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Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis acknowledges the crowd as he gives his state of the state address on March 5 in Tallahassee. A new Florida Atlantic University poll shows DeSantis remains popular and many of the policies he is pursuing also have significant public support. [AP file photo]

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By Zac Anderson

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Approval rating jumps 6 points to 54 percent while only 19 percent of respondents disapprove

Gov. Ron DeSantis remains popular and so are many of the proposals being pursued by DeSantis and the GOP-controlled Legislature this year, according to a new Florida Atlantic University poll.

DeSantis has a 54 percent approval rating in the poll released Thursday, with only 19 percent of respondents saying they disapprove of the governor and 27 percent unsure. The governor's approval rating is up six percentage points from an FAU poll last month.

A big reason that a majority of Floridians approve of DeSantis is his support for policy proposals that have bipartisan backing, including allowing smokable medical marijuana and cleaning up the environment.

DeSantis also backs expanding school vouchers, cracking down on so-called sanctuary cities and importing lower cost prescription drugs from Canada. The Florida Legislature is pursuing all of those proposals, and the FAU poll shows more people support them than oppose them.

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January 24, 2019

Importing cheaper prescription drugs from Canada has the most support of any idea polled by FAU, with 75 percent of Floridians backing it.

"The support is overwhelming among Floridians to import prescription drugs from Canada in an effort to lower prescription costs," Monica Escaleras, the director of FAU's Business and Economic Polling Initiative, said in a statement. "It's one of many popular proposals from Gov. DeSantis that has his honeymoon continuing in Florida."

The FAU survey of 500 registered voters — which was conducted between March 22 and 24 — also found that 63

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percent of Floridians support the harmful algae bloom task force that DeSantis established by executive order, and 52 percent support his push to expand school vouchers in Florida.

Banning fracking for oil and gas — another proposal that is working through the Legislature and is endorsed by DeSantis — is backed by 49 percent of voters and opposed by 31 percent.

Banning cities and counties from adopting so-called “sanctuary” policies that limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities has been [one of the most controversial issues](#) during the 60-day legislative session that began this month, with many Democratic lawmakers and immigrant rights advocates blasting the legislation.

But the FAU poll found that 46 percent of Floridians support the ban, including 26 percent of Democrats, and 34 percent oppose it.

Among the issues being pursued by the GOP Legislature that were polled by FAU, only arming teachers is unpopular. The poll found that 50 percent of Florida voters oppose arming teachers, while 38 percent support the idea. But a majority of Republicans (52 percent) support the idea.

President Donald Trump’s status continues to be underwater in Florida, with 45 percent of voters disapproving of the president and 44 percent approving. But DeSantis’s popularity could help Trump’s re-election effort next year.

“Florida looks once again to be a key swing state in the upcoming elections,” FAU political science professor Kevin Wagner said in a statement. “Opinions on the performance of the president are sharply divided, but Republicans may be lifted by the continuing strong support shown for Gov. DeSantis.”

The FAU poll has a margin of error of 4.3 percentage points.

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