

# KNOW THE POSITIONS OF THE Candidates for Governor



In keeping with its mission, the Virginia Catholic Conference ([vacatholic.org](http://vacatholic.org)) aims to educate and inform Catholics about a wide range of issues. The information listed here was compiled as of September 16, 2021, from policies, public statements, official and campaign websites and other resources to help voters inform their consciences before heading to the voting booth. The issues do not represent a complete list of issues that may be of importance to Catholics. The Conference neither supports nor opposes any candidate for public office.

*“Human dignity is respected and the common good is fostered only if **human rights are protected and basic responsibilities are met**. Every human being has a right to life, the fundamental right that makes all other rights possible, and a right to access those things required for human decency – food and shelter, education and employment, health care and housing, freedom of religion and family life.”*

– Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, No. 49, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2019.

## Terry McAuliffe Democrat



### ABORTION

According to his website, McAuliffe supports “passing an amendment to the Constitution of Virginia that permanently enshrines and codifies the protections of *Roe v Wade* in Virginia law.”

In 2016 and 2017 McAuliffe vetoed legislation that would have prohibited the Virginia Department of Health from contracting with or making grants to any entity that performs non-federally qualified abortions.

McAuliffe called the new law restricting abortion in Texas a “horrible draconian law” and said “it will be a job killer.”

### CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

According to his website, McAuliffe supports eliminating Virginia’s conscience law for private child-placing agencies. The conscience law provides that an agency shall not be required to participate in a foster care or adoption placement “when the proposed placement would violate the agency’s written religious or moral convictions or policies.”

In 2016 and 2017 McAuliffe vetoed legislation to provide that no clergy or religious organization would be subject to any penalty, civil liability or other action by the state “solely on account of ... belief, speech, or action in accordance with a sincerely held religious belief or moral conviction that marriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one woman.”

### ECONOMY

According to his website, McAuliffe “will make bold, targeted investments in building and training the workforce of the future and ensure that people of all ages have the skills they need to be successful in the jobs of today and tomorrow. Terry will also require employers to offer paid sick days and family medical leave, deliver families affordable childcare for families, accelerate the path to a \$15 minimum wage, and hold industries accountable to closing gender pay gaps. And he will partner with businesses and education institutions to re-skill and retrain Virginians, while also reimagining our postsecondary education experience.”

## Glenn Youngkin Republican



### ABORTION

Youngkin stated, “I’m pro-life, and I believe that there should be exceptions for rape, incest and when the life of the mother is at risk.”

Youngkin “supports funding for women’s health centers, believes that fewer abortions is a good thing ... and opposes ... forcing taxpayers to fund abortions.”

Youngkin stated, “You’ll never hear me support Planned Parenthood, what you’ll hear me talk about is actually taking back the radical abortion policies that Virginians don’t want.”

### CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

Youngkin stated, “The ability to practice our faith and express our religious beliefs is absolutely paramount.”

Youngkin posted, “A person’s religious beliefs should not be a reason to be canceled from a job.”

### ECONOMY

Youngkin wrote, “My Day One Game Plan tackles the rising cost of living and cuts costs for all Virginians by eliminating the grocery tax and suspending the most recent gas tax hike for a year, giving Virginia voters a voice in their real estate property taxes by requiring a vote for any proposed increase, cutting taxes on veteran retirement pay and cutting income taxes for all taxpayers by doubling the standard deduction. This will give a typical Virginia family of four almost \$1,500 back next year. ... We’ll launch #JumpstartJobs to train workers, develop talent, attract investment and make Virginia an easier place to start a business to add 400,000 jobs and grow 10,000 start-ups.”

*The issues listed here represent a snapshot of the candidates’ positions as of September 16, 2021.*

*The Conference neither supports nor opposes any candidate for public office. Published by the Virginia Catholic Conference, the public policy agency of Virginia’s Catholic Bishops.*

**Terry McAuliffe**  
Democrat

**EDUCATION**

In 2014 McAuliffe signed into law a bill that removed a one-year delay for claiming credits through the Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits program, which provides a tax credit for donations that fund scholarships for income-eligible students to attend nonpublic K-12 schools.

**ENVIRONMENT**

McAuliffe’s environmental plan on his website includes many action items, including “equitably improve access to clean public transportation, electric vehicles and EV charging infrastructure.” According to his policy page, “Securing Virginia’s clean energy future is critical to securing our future. I promise you Virginia will lead the nation in tackling climate change and transitioning to clean energy.”

**HEALTHCARE**

McAuliffe’s plan seeks to “lower premiums and increase assistance for Virginians who can’t afford their premiums”; “lower prescription drug costs by passing a Prescription Drug Sunlight Law, setting price limits on certain drugs, and holding big Pharma accountable”; and “increase funding for mental health and substance use disorder treatment.” [Note: McAuliffe’s plan also lists “enshrine *Roe v. Wade* in Virginia’s constitution,” which is included in the Abortion section of this document.]

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

In 2015 McAuliffe signed into law legislation creating new felonies for trafficking of persons for commercial sexual activity.

**Glenn Youngkin**  
Republican

**EDUCATION**

Youngkin said “to introduce school choice—charter schools, education savings accounts ... is how we will reform K-12 education.”

**ENVIRONMENT**

Youngkin’s economic plan calls for “invest[ing] in environmental challenges.” He also stated, “We need an electrical grid which is stable, and we absolutely have to change direction. We must change direction from the ‘clean energy’ plan that was passed. We must change direction because it is not doable, affordable, or good for Virginia.” In a September 16 debate Youngkin said, “I believe in all energy sources. We can use wind and solar, but we need to preserve our clean natural gas.”

**HEALTHCARE**

A spokesman for Youngkin stated, “Glenn Youngkin will work hard to fix the problems that exist in our health care system. Virginians deserve better access, better choices and better care, and Glenn will focus on lowering costs, increasing price transparency, and creating more competition so that patients are better served.”

According to Youngkin’s website he will “fund Virginia’s mental health care crisis plan.”

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

In June 2021 Youngkin announced a plan to combat human trafficking: “We will not only bring the full weight of the law down on traffickers and buyers, we will also equip survivors to heal and flourish.” His plan to “enforce, empower and educate” would, e.g., increase prosecutions and impose jail time as opposed to just a fine; provide resources survivors need for mental and behavioral recovery and wellness; and increase education about recognizing trafficking victims and appropriate ways to take action.