick Morrisey carried SD-2 by 5 points (35-30) over Moore Capito in the 2024 GOP gubernatorial primary, which runs roughly with his statewide margin of around 6 points. In 2024, Chris Rose ran an arch-conservative campaign against then-incumbent Mike Maroney and handily won this district. Previous primary results signal that Heaney could benefit from an ideologically arch-conservative electorate.

DISTRICT DNA • SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS (LV)



White/Caucasian = 99%. n = 381 likely R primary voters, weighted.



THE CANDIDATES

TOBY HEANEY

National Guard Veteran • Marion County

BACKGROUND

National Guard veteran from Marion County. Twice ran for the GOP nomination in HD-76 in 2022 and 2024, narrowly losing each time.

BACKERS

Sen. Chris Rose; Make Liberty Win; Americans for Prosperity.

KEY STRENGTH

Strong base in Marion; geographically closest to Monongalia, the district's largest population center.

ROBERT DOBKIN

Attorney • Marshall County

BACKGROUND

Attorney based in Marshall County. First-time candidate for state legislature.

BACKERS

Sen. Tom Takubo; WV Chamber of Commerce; Labor Unions.

KEY STRENGTH

Both camps privately credit Dobkin with running the stronger campaign. Slightly larger home-county base.

THE SNAPSHOT

THE HORSERACE • WITH LEANERS

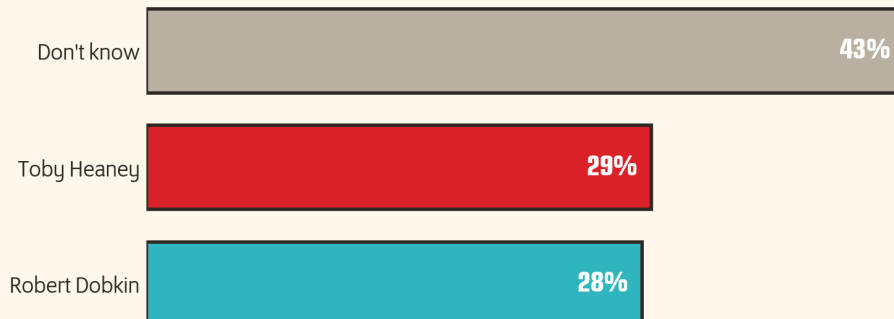
SD-2 Republican Primary Horserace (with leaners)



Heaney edges Dobkin 36%–33% with leaners, but nearly a third of likely primary voters remain undecided. Both candidates are pulling strong support in their respective home counties, but Heaney has a slight edge thanks to his proximity to Monongalia County and the electorate's ideology.

NO LEANER PUSH

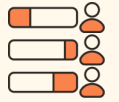
No leaner push



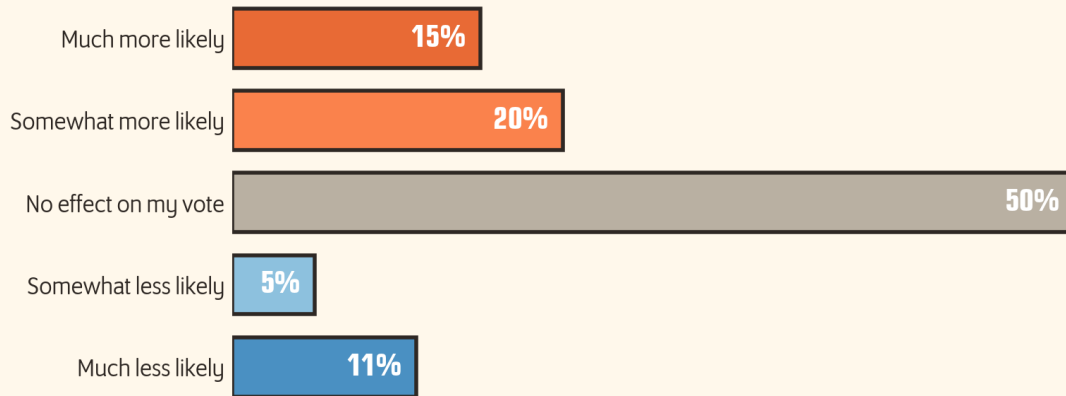
Without a leaner push, the race is a near-tie at 29% Heaney, 28% Dobkin, and 43% undecided. Heaney's thin lead expands ever so slightly when we ask undecideds who they lean toward, going from 1% to 3%.

REPUBLICAN TYPOLOGIES & IDEOLOGY

EFFECT OF A MORRISEY ENDORSEMENT

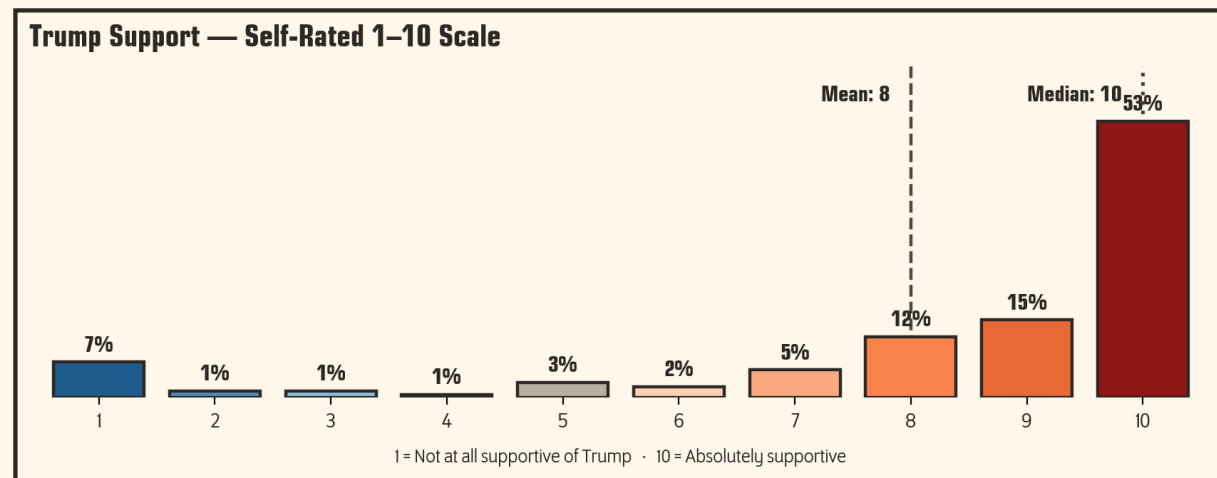


Effect of a Morrisey Endorsement on Vote



An endorsement from the Governor isn't particularly strong or weak here: the name of the game is how undecided voters would roll if the Governor throws his hat in the ring. Among undecided voters, 27% say they'd be more likely to vote for a Morrisey-backed candidate, and 21% say they'd be less likely.

TRUMP SUPPORT



Trump support in SD-2 is overwhelming and lopsided. 53% say they support the president absolutely, and 80% rate their level of support at 8 out of 10 or above. The mean is 8, and the median is 10. Any campaign that drifts too far from MAGA will likely struggle with voters in this district.



TEAM NOTES & ANALYSIS

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE · ON SURVEY DESIGN

Live and learn: an important survey design change.

As is standard in West Virginia Republican primaries, the hometown heroes are leading their respective turf. One important change to our survey design compared to the previous surveys is the addition of information about the candidate's hometown and county. We recently learned that this information will be available on voters' ballots, and we want our polls to be as close as possible to what voters will see in the voting booth.

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE · ON KEY COUNTIES

Monongalia is the golden goose: Heaney leads 44-10 and needs to win it big.

Primary voters love supporting their neighbors. Our survey shows Dobkin is taking 80% of the vote in Marshall (a county that is ~22% of the electorate); 52% of his district-wide support comes from his home county. It also shows Heaney taking 68% of the vote in Marion (~17% of the electorate); 32% of his district-wide support comes from his home county. Monongalia is the key to the district: it's 23% of the electorate, and since Heaney lives closer to it, it's not surprising he's leading there with 44% to Dobkin's 10%. Heaney needs to win Monongalia by a wide margin to come out on top.

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE · ON VOTER PROPENSITY

High-propensity voters tilt more conservative; the modal SD-2 voter is 65+ and votes every primary.

When analyzing voters' determination on how likely they are to vote and their previous primary voting record, one thing's for certain: ideology drives turnout. The more conservative a respondent is, the more likely they are to show up for the election, which is good news for Heaney. Totaling voters who are conservative + very conservative, Heaney leads 38% to Dobkin's 33%. 56% of voters are 65 or older, with the 65–74 bucket alone accounting for 29% of the sample. These findings are similar to what we saw in SD-1: high-propensity voters skew slightly more conservative and slightly older, low-propensity voters are younger and less conservative.



State Navigate is a nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to becoming a compass for state legislatures everywhere. Our bipartisan polling team consists of alumni of FiveThirtyEight, political scientists, and polling experts. Last year, State Navigate was the most accurate pollster in the country for the 2025 election cycle. To learn more about our poll sponsorship opportunities, [click here!](#) Public polling on state governance, especially state legislatures, is rare, so we try to make our polling as affordable as possible for sponsors to help fill this gap.

OUR POLLING TEAM

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE

FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chaz was the Director of CAnalysis.com, the only website dedicated to state legislative election forecasting. He has successfully forecasted thousands of state legislative elections since 2017 during his senior year in high school. Chaz leads the polling team and works with them on survey design, field work, weighting, and written analysis.

MICHAEL FOLEY

ELECTIONS COORDINATOR

Michael is an expert in GIS technology and has experience in coding and scraping technology. He is a graduate of Fordham University and the University of Chicago Law School. In our polling, Michael conducts fieldwork, setting up surveys and texts, and exports/designs crosstabs.

MARY RADCLIFFE

DATA MANAGER

Mary Radcliffe is a mathematician and data analyst from Pittsburgh. She earned a PhD in Mathematics from the University of California, San Diego in 2012. Mary has previously worked as a Teaching Professor at Carnegie Mellon University and Researcher at FiveThirtyEight. In our polling, Mary helps with survey design, keeps our polling operations ethical, creates toplines, and writes analyses of results.

G. ELLIOTT MORRIS

POLLING COMMITTEE MEMBER

Elliott Morris is a data-driven journalist and author living in Washington, DC. He's the author of STRENGTH IN NUMBERS: How Polls Work and Why We Need Them. Elliott was most recently the Editorial Director of Data Analytics at ABC News, where he developed polling aggregation and election-forecasting models and managed the research and data visualization teams for ABC's data-journalism website FiveThirtyEight/538. In our polling, Elliott helps with survey design and writing weighting scripts.

NICHOLAS GOEDERT

POLLING COMMITTEE MEMBER

Nicholas / "Nick" is an assistant professor of Political Science at Virginia Tech with expertise focused on legislative elections and American politics. He is the author of GROUND WAR: Courts, Commissions, and the Fight over Partisan Gerrymanders (Oxford, 2022). He served as an expert witness in the Wisconsin redistricting case Whitford v. Gill. He holds a Ph.D. in Politics from Princeton and a J.D. from Georgetown Law. In our polling, Nick helps with survey design and gives academic feedback.

Your compass for state legislatures

PEACE OUT. THAT'S ALL.

