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Rudy fails to boost ally in Va. gov race

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WASHINGTON — A new poll yesterday shows that a TV ad blitz featuring Mayor Giuliani endorsing Republican Mark Earley for Virginia's next governor is doing little to stave off a Democratic win.

The latest survey by the Richmond Times-Dispatch found Democrat Mark Warner leading Earley by 13 percentage points among the state's 4 million registered voters.

Warner, 47, who made himself a millionaire by investing in cell-phone technology, would be the first Democratic governor in Virginia since 1989.

The Giuliani ad marked a gamble by Earley, 46, who yanked all of his other commercials in favor of the spot showing the mayor seated, a flag just behind his shoulder, while he endorses Earley.

Warner outspent Earley 2-1, dumping $5 million of his own money into the campaign and spending $20 million altogether.

Earley has tried to make an issue of Warner's lack of government experience, saying recently, "This is not the time for on-the-job training for someone who wants to be governor of Virginia."

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