

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll #173
February 24-26, 2011
Sample: 900 New Jersey ADULTS ages 18 and older

Questions are presented in the order they were administered. Numbering may not necessarily be sequential and question numbers may be missing due to cuts prior to fielding and numbering convention.

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____. I'm conducting an Eagleton Poll for **RUTGERS** University. I'd like to ask a few questions of the **YOUNGEST MALE** age 18 or older, who is now at home.

(IF NO MALE AT HOME NOW: Then, may I speak with the **OLDEST FEMALE** age 18 or older who is now at home?)

WHEN RESPONDENT ON PHONE: Hello, my name is _____. We are talking to New Jersey adults to conduct a research study on public policy issues in New Jersey. Your participation is important as only 900 people will be selected to take part in this study. This will take about 12 minutes or so and your answers are anonymous. Anonymous means we will not collect any information that could be used to identify you.

Your participation is voluntary, you may end your participation at any time, and you may skip questions you do not want to answer. May I ask the first question? [IF YES] Thanks!

IF NECESSARY: We are not selling anything, not asking for money, and all your answers will be completely confidential.

IF RESPONDENT DECLINES TO PARTICIPATE, POSSIBLE PROBES:

--Your participation is very important because only 900 people have been randomly selected for this survey and your views will represent many people throughout the state.

IF "DON'T KNOW ENOUGH":

-- There are no right or wrong answers. We are only interested in your opinions. They are just as important as anybody else's.

IF NOT INTERESTED, DON'T WANT TO:

-- Please help me; we could really use your cooperation and we are interested in what you think.

Q1 Great thanks. First, for our records, what is your age?

____ (ENTER AGE: 98=98+, 99 = Don't Know/REFUSED)

[IF Don't Know/REFUSED IN Q1, ASK:]

Q1A. Is it between...?

- 1 18 - 20
- 2 21 - 24
- 3 25 - 29
- 4 THIRTIES (30 - 39)
- 5 FORTIES (40 - 49)
- 6 FIFTIES (50 - 59)
- 7 60 - 64
- 8 65 OR OVER
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q2 Next, what is your zip code?

- _____ Enter Zipcode
- 8 Don't know (VOL)
 - 9 Refused (VOL)

LEADERSHIP PERCEPTION

Q3 In politics today, do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or something else?

- 1 Democrat → **SKIP TO Q6**
- 2 Republican → **SKIP TO Q5**
- 3 Independent → **SKIP TO Q4**
- 4 Something Else / Other → **SKIP TO Q4**
- 8 Don't know → **SKIP TO Q4**
- 9 Refused → **SKIP TO Q4**

Q4 Would you say that you lean toward the Democrats, the Republicans, or neither party?

- 1 Democrat → **SKIP TO Q6**
- 2 Republican → **SKIP TO Q5**
- 3 Neither → **SKIP TO Q6**
- 8 Don't Know → **SKIP TO Q6**
- 9 Refused → **SKIP TO Q6**

Q5 Now, thinking ahead to the 2012 Presidential Election, which Republican would prefer as the nominee to run against President Obama? Just tell me the name.

[Do Not Read List; Code to list]

- 1 Michelle Bachman

- 2 Michael Bloomberg
- 3 John Bolton
- 4 Scott Brown
- 5 Jeb Bush
- 6 Chris Christie
- 7 Newt Gingrich
- 8 Mike Huckabee
- 9 Sarah Palin
- 10 Ron Paul
- 11 Tim Pawlenty
- 12 David Petraeus
- 13 Mitt Romney
- 14 Rick Santorum
- 97 Other [**Record Name**]
- 98 Don't know
- 99 Refused

Q6 Thinking ahead to the 2012 Presidential election, does President Obama deserve to be re-elected for another term?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

Q6A Are you NOW registered to vote where you live or haven't you been able to register so far?

- 1 Now registered to vote
- 2 Haven't been able to register so far
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

[SPLIT SAMPLE – RANDOM ½ GETS Q7A, Q8A AND ½ GETS Q7B, Q8B]

[VERSION A]

Q7A Please rate how Barack Obama is handling his job as President. Is it excellent, good, fair, or poor?

- 1 Excellent
- 2 Good
- 3 Fair
- 4 Poor
- 8 Don't know/No Opinion (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q8A Now let's talk about New Jersey. Please rate how Chris Christie is handling his job as Governor. Is it excellent, good, fair, or poor?

- 1 Excellent
- 2 Good
- 3 Fair
- 4 Poor
- 8 Don't know/No Opinion (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

[VERSION B]

Q7B Please rate how Barack Obama is handling his job as President, using a grading scale from A to F, You can give him any full letter grade, A, B, C, D, or F.

- 1 A
- 2 B
- 3 C
- 4 D
- 5 F
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

Q8B Now let's talk about New Jersey. Please rate how Chris Christie is handling his job as governor, using a grading scale from A to F, You can give him any full letter grade, A, B, C, D, or F.

- 1 A
- 2 B
- 3 C
- 4 D
- 5 F
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

[END SPLIT SAMPLE]

Q9 Would you say the state of New Jersey is currently going in the right direction or has it gone off on the wrong track?

- 1 Right Direction
- 2 Wrong Track
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q10 I'd like to ask about some people and organizations. Please tell me if your general impression of each one is favorable or unfavorable, or if you do not have an opinion. First, [next]: **[ROTATE]**

- A. The Tea Party movement
- B. Democrats in Congress
- C. Republicans in Congress
- D. President Barack Obama
- E. Governor Chris Christie
- F. Democrats in the State legislature
- G. Republicans in the State legislature
- H. Senator Robert Menendez
- I. Senator Frank Lautenberg
- J. State Senate President Steve Sweeney

- 1 Favorable
- 2 Unfavorable
- 8 No Opinion/Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q10A As you may know teachers and state workers in Wisconsin have been protesting proposed cuts to benefits and bargaining rights with large rallies at their state capitol. Do you think these workers are right to protest, or should they accept the cuts and changes that are being proposed.

- 1 Right to Protest
- 2 Accept the cuts
- 3 Depends (vol)
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

Budget Address

Q11 How much have you heard or read about Governor Christie's proposed state budget? Is it:

- 1 A lot
- 2 Some
- 3 A little, or
- 4 Nothing at all → **SKIP TO Q15**
- 8 Don't know (VOL) → **SKIP TO Q15**
- 9 Refused (VOL) → **SKIP TO Q15**

Q13 Overall are you very pleased, somewhat pleased, somewhat displeased, or very displeased with the Governor's proposed budget?

- 1 Very pleased
- 2 Somewhat pleased
- 3 Somewhat displeased
- 4 Very displeased
- 8 Don't know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q14 In just a couple words, please tell me what is it about the Governor's budget proposal that makes you feel **[INSERT ANSWER TO Q13]** with it?

[RECORD OPEN ENDED]

Q16 Of the following issues Governor Christie addressed in his budget, which ONE should be the first thing the legislature acts on? Is it: **[ROTATE]**

- 1 Reforming the state pension system
- 2 Eliminating automatic teacher tenure
- 3 Increasing property tax rebates
- 4 Requiring public employees to pay more for health benefits
- 5 Cutting taxes for business
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q18 The Governor wants to make large cuts in many programs to help close the budget deficit. Do you support the governor's budget or do you think the Legislature should find ways to protect some programs from cuts?

- 1 Support the Governor's budget
- 2 Find ways to protect programs
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q18A Thinking about working with the Democratic legislature in Trenton, which is more important: that Governor Christie **[ROTATE]** stick to his beliefs no matter what or compromise as needed to accomplish things?

- 1 Stick to beliefs
- 2 Compromise
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q19 To balance the state budget, some government services will be cut deeply and some will be cut less deeply. For each of the following, tell me if it should be cut more deeply, less deeply, or not cut at all.

[ROTATE]

- A Environmental programs
- B Programs for the poor
- C Colleges and universities
- D Public transportation
- E State aid to schools
- F State aid to local government

- 1 More Deeply
- 2 Less Deeply
- 3 Not at all
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q20 Some state taxes or fees might have to be raised to balance the budget. For each tell if you would support or oppose an increase.

[ROTATE]

- A Highway tolls
- B The gas tax
- C The state income tax
- D Business taxes
- F Adding sales tax to clothing
- G Adding sales tax to luxury goods

- 1 Support
- 2 Oppose
- 3 Depends (VOL)
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Issues

Q21 Currently public school teachers earn tenure after three years of teaching. Once granted tenure a teacher can only be dismissed for just cause and must be given a chance to offer a defense. Do you approve or disapprove of tenure for public school teachers?

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q23 The Christie administration is proposing to change how teachers are evaluated. Evaluations would depend in part on how well students do on statewide tests, as well as on classroom observations, student work and other measures. Is this a fair or unfair way to evaluate

teachers?

- 1 Fair
- 2 Unfair
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q24 Under this proposal, teachers would no longer automatically get tenure, and would risk losing tenure if they receive poor evaluations. Do you approve or disapprove linking tenure to these evaluations?

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q25 The administration also proposes to link teacher pay increases to improved student test scores. Some additional consideration would be given for teaching in high-need schools and in subjects where there are teacher shortages. Do you approve or disapprove of this proposal?

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q26 Some teachers work in schools where children struggle and may not perform well on statewide tests. Other teachers work in schools where children are well prepared and ready to learn. Should any new evaluation standards be applied the same way to all schools and teachers, or should there be adjustments for the specific circumstances of each school?

- 1 Apply the same standards
- 2 Make adjustments
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q27 Now, on to some other topics. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose Governor Christie's proposed state worker pension overhaul, which would cut benefits and increase worker contributions?

- 1 Strongly support
- 2 Somewhat support
- 3 Somewhat oppose
- 4 Strongly oppose
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

[SPLIT BALLOT; RANDOM ASSIGN 1/3 TO VERSION A, B, C]

[VERSION A]

Q28A To save the state money, Democratic State Senate President Steve Sweeney wants public employees to pay a larger share of their health insurance costs than they do now. He would set up a sliding scale from 12 to 30 percent of premium costs, based on income. This would more than triple the cost for some workers. Do you support or oppose Sweeney's plan?

- 1 Support
- 2 Oppose
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

[VERSION B]

Q28B To save the state money, Governor Chris Christie wants public employees to pay a larger share of their health insurance costs than they do now. He would require all workers to pay 30 percent of premium costs no matter what their income. This would more than triple the cost for some workers. Do you support or oppose Christie's plan?

- 1 Support
- 2 Oppose
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

[VERSION C]

Q28C To save the state money, Governor Chris Christie and Democratic State Senate President Steve Sweeney **[ROTATE NAMES]** both want public employees to pay a larger share of their health insurance costs than they do now. Although they differ on details both proposals would more than triple the cost for some workers. Do you support or oppose such proposals?

- 1 Support
- 2 Oppose
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

[END SPLIT BALLOT]

Q29 Which of the following best describes your own current health insurance? **[Read Options]**

- 1 You pay the full cost
- 2 You pay part of the cost
- 3 An employer pays the full cost

- 4 You have Medicare or Medicaid, or
- 5 You don't have any coverage
- 7 Parent/Other person pays (vol)
- 8 Don't know (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

Q30 Last year, Governor Christie vetoed a tax surcharge on incomes of more than \$1 million. Now the legislature may try again. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose increasing taxes on very high incomes to help close the budget gap?

- 1 Strongly support
- 2 Somewhat support
- 3 Somewhat oppose
- 4 Strongly oppose
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q32 Recently Governor Christie addressed an anti abortion rally expressing his opposition to abortion. Does his speaking at an anti-abortion rally make you feel better about Christie, worse about Christie, or does it have no effect on how you feel?

- 1 Better
- 2 Worse
- 3 No effect
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q33 Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances, or illegal in all circumstances?

- 1 Legal under any circumstance
- 2 Legal only under certain circumstances
- 3 Illegal in all circumstances
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

2011 Legislative Elections

Q34 There will be elections for the state legislature in November. Democrats say they need to win so they can continue to act as a check on Governor Christie's plans. Republicans say they need to win so that the governor's plans for change will not be blocked. Thinking about this, would you prefer that the Democrats or the Republicans win control of the legislature this coming fall?

- 1 Democrats
- 2 Republicans
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

Q35 If the election were today, would you vote to re-elect your current legislators or would you prefer to vote for someone new?

- 1 Current legislators
- 2 Someone new
- 3 Will Not vote (Vol)
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

Demographics

We're almost finished. We have just a few more questions to help us understand our results.

Q36 Thinking of politics, do you consider yourself to be liberal, conservative, or somewhere in between?

- 1 Liberal
- 2 Conservative
- 3 Somewhere in between
- 4 Other [vol]
- 8 Don't know [vol]
- 9 Refused [vol]

Q37 What was the last grade in school you completed? **[CODE TO LIST]**

- 1 8th Grade Or Less
- 2 High School Incomplete (Grades 9, 10 and 11)
- 3 High School Complete (Grade 12)
- 4 Vocational/Technical School
- 5 Some College
- 6 Junior College Graduate (2 Year, Associates Degree)
- 7 4 Year College Graduate (Bachelor's Degree)
- 8 Graduate Work (Masters, Law/Medical School, Etc.)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q38 What is your current employment status? Are you:

- 1 Employed full time
- 2 Employed part time
- 3 Laid off from a job
- 4 A homemaker or stay at home parent

- 5 Retired
- 7 Otherwise Not Employed
- 8 Disabled
- 9 Refused (VOL)

[Only ask if Q38 is 1 or 2]

Q39 Do you commute to New York City for your job?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q40 How many years have you lived in New Jersey, or have you lived here all of your life?

[CODE RESPONSE TO OPTIONS]

- 1 Less than one
- 2 1 to less than 3
- 3 3 to less than 6
- 4 6 to less than 10
- 5 10 to less than 20
- 6 20 to less than 30
- 7 30 or more
- 8 All my life
- 9 Don't Know/Refused (VOL)

Q41 Do you consider yourself to be Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, some other religion, atheist or agnostic?

- 1 Catholic
- 2 Protestant
- 3 Jewish
- 4 Muslim
- 5 Some other religion
- 6 Atheist
- 7 Agnostic
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

Q42 How often do you attend church, synagogue, or other worship services: at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom or never?

- 1 At least once a week
- 2 Almost every week
- 3 About once a month

- 4 Seldom
- 5 Never
- 8 Don't Know [vol]
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q43 Do you or any member of your household belong to labor union?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refuse

[ASK IF Q43 IS 1 ONLY]

Q44 Is the union a public employee union?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refuse

Q45 Are you of Latino or Hispanic origin, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or other Spanish background?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q46 Are you white, black or of Asian origin?

- 1 White
- 2 Black (accept African-American)
- 3 Asian
- 4 Hispanic / Latino [vol]
- 5 OTHER, SPECIFY: _____ [vol]
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q47 Last year, that is in 2010, what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category. **[READ LIST]**

- 1 Less than \$10,000
- 2 10 to under \$20,000
- 3 20 to under \$30,000
- 4 30 to under \$40,000

- 5 40 to under \$50,000
- 6 50 to under \$75,000
- 7 75 to under \$100,000
- 8 100 to under \$150,000
- 9 \$150,000 or more
- 10 Don't know/Refused [VOL. – DO NOT READ]

Q48 Are there any children in your household who are under the age 18 and live with you regularly?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q49 How many adults 18 or older currently live in your household?

[Record number]

- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q50 How many telephone numbers, including all cell phone numbers and non-cell phone numbers (often called landline numbers), does your household currently have?

[Record Open-Ended]

- 98 Don't know/not sure
- 99 Refused (VOL)

Q51 Of those telephone numbers, how many are for cell phones?

[Record Number]

- 98 Don't Know (VOL)
- 99 Refused (VOL)

[IF ANSWER IS ONE OR MORE, ASK Q52]

Q52 Which type of phone do you currently place and receive the most phone calls from?
Is it a cell phone or a land line phone?

- 1 Cell phone
- 2 Landline phone
- 3 Both Equally (vol)
- 8 Don't Know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

Q53 Gender (BY OBSERVATION)

- 1 Male
- 2 Female

Closing and Additional Informed Consent Language

That completes our survey. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. If you have any questions about this survey, you may contact Dr. David Redlawsk (*pronounced RED-losk*) at 732-932-9384, ext. 285. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the administrator of the Rutgers Institutional Review Board at: 732-932-0150, ext. 2104. Have a good day/evening.

Methodology Statement

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll February 24-26, 2011

New Jersey Statewide Poll

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone from February 24-26, 2011 with a scientifically selected random sample of 912 New Jersey adults. Data are weighted to represent known parameters in the New Jersey population, using gender, age, race, and Hispanic ethnicity matching to US Census Bureau data. All results are reported with these weighted data. This telephone poll included 775 landline respondents and 137 cell phone respondents, acquired through random digit dialing. Data reported in this release are from a weighted sample of 811 registered voters drawn from the full sample of adults.

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. The sampling error for 811 registered voters is +/-3.4 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey voters favored a particular position, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.6 and 53.4 percent (50 +/-3.4) had all New Jersey voters 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 by Braun Research, Inc., of Princeton, New Jersey. The questionnaire was developed and all data analysis was completed in house at the Eagleton Institute of Politics Center for Public Interest Polling. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, a non-partisan academic center focused on the study and teaching of politics and the political process.