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THE EAGLETON INSTITUTE OF POLITICS
WOOD LAWN•NEILSON CAMPUS•NEW BRUNSWICK•NEW JERSEY 08901•201/828-2210

NEW JERSEYANS AND ENERGY II: PUBLIC REJECTS PROPOSALS
CALLING FOR PERSONAL SACRIFICE

While 85 percent feel energy problems have gotten worse in the past and 69 percent feel they will get worse in the future, New Jerseyans oppose energy saving proposals that would require them to make personal sacrifices, according to the most recent Eagleton Poll. The Rutgers-based survey presented a statewide sample with nine energy alternatives and found the ones people supported most were the ones that would have the least impact on their lives.

Less than one in five -- 17 percent -- said they favored increased energy prices as a stimulus to reduce consumption; either as increased taxes on gasoline or increased prices on energy, while 80 percent were opposed to both measures. These figures have changed little from a September, 1978 Eagleton survey conducted for the N.J. Department of Energy.

Garden State residents were also opposed to gas rationing as a means to help solve energy problems by a 3 to 1 margin -- 73 percent to 24 percent; and were opposed to deregulating natural gas by a margin of 2 to 1 -- 60 percent opposed and 32 percent favored this proposal. These figures are also unchanged since September.

New Jerseyans are not as opposed to either relaxing pollution laws or Sunday closings of gas stations, alternatives which would have less of a direct importance on peoples lives. About 58 percent

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Attention Radio Stations:

Audio is available on 5/2/79, 10:00 A.M. From 201-545-6193 (Rutgers Feature Phone).

were opposed to each of these proposals to ease the energy situation while 36 percent favored each.

The public was equally divided on the question of increased use of nuclear energy to help solve energy problems, as reported earlier by Eagleton. Forty-eight percent favored increased use of nuclear power, while 44 percent opposed it. In the wake of the accident at Three Mile Island, the percentage favoring nuclear power has dropped from 60 percent in September to the current 48 percent.

Two energy saving proposals received strong support from New Jerseyans. Strict enforcement of the 55 m.p.h. speed limit was favored by a margin of 82 to 16 percent; and requiring businesses to lower heating, air conditioning and lighting was favored by 79 percent while being opposed by 19 percent.

Associate Director of the Poll, Cliff Zukin commented, "The proposals people endorsed were those that require very little changes in their behavior. For the most part the policies supported are those that require someone else -- or everybody else -- to sacrifice. Energy has not become a personalized problem to the public."

The latest Eagleton Poll was conducted between April 2 and 13, when a scientifically selected sample of 1004 New Jersey residents, 18 years and older, was interviewed by telephone.

A major study on public opinion about energy in New Jersey was done for the New Jersey Department of Energy by the Eagleton Institute in September, 1978. Those wishing further details on this study should contact Mr. Ira Dorfman, Administrator of the Office of Conservation, New Jersey Department of Energy, at (201) 648-3373.

BACKGROUND MEMO--RELEASE 36-6, WEDNESDAY MAY 2, 1979

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

"A number of suggestions have been made about how we can help solve our energy problems. I am going to read you a list of these suggestions. For each one could you tell me whether you favor or oppose it. Do you favor or oppose ...

Strictly enforcing the 55 mile per hour speed limit.

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April, 1979	82	16	1	1	100%	1003
Sept., 1978	84	14	1	1	100%	1005
Oct., 1977	86	13	0	1	100%	552
Jan., 1975	85	14	--	1	100%	1002

Increasing taxes on gasoline to reduce consumption.

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April, 1979	17	80	1	2	100%	1005
Sept., 1978	13	84	1	2	100%	1004
Oct., 1977	21	76	1	2	100%	523
Jan., 1975	17	81	--	3	101%	1003

Closing gas stations on Sundays.

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April, 1979	37	59	2	2	100%	1005

Rationing gasoline.

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April, 1979	24	73	3	1	101%	1004
Sept., 1978	22	73	4	1	100%	1002
Oct., 1977	25	71	3	2	101%	521
Jan., 1975	34	63	--	3	100%	1002

Relaxing enforcement of air and water pollution laws.

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April, 1979	36	58	2	4	100%	1004
Sept., 1978	31	64	2	3	100%	1003
Oct., 1977	32	64	2	3	101%	523
Jan., 1975	36	60	--	4	100%	995

Removing price controls on natural gas.

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April, 1979	32	60	2	7	101%	1004
Sept., 1978	33	54	1	12	100%	1001
Oct., 1977	27	64	1	8	100%	521

Increasing the price of energy such as oil, gas and electricity to cut down on consumption.

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April, 1979	17	81	1	2	101%	1004
Sept., 1978	15	82	2	1	100%	1005

Requiring businesses to lower heating, air conditioning, and lighting."

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April, 1979	79	19	1	1	100%	1005
Sept., 1978	76	18	4	2	100%	1005

"In the past year, do you think our energy problems have gotten better or worse?"

"Do you expect these problems to get better or worse in the next year?"

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>No Change</u>	<u>Depends/ Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Last year	7	85	4	5	101%	(1005)
Next year	24	69	2	4	99%	(1005)