

The text below is from Mike Watson's FB page, an insightful analysis of this failed election. Very interesting and insightful summary, from a guy that has "been there".

In response to my friend and former House colleague Scott Lingamfelter's post stating that the RVP failed us in this election, I offered the following response. Thought I'd share it here if interested:

As you know, there were several factors for the Republican losses in Virginia, some perhaps insurmountable, a few of them we knew in advance, specifically the 'opposite party in the Whitehouse' trend. Regarding GOTV, we saw numerous failures, including the party apparatus, which failed miserably. Yet, no amount of ground game will ever be sufficient without a clear and concise, meaningful message from the candidate. You have to give voters a reason to vote 'For' you and it has to be something that matters to a wide swath of voters. No doubt, boys in girls' bathrooms is important for many, especially those with daughters in school. Right to work is important to many, especially those who are in careers that could be forced to join a union. Voting with Pelosi 95% of the time is important to many, especially to those who know what those votes were. But none of these are what keeps the overwhelming majority of voters awake at night.

What does? The number one issue that keeps the most people awake at night is 'how am I going to make the mortgage or pay rent this month', 'can I afford groceries this week', 'my child is sick but I can't afford another high deductible', 'what happens if Verizon cuts off my phone service tomorrow', 'how am I going to afford Christmas for the kids this year', 'I want to buy my wife something for our anniversary but I just don't have the money'. No single issue weighs more heavily on more minds than money. I know what it does to a person; I've been there, experienced every one of these scenarios, and as important as other issues may be, when you're in that situation, you think of little else.

Nearly 70% of Americans are living paycheck to paycheck. Despite an excellent opportunity to present a compelling message, however, Winsome was mute on this issue. No plan, no detail, no empathy. Worse, she let the other side claim this issue; this although Spanberger voted for the cause of the greatest inflation period in 4 decades (1981). Heck, I saw one of her ads where the guy blamed 'higher gas prices' on Trump despite the fact that they got to \$4.33 per gallon due to policies Spanberger supported in Congress, and they are down significantly from the day Trump took office; no one even called her out on it. Winsome (her "advisors") let Spanberger own the #1 issue in

Virginia and throughout the country, the issue we could have addressed with convincing clarity, yet said nothing.

It was painful watching the results come in, and now what keeps me awake at night is the extreme legislation that will be presented to the new Governor; for a preview, just look at some of the 400 bills Governor Youngkin had to veto. She'll have a chance to prove the 'moderate' characteristics she claimed, but to do so, she'll have to push back against Lucas, Scott, the black caucus, the activists who have few adult life experiences, and the strengthening socialist wing of her party. I have little faith she'll stick to that moderate tone once the closed-door meetings take place. We shall see. In the meantime, we need to plan on a vigorous primary season in 2029 and use it to vet good candidates. As I've always believed, if you can't win a primary you sure as hell can't win a general. (Maybe we should vet the consultants and advisors a little better too).

I think we have to add money to that too. If the airwaves and other forms of media are inundated with liberal hype because they have as much money as they need, we will always have an uphill battle. Our candidates were outspent anywhere from 2:1 to 4:1. You obviously need a good message but you've got to be able to get it out and in quantity.

Chuck Colgrove

He's right, but the problem is broader than the Statewide campaign. His comments could be made about our local races as well. The Republican brand in our area is silence and nonengagement on the issues that matter -- taxes, education, and public safety. We as a Party have ignored them for years and gone along to the point that we are complicit.

There is an adage in politics that you can't be blamed for the position you don't take, but we have let that become an excuse for not taking any positions. In the end, all politics is local. If we don't have a presence here, we can't get to Richmond.

Steven Mains