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SLIM MAJORITY OF N.J. VOTERS APPROVE CHRISTIE'S OVERALL JOB PERFORMANCE; REMAIN LESS POSITIVE ON MOST INDIVIDUAL ISSUES

Despite ratings voters think Christie already preparing for 2016 run

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – As New Jersey Governor Chris Christie ramps up his travel schedule to states like Iowa and New Hampshire, back home his overall job approval continues to hover just above 50 percent, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. Remaining well below his post-Superstorm Sandy high of 73 percent, 52 percent of registered New Jersey voters now approve of the job Christie is doing overall, a slight dip from his 55 percent approval in April. Forty-one percent disapprove and 7 percent are unsure.

But voters' approval of the job Christie is doing on specific issues is a different story, with more disapproving than approving in most areas. At 59 percent approval, Hurricane Sandy recovery is Christie's highest rating, though a far cry from his high of 87 percent in April 2013. Perceptions of Christie's performance on the state pension fund crisis, asked for the first time this poll, are particularly negative, with 53 percent disapproving of Christie's handling of the issue; only 24 percent approve.

Despite lukewarm job ratings and an embattled past few months for the governor, 57 percent of voters expect Christie to run for president in 2016; only 29 percent believe he will not, while another 14 percent are unsure. Most say Christie's preparations for a possible presidential bid are influencing how he does his job: 48 percent say his decisions on state issues are more about his potential candidacy while 38 percent say he is only doing what is best for New Jersey.

More than half see Christie's travelling and fundraising for the Republican Governors Association – which has conveniently taken him to some must-visit locations for 2016 – as having no effect on his job as governor, but just over a third say that this has hurt his ability to effectively carry out his current duties.

“As Governor Christie clearly lays the groundwork for a possible presidential run, the results in New Jersey are a mixed bag,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor

of political science at Rutgers University. “While Christie gets a positive overall rating – one that is pretty good for a Republican in an otherwise Democratic state – concerns about specific issues are quite high and have the potential to drive down his overall support over time.”

Results are from a statewide poll of 871 New Jerseyans contacted by live callers on both landlines and cell phones from July 28 to Aug. 5, 2014. This release reports on a subsample of 750 registered voters with a margin of error of +/- 4.0 percentage points.

GOP voters less positive on specific issues

While voters have a generally positive opinion on Christie’s job performance, they are much more negative on many specific issues. Beyond the 59 percent positive Sandy recovery ratings, which are much lower than before the Bridgegate scandal, things go downhill with fewer than 50 percent approval in all other areas examined: pension fund crisis, 24 percent approval; taxes, 34 percent; state budget, 38 percent; economy/jobs, 39 percent. More positively, 45 percent approve Christie’s performance on education, and 48 percent approve his work on crime and drugs.

Approval ratings on Christie’s efforts on education, crime, and the economy have held steady since the last Rutgers-Eagleton Poll in April. But ratings on the state budget and taxes have declined by 5 points over the past four months. Over the same time, positive assessments of the governor’s performance on Superstorm Sandy recovery have rebounded 6 points.

Democrats are least positive about Christie’s job performance on the state budget (22 percent), taxes (18 percent), and the pension fund crisis (11 percent). They are positive only about Sandy recovery, 49 percent approve while 40 percent disapprove.

More than half of Republicans approve of Christie in most of the issue areas examined, with the highest approval, 71 percent, going for Sandy. The only exception is Republicans’ mixed views on the state pension fund crisis, where only 42 percent approve how Christie is handling the issue, while 36 percent disapprove, and another 23 percent are unsure. Independents are least likely to approve of Christie on this issue: 27 percent approve to 52 percent disapprove. According to Redlawsk, while Republicans remain more positive about specific issues than do Democrats and independents, even they report less positive ratings on the individual issues than they do overall.

Christie’s ratings moving in narrow band

Post-Bridgegate, Christie’s overall job approval continues to trend over a very small range: just over 50 percent among all voters, with Democrats remaining mostly against (60 percent approve) and Republicans mostly in support (78 percent approve). Independents continue to generally approve

Christie's job performance, 57 percent to 37 percent. Redlawsk noted that before Superstorm Sandy, Christie's favorability ratings never went above 50 percent or below 44 percent, and his job performance grades were similar. "We seem to be back to the same basic pattern," Redlawsk added. "Over the past six months, overall job approval for Christie has ranged between 52 and 55 percent, with little variation, essentially resetting to pre-Sandy numbers."

Women voters are less positive about Christie's job performance: 49 percent approval to 44 percent disapproval. Men are more positive; 56 percent approve while 37 disapprove. Millennials are more divided than any other age group, with 47 percent approving Christie's work while 44 percent disapprove. Christie continues to score higher ratings among Sandy-battered regions that are also Republican strongholds, with 55 percent of exurban area voters and 61 percent of shore-dwellers approving his overall performance.

Partisanship, overall views affect attitude toward Christie's 2016 preparations

With the buzz that currently surrounds Christie and recent activities hinting he will run, more than half of every demographic group tested believes Christie will throw his hat in the ring for 2016. Whether his recent decisions are about a potential run or more about what is right for the state is the source of some disagreement.

Not surprisingly, just over six in 10 Christie supporters believe the governor continues to "do what's best for the state" with his recent decisions to sign or veto bills, even as he prepares for a possible GOP primary run. But nearly eight in 10 of voters who are negative about Christie say his actions have been more about setting up a potential presidential bid.

Partisans take opposite sides; 62 percent of Republicans take the "best for New Jersey" view, versus the 61 percent of Democrats who think his decisions are about a presidential run. Independents are more split. Forty percent say Christie is doing what is best for New Jersey; 47 percent see his actions as related to a presidential campaign. Half of women believe Christie's decisions are in preparation for 2016, compared to 45 percent of men. Thirty-three percent of women think he's doing what's best for the state, while 44 percent of men feel the same.

Opinions are similarly divided regarding how Christie's travel schedule has affected his ability to govern: 75 percent of Republicans say his frequent trips have no effect, but more than a third of independents and 45 percent of Democrats say it has hurt his ability to govern effectively.

Those who view the governor favorably and approve of his job performance overall (both at 73 percent) are much more likely to say there has been no effect. Christie's detractors (56 percent) and those critical

of his job overall (57 percent) think differently.

“Christie is clearly gearing up in case he decides to run,” said Redlawsk. “There is no other good reason for a governor of New Jersey – even one leading the Republican Governor’s Association – to spend the time he has in Iowa, New Hampshire and even Mexico. Voters seem to recognize this, and while Republicans in New Jersey are pretty upbeat about it, Democrats and independents are much less so, and much more certain that the choices Christie makes today are about his future tomorrow.”

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QUESTIONS AND TABLES START ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Questions and Tables

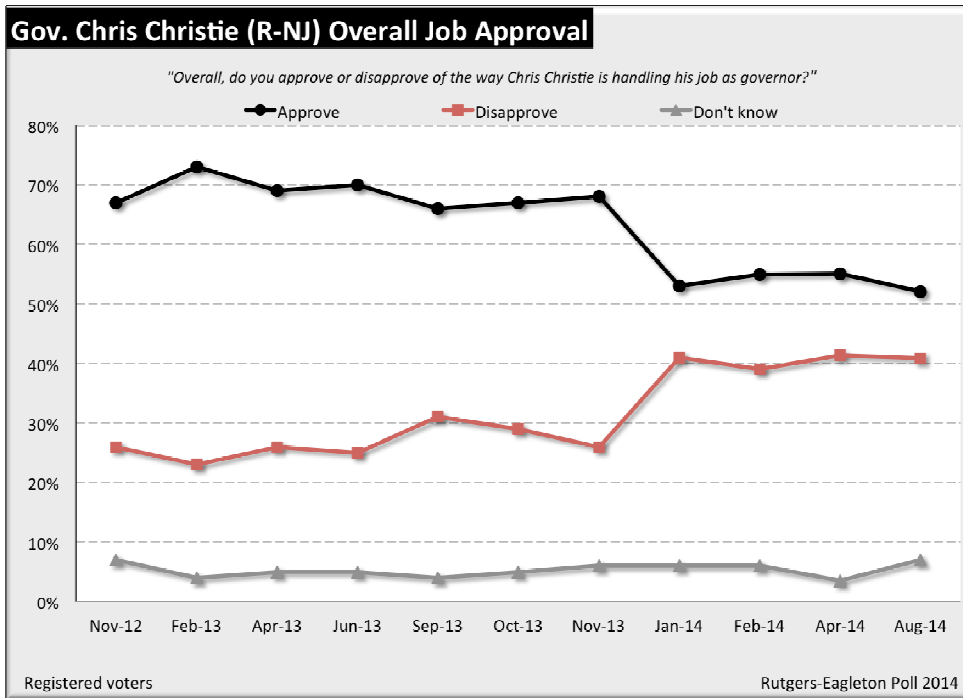
The questions covered in the release of August 12, 2014 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are New Jersey Registered Voters; all percentages are of weighted results.

Q. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way Chris Christie is handling his job as governor?

	REGISTERED VOTERS	Christie Favorability	
		Fav	Unfav
Approve	52%	92%	7%
Disapprove	41%	4%	89%
Don't know	7%	4%	4%
Unwgt N=	749	355	309

Trend ...

	4/14 RV	2/14 RV	1/14 RV	11/13 RV	10/13 RV	9/13 RV	6/13 RV	4/13 RV	2/13 RV	11/12 RV
Approve	55%	55%	53%	68%	67%	66%	70%	68%	73%	67%
Disapprove	41%	39%	41%	26%	29%	31%	25%	26%	23%	26%
Don't know	4%	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%	7%
Unwgt N=	724	725	747	795	794	809	756	810	696	533



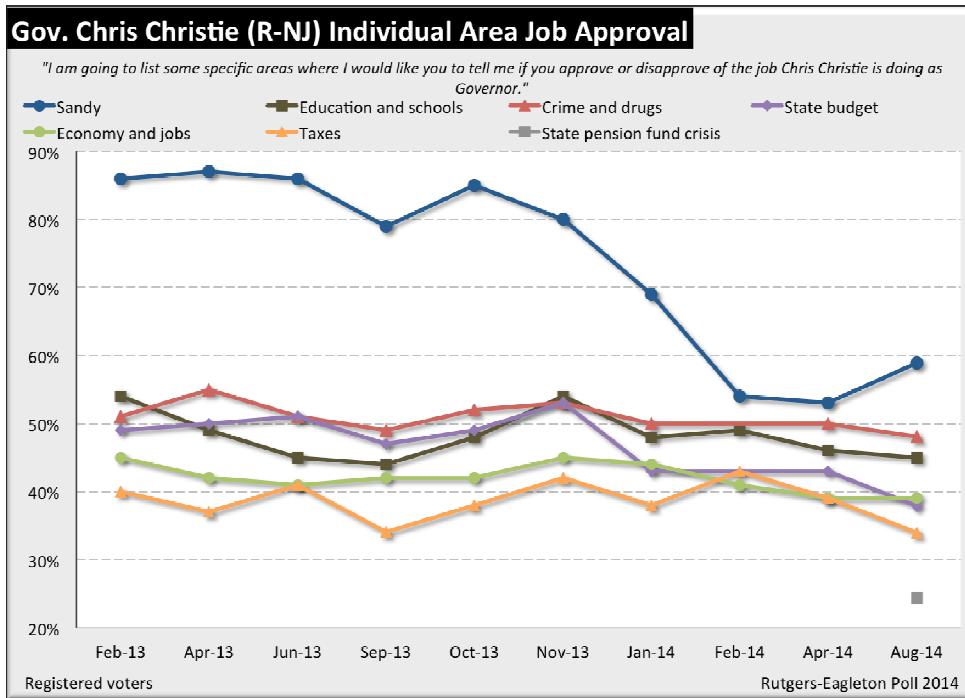
	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Approve	31%	57%	78%	32%	53%	71%	56%	49%	47%	57%	52%	53%
Disapprove	60%	37%	17%	63%	40%	22%	37%	44%	44%	38%	45%	36%
Don't know	9%	6%	5%	5%	7%	7%	7%	7%	10%	5%	3%	12%
Unwt N=	242	348	151	155	408	166	342	407	135	132	231	251

	Region				
	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore
Approve	42%	51%	55%	52%	61%
Disapprove	53%	41%	39%	43%	32%
Don't know	6%	8%	7%	6%	7%
Unwt N=	110	257	105	117	160

Q. Now I am going to list some specific areas where I would like you to tell me if you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing. First: [RANDOMIZE ORDER]

REGISTERED VOTERS

	NJ's economy and jobs	Taxes	Education and schools	Hurricane Sandy recovery	Crime and drugs	The state budget	The state pension fund crisis
Approve	39%	34%	45%	59%	48%	38%	24%
Disapprove	50%	57%	47%	33%	34%	46%	53%
Don't know	11%	9%	8%	8%	18%	16%	23%
Unwt N=	742	741	746	743	739	739	744



NJ's Economy and Jobs

	RV	Christie Favorability	
		Fav	Unfav
Approve	39%	60%	18%
Disapprove	50%	30%	73%
Don't know	11%	10%	9%
Unwt N=	742	355	304

Christie Approvals August 2014
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Region			Phil/	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	South	Shore
Approve	28%	40%	57%	28%	40%	47%	41%	38%	31%	37%	40%	38%	50%
Disapprove	63%	47%	34%	60%	49%	43%	48%	52%	59%	53%	44%	51%	40%
Don't know	9%	14%	9%	12%	11%	10%	12%	11%	10%	11%	16%	11%	10%
Unwt N=	240	343	152	153	405	165	340	402	107	256	104	116	159

Taxes

	RV	Christie Favorability	
		Fav	Unfav
Approve	34%	55%	11%
Disapprove	57%	38%	81%
Don't know	9%	7%	8%
Unwt N=	741	350	309

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Region			Phil/	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	South	Shore
Approve	18%	34%	60%	20%	33%	51%	35%	33%	27%	32%	40%	31%	41%
Disapprove	71%	57%	35%	70%	58%	42%	56%	59%	63%	59%	51%	62%	51%
Don't know	11%	9%	6%	10%	9%	7%	9%	8%	10%	9%	9%	6%	8%
Unwt N=	240	344	151	152	405	165	341	400	109	256	104	116	156

Education and Schools

	RV	Christie Favorability	
		Fav	Unfav
Approve	45%	70%	15%
Disapprove	47%	23%	78%
Don't know	8%	7%	8%
Unwt N=	746	355	308

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Region			Phil/	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	South	Shore
Approve	30%	47%	67%	27%	45%	63%	47%	43%	32%	47%	51%	42%	49%
Disapprove	64%	44%	25%	65%	48%	29%	45%	49%	60%	48%	42%	50%	38%
Don't know	6%	9%	8%	8%	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%	5%	7%	8%	12%
Unwt N=	242	345	152	155	405	167	342	404	109	257	104	117	159

Hurricane Sandy Recovery

	RV	Christie Favorability	
		Fav	Unfav
Approve	59%	76%	38%
Disapprove	33%	17%	55%
Don't know	8%	7%	7%
Unwgt N=	743	353	308

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Region			Phil/ Shore	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	South	Shore
Approve	49%	61%	71%	53%	61%	62%	60%	58%	52%	55%	68%	61%	63%
Disapprove	40%	32%	24%	39%	31%	32%	32%	34%	41%	37%	20%	30%	33%
Don't know	11%	7%	5%	8%	8%	6%	9%	7%	8%	8%	12%	9%	4%
Unwt N=	242	343	151	154	404	166	341	402	109	257	103	116	158

Crime and drugs

	RV	Christie Favorability	
		Fav	Unfav
Approve	48%	66%	28%
Disapprove	34%	18%	55%
Don't know	18%	16%	17%
Unwgt N=	739	349	308

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Region			Phil/ Shore	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	South	Shore
Approve	41%	48%	61%	37%	50%	56%	52%	45%	38%	48%	47%	44%	60%
Disapprove	40%	35%	20%	38%	33%	29%	33%	35%	51%	33%	24%	36%	28%
Don't know	19%	17%	19%	25%	17%	15%	16%	20%	12%	19%	29%	20%	12%
Unwt N=	242	340	152	154	401	166	340	399	108	254	105	117	155

The state budget

	RV	Christie Favorability	
		Fav	Unfav
Approve	38%	62%	11%
Disapprove	46%	19%	79%
Don't know	16%	19%	11%
Unwgt N=	739	351	306

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Region			Phil/ Shore	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	South	Shore
Approve	22%	40%	62%	22%	40%	49%	42%	34%	19%	35%	47%	35%	54%
Disapprove	60%	45%	23%	65%	44%	32%	42%	49%	58%	48%	35%	47%	37%
Don't know	18%	16%	16%	13%	16%	20%	16%	17%	23%	17%	17%	18%	9%
Unwt N=	240	341	151	154	402	164	338	401	107	255	105	116	156

The state pension fund crisis

	RV	Christie Favorability	
		Fav	Unfav
Approve	24%	40%	7%
Disapprove	53%	34%	76%
Don't know	23%	26%	16%
Unwgt N=	744	353	308

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Region				
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore
Approve	11%	27%	42%	13%	24%	38%	30%	20%	19%	20%	21%	32%	33%
Disapprove	65%	52%	36%	65%	55%	35%	53%	54%	58%	53%	61%	46%	49%
Don't know	24%	21%	23%	22%	21%	27%	17%	27%	23%	27%	18%	22%	18%
Unwt N=	241	346	150	155	406	164	341	403	110	257	104	116	157

Q. There is a lot of talk about Governor Christie running for president. Do you think he will run in 2016, or not?

	RV	Christie Favorability		Christie Approval	
		Fav	Unfav	Approve	Disapprove
Yes	57%	57%	58%	58%	57%
No	29%	27%	32%	27%	32%
Don't know	14%	16%	10%	15%	11%
Unwgt N=	744	355	307	375	314

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Yes	62%	56%	55%	65%	54%	56%	57%	58%	54%	61%	60%	53%
No	27%	30%	29%	21%	32%	30%	31%	27%	37%	25%	26%	29%
Don't know	11%	14%	17%	13%	14%	14%	12%	16%	9%	15%	14%	18%
Unwt N=	241	345	151	154	405	166	342	402	135	133	229	247

	Region				
	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore
Yes	51%	59%	56%	53%	63%
No	31%	27%	28%	35%	25%
Don't know	17%	14%	16%	12%	12%
Unwt N=	110	256	103	117	158

Q. In general, are the decisions Christie is making lately about various issues, including whether to sign or veto bills, more about [ROTATE ORDER: what's best for NJ or more about his potential run for president]?

	RV	Christie Favorability		Christie Approval	
		Fav	Unfav	Approve	Disapprove
Best for NJ	38%	63%	11%	61%	12%
Potential run for president	48%	22%	79%	24%	78%
Don't know	14%	15%	10%	15%	10%
Unwgt N=	736	350	305	369	312

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Best for NJ	23%	40%	62%	23%	38%	56%	44%	33%	33%	38%	42%	39%
Potential run	61%	47%	25%	64%	47%	32%	45%	50%	51%	47%	46%	47%
Don't know	16%	13%	13%	13%	14%	12%	11%	17%	17%	15%	12%	14%
Unwt N=	239	341	149	153	401	164	335	401	134	132	225	245

	Region				
	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore
Best for NJ	28%	38%	49%	34%	42%
Potential run	56%	47%	41%	53%	43%
Don't know	16%	15%	10%	13%	15%
Unwt N=	108	254	104	115	155

Q. Governor Christie has been frequently travelling outside of New Jersey in the past year to fundraise and campaign as part of his duties as the Chairman of the Republican Governor's Association. Do you think the governor's travel schedule hurts his ability to be an effective governor in New Jersey, or does it not have an affect on his ability to govern?

	RV	Christie Favorability		Christie Approval	
		Fav	Unfav	Approve	Disapprove
Hurts his ability	36%	20%	56%	20%	57%
Does not have an effect	57%	73%	37%	73%	36%
Helps ability to govern (vol)	1%	2%	0%	2%	0%
Don't know	6%	5%	6%	5%	7%
Unwgt N=	741	352	307	373	313

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Hurts	45%	36%	20%	48%	36%	26%	35%	37%	38%	32%	41%	33%
No effect	45%	58%	75%	45%	57%	68%	58%	55%	53%	61%	54%	58%
Helps (vol)	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%
Don't know	10%	5%	3%	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%	8%	7%	3%	8%
Unwt N=	240	344	152	155	402	167	342	399	134	132	227	248

**Christie Approvals August 2014
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Region				
	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore
Hurts	47%	36%	45%	29%	27%
No effect	40%	56%	50%	63%	70%
Helps (vol)	3%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Don't know	10%	7%	5%	7%	2%
Unwt N=	109	254	105	116	157

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll July 28 – August 5, 2014

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live callers July 28 – August 5, 2014 with a scientifically selected random sample of 871 New Jersey adults, including 750 registered voters. This telephone poll included 543 landline and 328 cell phone adults, all acquired through random digit dialing. Distribution of household phone use in this sample is:

Cell Only:	24%
Dual Use, Reached on Cell:	14%
Dual Use, Reached on LL:	57%
Landline Only:	5%

Data for registered voters (N=750) and all adults (N=871) were weighted separately to the demographics of registered voters and adults in New Jersey, respectively. Both weights account for the probability of being selected within the sample frame and the probability of being sampled within a household, based on the number of individuals living in the household and the phone composition (cell, landline) of the household. The samples were weighted to several demographic variables reflecting the population parameters of the state of New Jersey: gender, race, age, and Hispanic ethnicity. The final weight, which combined all of the parameters mentioned, was trimmed at the 5th and 95th percentile so as to not accord too much weight to any one case or subset of cases. All results are reported with these weighted data.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. In this poll, the simple sampling error for the 871 adults is +/-3.3 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. The adult sample weighting design effect is 1.40, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 3.9 percentage points for the adult sample. The simple sampling error for 750 registered voters is +/-3.5 percentage points. The weighting design effect for the registered voter sample is 1.25, making the adjusted margin of error +/-4.0 percentage points for the registered voter sample.

Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey registered voters in this sample favor a position, we would be 95 percent sure that the true figure is between 46.0 and 54.0 percent (50 +/-4.0) if all New Jersey voters had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process.

Weighted Sample Characteristics 750 New Jersey Registered Voters			
33% Democrat	46% Male	9% 18-24	68% White
47% Independent/Other	54% Female	27% 25-44	12% Black
20% Republican		40% 45-64	11% Hispanic
		24% 65+	9% Asian/Other/Multi