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**VOTERS REMAIN NEGATIVE ABOUT 'BRIDGEGATE,' OTHER ALLEGATIONS;
BUT HALF SAY CHRISTIE IS PUTTING SCANDALS BEHIND HIM**

Most say allegations are politics as usual, investigation a waste of time

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – Seven months after the George Washington Bridge scandal burst Gov. Chris Christie's ratings bubble, almost half of New Jersey voters continue to doubt the governor's explanation of what happened. According to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, 47 percent of registered voters say they do not believe Christie at all, while another 24 percent say they somewhat believe him and just 23 percent say they fully believe him. Six percent are unsure.

More than half of respondents say Bridgegate and allegations of misuse of Port Authority and Sandy funding are serious for Christie, with 39 percent saying "very serious" and 17 percent saying "extremely serious." But 27 percent say the allegations are not very serious, while 14 percent say not serious at all. Despite the net negative view, voters have shifted slightly in Christie's favor since April. The percentage thinking the allegations are extremely serious has dropped nine points, while "not at all serious" is up seven points.

There has not been the same shift on how damaging Bridgegate and other issues have been to Christie's presidential ambitions, however. Almost seven in 10 voters still think these allegations are either very (20 percent) or somewhat (48 percent) damaging. Only 18 percent believe they are not very damaging and just 11 percent say not damaging at all.

Nevertheless, 51 percent of voters think the governor has been mostly successful in putting these allegations behind him, though 40 percent disagree. Nearly three-quarters of voters call the allegations "just politics as usual" and not unique to the Christie administration; 60 percent think the ongoing legislative investigation is a waste of time.

"Governor Christie is trying very hard to put all of this behind him as he appear to be exploring a

presidential campaign,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. “Whether he is succeeding is still unclear. Most voters agree that the legislative investigation is a waste of time, but they also think the allegations are serious and have potential to derail him. If any indictments related to the various allegations come down, all bets are off. If not, Christie may well become a GOP front-runner again.”

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.

Republicans stand by their governor but see damage to 2016 aspirations

Christie’s believability in the “Bridgegate” scandal has not recovered since voters generally panned the January press conference where Christie said he was unaware of the lane closings. They remain skeptical and see the mounting allegations as problematic for Christie. Views on Christie’s role and its repercussions are, of course, particularly divided by partisanship: 11 percent of Democrats fully believe the governor’s explanation and another 16 percent somewhat believe him, while 68 percent do not at all. Republicans say just the opposite – though to a slightly lesser extent – split between fully (47 percent) and somewhat believing (35 percent). Independents resemble the population as a whole. Christie also has more credibility with those favorable toward him and who approve of the job he is doing overall, but again to a lesser extent than the total disbelief of his more passionate detractors.

“The fact that fewer than half of GOP voters fully believe Christie is a problem waiting to happen,” said Redlawsk. “He needs a strong party base to run for president. If Republican voters in New Jersey are even somewhat skeptical, there might be an opening for his GOP challengers to define him by these allegations. It’s important to remember that a full-blown presidential campaign has not yet started, and the inevitable attacks have not begun in earnest.”

Perceptions of how serious the various allegations are for Christie also depend on the same set of factors. Just under three-quarters of Democrats believe the allegations are at least somewhat serious. GOP voters now believe the events to be less serious than they did earlier this year, a positive sign for the governor. Four in 10 Republicans say the claims of wrongdoing are not very serious for Christie and another quarter say they are not at all. Those unfavorable towards Christie, who disapprove of the job he is doing, or do not believe his explanation are stronger in their belief that the allegations are serious than Christie’s supporters are that they are not serious.

Christie’s potential 2016 run may be hampered because voters of all partisan leanings are at least

somewhat likely to think the allegations are damaging to a campaign for president. Almost 80 percent of Democrats see the ongoing controversies as somewhat or very damaging to Christie's aspirations, as do 62 percent of independents. But even a majority of Republicans agree, with 52 percent seeing this as somewhat damaging while another 12 percent find the allegations very damaging to his potential campaign. Over half of every demographic thinks this has all been at least somewhat damaging to the governor's 2016 hopes, even among Christie's biggest supporters.

"Voters still do not fully believe the governor's claims, and while most Republicans do not see the events as very serious, they do think his potential presidential campaign has been damaged," said Redlawsk. "In this context, the views of Republicans are most important, since Christie has to first survive what is likely to be a brutal Republican 2016 primary season, before worrying about what Democrats think."

Christie, voters want to leave scandals behind

Even as they say the allegations are serious and his campaign has been damaged, voters nonetheless think Christie himself has been mostly successful in putting the potential scandals behind him, most likely due to his continual and adamant denials and even his playful brushing aside of the controversies on late night television. Three-quarters of Republicans and just over half of independents say Christie has been mostly successful, as do 35 percent of Democrats. Fifty-five percent of Democrats take the opposite view. At least a plurality of nearly every other key demographic group says he has been mostly successful. Among detractors, Christie gets at least a third vouching for his successful dismissal of the scandals. "Perhaps Christie's dancing and joking with Jimmy Fallon has made some difference," suggested Redlawsk.

Voters also seem to be growing tired of the legislative investigation. While the desire to continue investigating is somewhat determined by personal views of Christie, even 41 percent of Democrats say it's time for the Legislature to move on. Eighty-two percent of Republicans and 67 percent of independents feel the same. Fifty-five percent of Democrats want the investigation to continue.

Even those who do not believe Christie's Bridgegate explanation at all are split – 51 percent say keep investigating, versus 47 percent who say it is a waste of time.

The governor's supporters and detractors alike agree that these scandals are not unique to the Christie administration. Eighty-eight percent of Republicans, 78 percent of independents and 54 percent of Democrats think this is just politics as usual. Even those unfavorable toward Christie, disapproving of him, and most skeptical of his explanation feel the same.

“At some level, voters probably expect political scandals here in New Jersey, so maybe this just doesn’t seem particularly different,” noted Redlawsk. “Moreover, most of the claims are about ‘payback’ in some form or another, and voters already tend to think politicians act this way on a regular basis.”

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QUESTIONS AND TABLES START ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

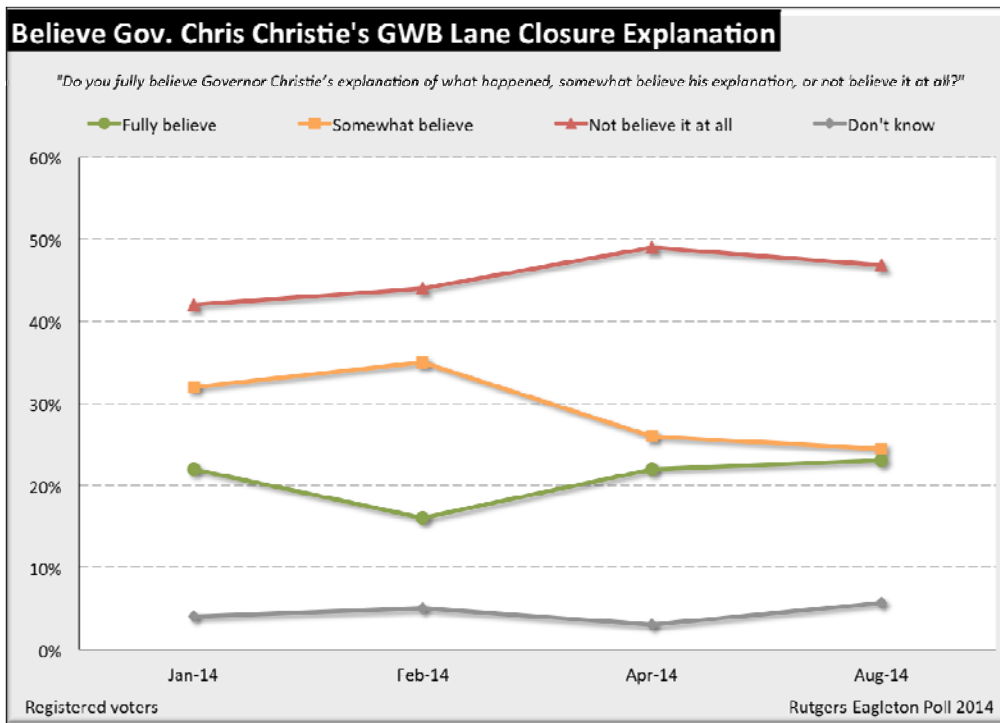
Questions and Tables

The questions in the release of August 14, 2014 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are New Jersey Registered Voters unless otherwise indicated; percentages are of weighted results.

Q. Let's turn to the ongoing controversy over the George Washington Bridge lane closures in Fort Lee. Governor Christie has said that the closing was done without his knowledge by staff members acting on their own. Do you fully believe Governor Christie's explanation of what happened, somewhat believe his explanation, or not believe it at all?

Registered Voters

		Christie Favorability		Christie Job Approval	
		Fav	Unfav	Apprv	Disapp
Fully believe	23%	41%	5%	39%	4%
Somewhat believe	24%	32%	12%	34%	11%
Not believe it at all	47%	20%	79%	21%	80%
Don't know	6%	6%	5%	6%	5%
Unwgt N=	742	353	306	374	313

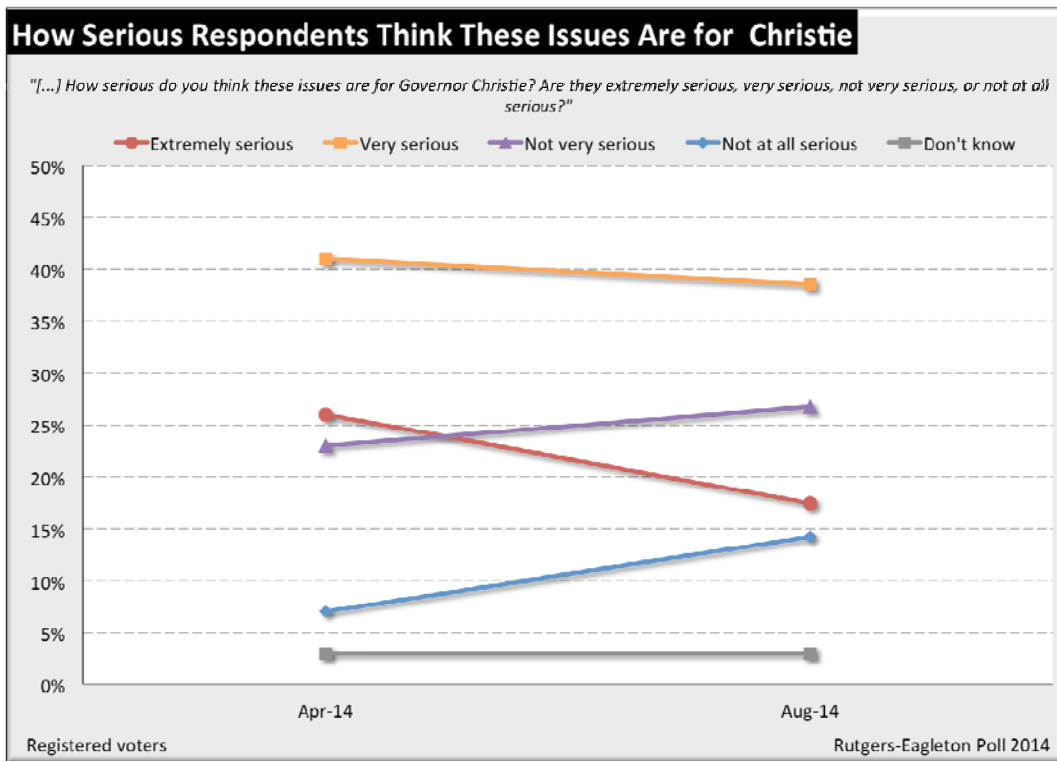


	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Fully believe	11%	22%	47%	8%	20%	46%	25%	21%	10%	17%	25%	38%
Somewhat believe	16%	26%	35%	14%	29%	26%	25%	24%	26%	28%	23%	21%
Not believe it at all	68%	44%	16%	70%	46%	24%	45%	48%	54%	47%	49%	36%
Don't know	6%	7%	3%	8%	5%	5%	5%	6%	10%	8%	3%	4%
Unwt N=	239	346	152	154	405	165	342	400	135	130	228	249

Q. Given all the allegations about the bridge, as well as talk about the Christie administration using Port Authority to further political goals, how serious do you think these issues are for Governor Christie? Are they extremely serious, very serious, not very serious, or not at all serious?

Registered Voters

		Christie Favorability		Christie Job Approval		Believe Christie's GWB Explanation		
		Fav	Unfav	Apprv	Disapp	Fully	Somewhat	Not at All
Extremely serious	17%	10%	29%	9%	30%	8%	8%	28%
Very serious	39%	30%	45%	32%	44%	22%	40%	45%
Not very serious	27%	37%	16%	36%	16%	39%	36%	17%
Not at all serious	14%	20%	8%	20%	8%	27%	15%	9%
Don't know	3%	3%	2%	4%	2%	4%	1%	1%
Unwgt N=	741	352	306	372	313	190	178	331



	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Extremely serious	28%	13%	9%	22%	19%	10%	16%	18%	12%	17%	20%	20%
Very serious	46%	40%	22%	45%	41%	26%	40%	37%	39%	45%	35%	37%
Not very serious	16%	29%	40%	17%	25%	41%	25%	28%	29%	25%	27%	26%
Not at all serious	8%	14%	25%	13%	13%	20%	16%	13%	14%	10%	16%	15%
Don't know	2%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	6%	3%	1%	3%
Unwt N=	239	346	150	154	405	164	342	399	135	131	229	246

Q. Do you think these allegations are [ROTATE: unique to the Christie administration or just politics as usual]?

Registered Voters

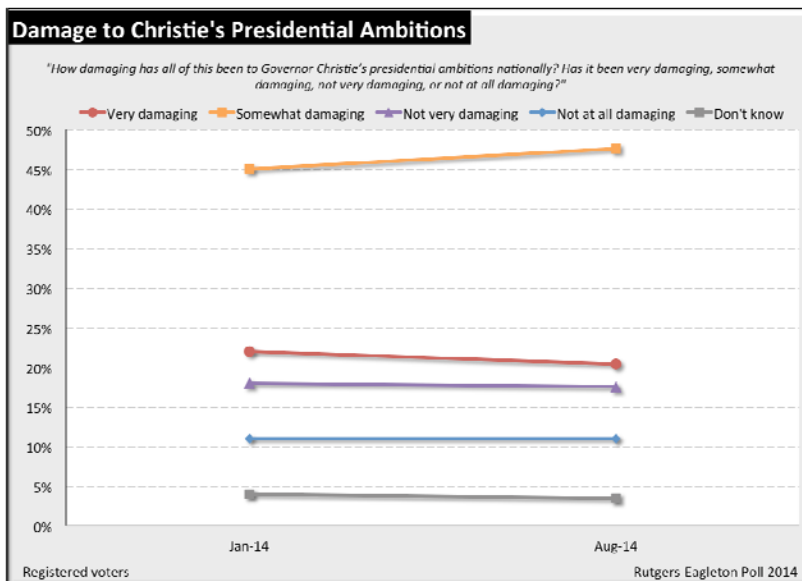
		Christie Favorability		Christie Job Approval		Believe Christie's GWB Explanation		
		Fav	Unfav	Apprv	Disapp	Fully	Somewhat	Not at All
Unique to Christie administration	22%	10%	39%	9%	40%	8%	11%	37%
Politics as usual	72%	85%	56%	85%	56%	87%	85%	59%
Don't know	6%	5%	4%	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%
Unwgt N=	736	351	304	371	310	190	176	328

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Unique to Christie	39%	16%	10%	37%	21%	11%	22%	23%	17%	20%	30%	19%
Politics as usual	54%	78%	88%	54%	75%	83%	74%	70%	74%	74%	66%	75%
Don't know	7%	6%	2%	9%	4%	5%	4%	7%	9%	6%	4%	6%
Unwt N=	238	343	150	152	403	164	340	396	134	131	226	245

Q. How damaging has all of this been to Governor Christie's presidential ambitions nationally? Has it been very damaging, somewhat damaging, not very damaging, or not at all damaging?

Registered Voters

		Christie Favorability		Christie Job Approval		Believe Christie's GWB Explanation		
		Fav	Unfav	Apprv	Disapp	Fully	Somewhat	Not at All
Very damaging	20%	13%	31%	13%	30%	11%	9%	31%
Somewhat damaging	48%	47%	45%	47%	47%	42%	58%	45%
Not very damaging	18%	20%	16%	20%	15%	21%	16%	16%
Not at all damaging	11%	16%	5%	16%	6%	22%	14%	5%
Don't know	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%	2%
Unwgt N=	742	353	306	373	313	191	178	331



**Bridgegate August 2014
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very damaging	31%	16%	12%	24%	21%	17%	18%	22%	15%	20%	23%	23%
Somewhat damaging	48%	46%	52%	52%	47%	47%	46%	49%	53%	52%	42%	46%
Not very damaging	13%	20%	19%	17%	19%	15%	19%	17%	18%	19%	18%	15%
Not at all damaging	5%	13%	16%	4%	11%	17%	15%	8%	8%	6%	16%	11%
Don't know	3%	5%	1%	2%	3%	5%	3%	4%	7%	3%	1%	3%
Unwt N=	239	346	151	154	404	166	342	400	135	131	228	248

Q. Governor Christie has continued to deny these allegations to the press and even jokingly brushed them aside on late night television. Do you think the governor has been mostly successful or mostly unsuccessful in putting the George Washington Bridge scandal and other related events behind him?

Registered Voters

		Christie Favorability		Christie Job Approval		Believe Christie's GWB Explanation		
		Fav	Unfav	Apprv	Disapp	Fully	Somewhat	Not at All
Mostly successful	51%	66%	36%	65%	33%	79%	59%	36%
Mostly unsuccessful	40%	25%	57%	26%	59%	16%	32%	58%
Don't know	9%	9%	7%	9%	8%	5%	10%	6%
Unwgt N=	741	352	306	373	312	191	177	330

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Mostly successful	35%	52%	75%	41%	51%	61%	56%	47%	49%	55%	54%	45%
Mostly unsuccessful	55%	39%	18%	51%	40%	31%	38%	42%	37%	39%	40%	45%
Don't know	9%	9%	7%	8%	9%	8%	6%	11%	14%	5%	6%	11%
Unwt N=	238	344	152	153	403	167	340	401	135	132	226	248

Q. The legislature has been investigating the Christie administration about the bridge and other allegations, and has required officials to provide records and testify. Do you think the investigation should continue to try to find out exactly what happened, or is it a waste of time to keep focusing on this event when there are other important issues?

Registered Voters

		Christie Favorability		Christie Job Approval		Believe Christie's GWB Explanation		
		Fav	Unfav	Apprv	Disapp	Fully	Somewhat	Not at All
Keep investigating	36%	20%	53%	21%	55%	20%	21%	51%
Waste of time	61%	78%	43%	77%	42%	79%	78%	47%
Don't know	3%	2%	4%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Unwgt N=	739	352	304	373	310	191	178	327

**Bridgetate August 2014
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Keep investigating	55%	31%	16%	50%	34%	25%	34%	37%	35%	39%	37%	32%
Waste of time	41%	67%	82%	45%	64%	73%	64%	60%	61%	57%	62%	66%
Don't know	3%	2%	2%	5%	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	4%	1%	3%
Unwt N=	236	344	152	150	404	167	341	398	134	131	226	248

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