

NEW QUANTUS INSIGHTS POLL - South Carolina GOP: Governor's Race Wide Open, Graham In Control

Poll shows open race for governor, with Alan Wilson edging ahead on crime and leadership. Sen. Lindsey Graham holds a steady majority with Trump's endorsement.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- By Jason Corley, Lead Pollster, Quantus Insights

Quantus Insights, in partnership with [Trending Politics News](#), conducted a [statewide survey](#) of South Carolina Republican voters ahead of the primary season. South Carolina

Republicans enter the 2025 primary season with their eyes on two fronts — the governor's race, where several familiar names are vying for advantage, and a Senate contest where the incumbent remains the early favorite. Beneath the headline numbers, the data suggests a party largely satisfied with its direction but undecided on who should carry its banner into the next cycle.

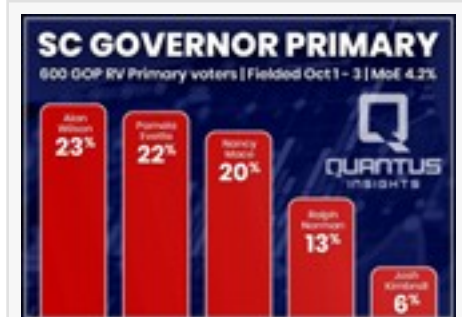
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A Fragmented Field for Governor

Among GOP voters, no single figure has yet consolidated the race for governor. The initial ballot shows Pamela Evette (17%), Alan Wilson (16%), and Nancy Mace (16%) essentially tied, with Ralph Norman (11%) and Josh Kimbrell (5%) further back. More than a third of voters remain undecided (35%), underscoring how unsettled the field remains.



SC Governor's Primary Sept. 7, 2025 Quantus Poll

When leaners — those currently undecided but expressing a soft preference — are included, Wilson edges slightly ahead, 23% to Evette's 22% and Mace's 20%, with Norman at 13% and Kimbrell trailing behind at 6%. Even so, the race remains defined by indecision, not consolidation: nearly half of those without a firm choice remain open to persuasion.

The lack of a clear frontrunner stands out in a state accustomed to decisive early favorites. It suggests that voters, while broadly content with the party's direction, are evaluating personalities more than policies, and that the next few months will test who can project executive steadiness rather than ideological zeal.

Image and Standing

Image ratings reinforce the sense of fluidity. Among the leading figures, Alan Wilson and Pamela Evette post the most balanced favorability, each showing broad awareness without deep negatives.

- Alan Wilson: 17% very favorable, 21% somewhat favorable — 38% favorable overall, against 8% very unfavorable and 12% somewhat unfavorable (20% total unfavorable). Roughly four in ten voters (42%) say they don't know enough to rate him.

- Pamela Evette: 13% very favorable, 18% somewhat favorable — 31% favorable overall, with 16% very unfavorable and 11% somewhat unfavorable (27% total unfavorable), and 42% unsure.

By contrast, Nancy Mace's numbers are far more polarized. She records 12% very favorable and 26% somewhat favorable (38% favorable total), offset by 36% very unfavorable and 12% somewhat unfavorable (48% total unfavorable). Only 13% say they are unsure, indicating she is widely known but deeply divided in perception.

Ralph Norman (9% very favorable, 15% somewhat favorable; 24% favorable) and Josh Kimbrell (4% very favorable, 12% somewhat favorable; 16% favorable) remain less defined, with 46% and 65% unsure, respectively.

Taken together, the numbers tell a clear story: Wilson and Evette have the healthiest net images (+18 and +4, respectively), Mace is fully known but polarizing, and Norman and Kimbrell are still in the introduction phase.

The Issue That Resonates: Crime and Safety

When asked which candidate is best equipped to handle crime and public safety, Alan Wilson leads (20%), followed by Mace (17%) and Evette (14%), with a striking 38% unsure. This hesitation mirrors broader national sentiment — a public concerned about order but wary of quick solutions. Wilson's edge here may reflect his tenure as attorney general; a portfolio naturally aligned with law enforcement and public safety.

That gap, however, is not insurmountable. Voters' uncertainty on crime — the largest "don't know" share of any policy item tested — suggests the debate is still forming, not fixed.

Economic Questions: Taxes and Trade-Offs

On fiscal matters, the survey finds a clear instinct for reform, though not unanimity on approach. Asked whether they favor replacing the state income tax with a sales-based alternative, 58% express support, including a third who “strongly support” the idea. Only 16% oppose, while a full quarter remain undecided (26%).

Support for a sales-tax alternative cuts across factions, appealing to voters’ sense of fairness and simplicity. But the undecided segment points to an electorate that wants assurances. That reform would be pro-growth but not punitive, and that it would not shift burdens unevenly across income brackets or regions.

Senate: Consolidation Around the Incumbent

While the governor’s race remains fluid, the Senate primary tells a very different story — one defined by stability and consolidation.

On the initial ballot, Sen. Lindsey Graham commands a 51% share of likely GOP primary voters, leaving Mark Lynch (11%) and Paul Dans (6%) in distant contention. Nearly a third of the electorate (32%) remains undecided at this early stage, but when leaners — undecided voters who express a soft preference — are allocated, Graham’s position strengthens further:

- Graham: 58%
- Lynch: 15%
- Dans: 7%
- Still undecided: 20%

That eight-point gain among leaners reflects the kind of latent support common for long-term incumbents. Voters who may hesitate to commit early but ultimately coalesce around the familiar. It also underscores Graham’s institutional advantage: name recognition, fundraising reach, and perceived electability.

Two follow-up questions clarify why the field remains so one-sided:

In the “Candidate Momentum” test — which measures which contender voters believe is gaining strength in the race — Graham leads with 54%, compared to 10% for Lynch and 4% for Dans, with 32% unsure. Momentum, in this context, is not current preference but perceived trajectory; whether voters think a candidate’s campaign is building energy and visibility. A 5-to-1 advantage in that metric suggests Graham’s dominance is recognized even among those not firmly committed to him.

The “Electability” question — which gauges who voters believe would be strongest in the general election — delivers an even clearer verdict: Graham 57%, Lynch 12%, Dans 3%, with 28% unsure. This is the measurement of who can win, not simply who voters like. In GOP primaries, that perception often hardens quickly, and once established, it tends to be self-reinforcing.

The net effect: Graham leads every dimension of the race — vote share, momentum, and perceived strength — by wide margins. His position reflects institutional stability rather than ideological fervor: the support of a party that, while sometimes divided in tone, is unified in its preference for a known quantity heading into a competitive national cycle.

That consolidation is reinforced by Graham's full endorsement from President Trump, whose standing among South Carolina Republican primary voters remains exceptionally strong. The backing carries both symbolic and structural weight — a signal to core GOP voters that Graham is part of the party's governing coalition, not its opposition. In practical terms, it helps freeze the field: potential challengers face the dual barrier of Trump's approval and Graham's incumbency, a combination that explains why his lead is not only large, but durable.

The Broader Mood

Beneath the numbers, a consistent mood runs through South Carolina's 2025 Republican electorate: measured, steady, and pragmatic. The caution visible in both the gubernatorial and tax questions shows a public that values competence over confrontation, stability over spectacle. These are voters not clamoring for revolution, but for reassurance, in an electorate that prizes steadiness in a season when much of the country feels uncertain.

On crime and taxation, two issues that have defined South Carolina politics for decades, voters favor law, order, and restraint, but not at the expense of fairness or freedom. They want government to be firm but not overbearing, pro-growth without being careless. That instinct runs through every measure of the poll: the modest leads, the high undecideds, the skepticism of extremes.

In South Carolina's 2025 Republican primaries, voters are less in revolt than in reflection. They are not seeking a new direction so much as a steady hand to preserve the one they trust. In a field crowded with ambition, it will be those who can project executive credibility and quiet command — rather than volume or velocity — who find the most receptive audience.

This is not an electorate chasing novelty. It is one that rewards discipline, durability, and a sense of order. Qualities that, in politics as in governance, have always worn well in South Carolina.

Quantus Insights is a premier provider of polling, election forecasting, economic analysis, and advanced modeling. Our mission is clear: to provide political and economic intelligence that influences decision-making in elections and public policy.

[Jason B. Corley](#) is a former intelligence community professional with over 15 years of experience in all-source analysis and national security. He served eight years in the U.S. military as an intelligence analyst, including deployment as a tactical intelligence operator during the Iraq War. After transitioning from government service, he moved into the private sector, leading strategic initiatives in cyber defense and information security. His work has spanned OSINT, incident

response, MDR/EDR, and business development in high-risk, data-driven environments. He is the co-founder and Lead Pollster at Quantus Insights, where he specializes in election forecasting, political polling, and predictive analytics. Across every role, he brings a sharp focus on problem-solving, execution, and building systems that drive results.

Jason Corley

Quantus Insights

+1 702-374-3308

contact@quantusinsights.org

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