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Ron DeSantis leads Dem rival Charlie Crist by double digits: poll

By Jon Levine

October 22, 2022 | 9:41am | Updated

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis is leading his Democrat challenger by as much as 11 points.
OLIVIER DOULIERY/AFP via Getty Images; Octavio Jones/Getty Images

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Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has opened a yawning lead over his Democratic rival with just three weeks to go before the Florida gubernatorial election, according to a new poll.

DeSantis, who is seeking a second term, held an 11 point lead over Charlie Crist, the poll from Florida Atlantic University's Business and Economics Polling Initiative found.

The incumbent enjoyed a 53% approval rating, while 63% of respondents said they approved of DeSantis' handling of the deadly Hurricane Ian.

Crist, a former GOP governor, is now seeking election as a Democrat.

"The governor's hurricane response received strong approval among Floridians, who most likely favor him in the upcoming gubernatorial race," said Monica Escaleras, Ph.D., director of FAU BEPI in a news release Friday.

The biggest concern among Floridians was inflation, with 36% saying it was their top issue, while another 19% cited threats to democracy as their biggest concern. Just 9% of those polled said abortion access was their most pressing issue, according to the poll.

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Charlie Crist was Florida's governor from 2007 to 2011.
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The survey also showed DeSantis leading President Biden 48% to 42% in a hypothetical 2024 match-up. Former President Trump also tops Biden 45% to 41% in a potential matchup.

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Florida Senator Marco Rubio held a smaller but still comfortable advantage over his Democratic rival Rep. Val Demings, leading her 48% to 42%, the poll found.