Your Election 2013

John McAuliff
YOUR ELECTION 2013:
Forum Editor John McAuliff

Speaking for Republicans, Candidate
Ken Cuccinelli (R)

Having served as a legislator, an attorney general, and now a candidate for the statehouse, Ken Cuccinelli knows what pressure feels like. The question is, with five days to go: Can he pull off an upset win over Terry McAuliffe? Editor in Chief John McAuliff sat down with Cuccinelli when he visited campus for a town hall discussion in October. We'll let him tell you for himself why you should vote for the Republican candidate this week.

Why should college students vote in this election? What's at stake for them?

Well, the younger you are, the more that's at stake. You'll be living with the decisions longer than anyone else. At the federal level, young voters are already facing extraordinary debt. A big central focus for me is growing opportunity and that doesn't mean the government doing it, it means the government finding ways to get out of the way so the private sector can do it. I mean the biggest challenge anybody coming out of college has is that first job. I've been there, I've done it, and my focus is on making sure those opportunities are growing. If we want the kind of growth in our economy that will make your May and June a whole lot more pleasant, we need that kind of focus.

What's your opinion on out-of-state students registering to vote here in Virginia?

So long as it's an honest commitment, I'm good with that. If they plan on settling in here in Virginia, we want them here. What we don't want is voting in both places. We obviously want them engaged.

The latest poll shows a 19-point gap among Virginia women in favor of McAuliffe. What is it about your message that is not quite reaching women right now, and what are you going to do to fix it?

More from the negative side, they have been pounding me all summer.

Then how do you break through that?

It starts with my record. In college I started an organization fighting against sexual violence, and half the fight was against the university. Here we are more than two decades later and it is still that kind of a problem. If you are looking for real world impact that most benefits women, I'm the only candidate with that kind of track record. You know, domestic violence work and numerous programs across the commonwealth out of my office, with human trafficking. We suffer a bit while being outspent from a lot of lying. For example the contraception ad, we aren't planning to even touch that. Never have, never will, that's just not a direction we're going. Their strategy is scare tactics. Well into October, I'm the only candidate that has always had positive ads running. My opponent can't say that.

Assuming the legislature stays the same, it will be a split party legislature. Let's imagine they become as uncooperative as congress is with President Obama and there is a threat of a shutdown. What do you do to handle it?

You know there's one bill you got to get through every two years nothing else has to pass, that bill has to pass. A good governor expects to do the herding, to get people to the table to talk, to start finding the areas of compromise that 21 senators and 51 legislators can agree with, and the governor, even if he's got to swallow hard, can sign. I've done that, I have a track record of participating in that. We argue here in the commonwealth, but we are nowhere near Washington. One of the questions at stake here in this election is: Do we want to bring Washington tactics here to Virginia?

Let's say the marijuana legalization movement comes from the western part of the country here to Virginia. Where do you come down on it?

Well, one of the things they have out west that we don't have here is referendum. I wish we did, actually. I find it very interesting that the people of Washington and Colorado knew when they voted that they were voting to make something legal under state law that was illegal under federal law, and they did it anyway. It's spectacularly American.

For my perspective, I am not a never-every look at legalization guy, but you know that we have two states doing it. This is what the laboratories of democracy are for. Let's see how it goes, let's see what happens to the market, to usage. Let's see what problems arise from it. Does it solve some of the problems related to the black market trade? We'll see. It's going to be a very interesting experiment. An amusing one.
Senator Tim Kaine knows what it means to be Governor of Virginia. He also knows what it means to be here at the University. When he's not in Washington working on the budget or foreign relations, he's here at Richmond teaching a group of juniors and seniors in a class called “Leadership Breakthroughs.” In this cycle, he's a big supporter of and surrogate for Democratic Candidate Terry McAuliffe.

Why do you continue to teach despite being a senator now?

I really love teaching because I like the material and I also find that politics and government can be a profession where there are an awful lot of cynics and I start off first thing every Monday morning with young people who still have an altruistic public service gene in their orientation to the world. It's a great way to start off the week.

Why is it important that students at UR vote in this election?

The thing is, our politics has done a better job of looking at issues that are for folks later in life like social security. There are dramatic constituencies that work really hard to protect those issues but sometimes I think it is issues that education that matter to young people that get the short stick. Young people participating has a way of dragging those of us who serve more into focusing on the issues that matter to young people.

Why should college students like myself support Terry McAuliffe?

I think Terry has not made ideological social crusades his primary focus in politics, and so he is a good match for young voters with his attitude of inclusion. He hasn’t been on a crusade to restrict women’s healthcare rights or those of LGBT folks. He comes at politics from a very inclusive place. Secondly, I’m starting to feel that maybe the biggest challenge in politics now is not left and right or democrat and republican but between folks who—whatever political orientation—embrace the notion that compromise is a part of what we do and folks who reject compromise as something we shouldn’t do. Terry understands that to find an agreement, make a deal, pass legislation it’s about compromise. He’s running against someone, Ken Cuccinelli, who comes to politics from the non-compromise point of view.

Your Senate career may just be nine months old, but what kind of role have you played so far?

I’ve tried to do a couple of things. I really do feel like one of the reasons I’m there is to try to build bridges between the parties in the Senate. I try to do that in a couple of ways. First, any legislation I introduce is introduced with a Republican cosponsor. It demonstrates that cooperation is a muscle and is you exercise it gets stronger if you don’t it doesn’t. Second, with the 15 freshmen Senators, I have been playing a little of the role of social chairman. We’re getting together to enjoy each others company and Ted Cruz, who I’ve gotten to know quite well said the other day, “Well you know I’ve had a lot of colleagues who are going after me but none of the freshmen have ever called me out by name when they disagree, nor do I call out any freshmen by name. The fact that we are spending social time together is building friendships.

Lots of students may not have been politically active in the past but have reached a point in their lives where they want to, but don’t know how. How can they get involved?

There’s a million ways in. Voting, volunteering for candidates from school board to president. One of the things I really like about politics for young people is that political involvement, if you really decide to pursue it is one of the purest meritocracies there is in terms of your efforts are rewarded. Most people start as a volunteer or an intern. If they are good, three months later they get a job offer at a low salary, and then six months later they get promoted. I have a lot of people in my staff who started with me as volunteers in college. To climb the ladder, all you have to do is get your foot in the door as a volunteer and do a good job.
MAGGIE MOLLY KINIRY, Virginia, a time in which we will be asked to bipartisanship. McAuliffe believes that long-term job growth is dependent on making Virginia more welcoming to innovative and sustainable businesses. His education plan is centered on making education affordable for everyone; this includes protecting Tuition Assistance Grants, which help keep Virginia private schools affordable for Virginia students. Equally importantly, McAuliffe has shown dedication to bipartisanship. He has previously worked with politicians on the other side of the aisle, including Virginia’s outgoing Republican governor Bob McDonnell, with whom he worked on an important bill to fund Virginian infrastructure. In light of the recent government shutdown, the importance of working with policymakers on both sides of the aisle should be blatantly obvious.

On the other hand, McAuliffe’s primary opponent, Ken Cuccinelli, has time and time again put forth an extreme ideological agenda. If McAuliffe is focused on bringing Virginia into the 21st century, Cuccinelli seems dead-set on sending it backwards. Cuccinelli’s campaign has implied that coal represents the past, present, and future of Virginia’s energy and that it will continue to provide Virginians with employment opportunities.

The University of Richmond Young Democrats would like to formally endorse Terry McAuliffe for Governor of Virginia. Terry McAuliffe is the best choice for governor because he is focusing on what Virginia really needs: job creation and growth, investment in education, and bipartisanship. McAuliffe believes that long-term job growth is dependent on making Virginia more welcoming to innovative and sustainable businesses. His education plan is centered on making education affordable for everyone; this includes protecting Tuition Assistance Grants, which help keep Virginia private schools affordable for Virginia students. Equally importantly, McAuliffe has shown dedication to bipartisanship. He has previously worked with politicians on the other side of the aisle, including Virginia’s outgoing Republican governor Bob McDonnell, with whom he worked on an important bill to fund Virginian infrastructure. In light of the recent government shutdown, the importance of working with policymakers on both sides of the aisle should be blatantly obvious.

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The University of Richmond College Republicans are proud to endorse Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli to be the next Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

This election comes at a critical juncture for Virginia, a time in which we will be asked to choose between fiscal responsibility and recklessness, between those who know Virginia well and those who know only political ambition. As the only candidate with a history of serving Virginia as an elected official, Ken is the right man for these fraught times.

On the issues most important to college students, Ken is the clear choice. His jobs plan includes reducing the individual and business income tax rates, establishing a Small Business Tax Relief Commission, and making sure that the state government growth does not outpace the economy. This plan has been rated by economists as generating 58,000 jobs and increasing real disposable income by $3.6 billion. His opponent’s plan is unfortunately not substantive enough to be rated by economists, calling into question whether it is truly a plan at all.

Ken’s strategy for reforming and reinvigorating higher education is designed for the success of students, universities, and the state’s economy. The guiding principles of his strategy are economic growth, employability, affordability, and accountability. Ken believes that economic opportunity is driven by education, and to that end, he supports a greater focus on career readiness programs to ensure that getting an education pays off for students. To reverse the trend of skyrocketing costs for higher education, Ken proposes several measures designed to help prospective students and their parents, including tuition assistance grants, four year guaranteed tuition, and an increase in the amount of work-study funding available.

Throughout a very negative election cycle, Ken has been accused of promoting an anti-woman “extreme ideological agenda”. While we cannot in good conscience endorse his views on abortion, we feel it is equally important to note our dissatisfaction with the reduction of women’s issues to abortion and contraception. This is as insulting as it is misleading. As an undergraduate at UVA, Ken helped to found the first student-run sexual assault prevention group after a female housemate of his was attacked. With this group, he assisted in educating student groups and pressured the University to hire a full-time sexual assault prevention coordinator. As Attorney General, he spearheaded efforts to tackle human trafficking in Virginia, a global crisis that disproportionately affects women and girls. On the issue of contraception, he has promised to do nothing to change access for adults. Ken’s record on defending the rights of women and girls in Virginia is proven, and he has shown time and time again that he is willing to lead and take action on these issues, rather than fall back on bombastic rhetoric.

We strongly encourage the University of Richmond community to support Ken in this crucial race for Governor.

- MOLLY KINIRY, President of UR College Republicans