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## **Clean Elections Districts Are Different**

Compared to voters statewide, voters in the experimental Clean Elections districts were more likely to say they had heard or read about Clean Elections legislation and had heard or read about the legislative races in their district. According to a study undertaken jointly by Rutgers' Eagleton Institute of Politics and Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind Poll for the Clean Elections Citizens' Advisory Committee, 22% of likely voters statewide but 44% of voters in Clean Elections districts heard some or quite a lot about the experimental legislation. In addition, just 37% of likely voters statewide compared to 70% of likely voters in Clean Elections districts reported they heard some or quite a lot about the legislative races in their district. "There was a distinct and positive change this year in voters' awareness of the reform legislation compared to two years ago," said Tim Vercellotti, director of polling at Eagleton.

Voters in Clean Elections districts were also far more likely than other voters around the state to say their legislative races focused on candidates' issue positions rather than on personalities. While 41% of voters in Clean Elections districts said their campaigns stressed issues and 42% said their campaigns stressed personal characteristics, just 25% of voters statewide said their legislative races stressed issues and 45% said the campaign emphasized personality. "A campaign focused on issues rather than on personality is what you hope happens with public financing of elections," said Ingrid Reed, Director of the New Jersey Project at Eagleton.

Likely voters in Clean Election districts reported getting more direct mailings from the campaigns than voters statewide (82%-49%) and reading more articles in the newspaper about their races (74%-56%). However only one in four voters (28%) in the Clean Elections districts could remember receiving any mailings from the state—mailings that were supposed to explain and promote participation in the Clean Elections races.

One thing that did not differ much between statewide surveys and surveys in the Clean Elections districts was voters' trust in the legislature. Only 14% of voters statewide and 20% of voters in the Clean Elections districts said they can trust the state legislature to do what is right most or all of the time. Likewise, 55% of voters statewide and 52% of voters in Clean Elections districts said they are "very concerned" about the influence of campaign contributors on the state legislature after the election. In addition, 39% of likely voters statewide and 41% of voters in Clean Election districts said they are "not confident at all" that public financing can reduce the influence of large donors in the political process. "People's skepticism about the election process shows up in low turnout, low trust in government and high concern about the influence of money," said Peter Woolley, director of the Fairleigh Dickinson University poll. "But public skepticism also applies to public financing as a solution."

Statewide polls were taken Sep. 21-26 and Oct. 22-28 and have a margin of error of +/- 4 percentage points. The Clean Elections districts – the 14<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> legislative districts – were polled Oct. 29 - Nov. 5 and have a margin of error of +/- 5 percentage points. The study was underwritten by the Fund for New Jersey and the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce.

*Tables, questions, and methodology available on the web at:*  
<http://publicmind.fdu.edu> and <http://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu>

## Methods and Tables

All interviews were conducted by telephone by professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing system). Respondents in statewide surveys were identified by random digit dialing (RDD). Respondents in Clean Elections legislative districts were identified through registered voter lists (RVL). Sampling error at the 95% level of confidence (MoE) as well as the interview dates and sample sizes for the various populations are as follows:

Interview Dates:	Population	Sample size	MoE
Oct. 22-28, 2007	likely voters – statewide	519	+/- 4
Oct. 29-Nov. 5, 2007	RVL, likely voters – Clean Elections districts	441	+/- 5
Oct. 29-Nov. 5, 2007	RVL, registered voters – Clean Elections districts	759	+/- 4
Sep. 17-23, 2007	RDD, likely voters, statewide	701	+/- 4
Oct. 20-26, 2005	RDD, likely voters, statewide	355	+/- 5
Oct. 24-31, 2005	RVL, likely voters – Clean Elections districts	347	+/- 5
Oct. 24-31, 2005	RVL, registered voters, Clean Elections districts	500	+/- 4
Sep. 21-26, 2005	RDD, likely voters, statewide,	596	+/- 4

Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from many factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations in the technique and demeanor of interviewers.

	Statewide Sept. 05	Statewide Oct. 05	Statewide Sept. 07	Statewide Oct. 07
Just about always	2%	1 %	1%	1%
Most of the time	20%	15 %	15%	13%
Some of the time	61%	68 %	62%	67%
None of the time	14%	15 %	18%	16%
Don't know/Refused	3%	4 %	4%	3%
N =	596	355	701	519

	Likely voters Clean Elections Districts (10/05)	Likely voters Clean Elections Districts (10-11/07)
Just about always	1 %	1%
Most of the time	18 %	19%
Some of the time	65 %	66%
None of the time	12 %	12%
Don't know/Refused	4 %	3%
N=	347	441

	Statewide Sept. 05	Statewide Oct. 05	Statewide Sept. 07	Statewide Oct. 07
Very concerned	49%	56%	56%	55%
Somewhat concerned	38%	32%	31%	33%
Not concerned at all	12%	11%	10%	8%
Don't know/Refused	2%	1%	3%	4%
N =	596	355	701	519

	Likely voters Clean Elections Districts (10/05)	Likely voters Clean Elections Districts (10-11/07)
Very concerned	52%	52%
Somewhat concerned	37%	40%
Not concerned at all	10%	7%
Don't know/Refused	1%	1%
N	347	441

	Statewide Sept. 05	Statewide Oct. 05	Statewide Sept. 07	Statewide Oct. 07
Quite a lot	4%	7%	4%	7%
Some	14%	13%	16%	15%
Just a little	26%	30%	30%	31%
Nothing at all	56%	50%	49%	47%
Don't know/Refused	1%	1%	1%	1%
N =	596	355	701	519

	Likely voters Clean Elections Districts (10/05)	Likely voters Clean Elections Districts (10-11/07)
Quite a lot	12 %	20%
Some	17 %	24%
Just a little	29 %	26%
Nothing at all	41 %	29%
Don't know/ref.	1 %	1%
N =	347	441

	14 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	24 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	37 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)
Quite a lot	26%	17%	16%
Some	23%	25%	23%
Just a little	26%	31%	22%
Nothing at all	24%	27%	37%
Don't know/ Refused	1%	0%	1%
N =	152	155	134

	14 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	24 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	37 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)
Yes	49%	28%	28%
No	12%	16%	14%
Don't know	39%	56%	58%
Refused	0%	0%	9%
N=	152	155	134
	6 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10/05)	13 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10/05)	
Yes	23 %	18 %	
No	8 %	14 %	
Don't know	69 %	68 %	
Refused	1 %	0 %	
N=	181	166	

	Statewide Sept. 05	Statewide Oct. 05	Statewide Sept. 07	Statewide Oct. 07
Very confident	9%	6%	9%	12%
Somewhat confident	44%	49%	42%	38%
Not confident at all	43%	39%	38%	39%
Don't know/Refused	5%	5%	11%	11%
N =	596	355	701	519

	Likely voters – Clean Elections Districts (10/0b5)	Likely voters – Clean Elections Districts (10-11/07)
Very confident	8%	8%
Somewhat confident	44%	46%
Not confident at all	42%	41%
Don't know/Ref.	6%	4%
N=	347	441

	Statewide Sept. 05	Statewide Oct. 05	Statewide Sept. 07	Statewide Oct. 07
Quite a lot	5%	15%	6%	11%
Some	13%	21%	19%	26%
Just a little	30%	38%	39%	39%
Nothing at all	50%	25%	35%	23%
Don't know/Refused	2%	1%	2%	1%
N =	596	355	701	519

\*2005 wording was "Assembly race"

<b>Table 6B</b> <b>[Asked in the Clean Elections Districts]</b> <b>And what about the [race for state legislature]? How much have you heard or read so far about the [races for state legislature] in the district where you live?*</b>		
	Likely voters – Clean Elections Districts (10/05)	Likely voters – Clean Elections Districts (10-11/07)
Quite a lot	16%	34%
Some	24%	36%
Just a little	37%	20%
Nothing at all	21%	8%
Don't know/Ref.	1%	1%
N =	347	441

\*2005 wording was “Assembly race”

<b>Table 6B</b> <b>[Asked in the Clean Elections Districts]</b> <b>And what about the [race for state legislature]? How much have you heard or read so far about the [races for state legislature] in the district where you live?*</b>			
	14 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	24 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	37 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)
Quite a lot	43%	34%	25%
Some	38%	36%	36%
Just a little	13%	23%	24%
Nothing at all	5%	7%	14%
Don't know/Refused	1%	1%	1%
N=	152	155	134

\*2005 wording was “Assembly race”

<b>Table 7A</b> <b>In the past month, have you received information about [the state legislative races in your district] in any of the following ways:*</b>				
Percent “yes”:	Statewide Sept. 05	Statewide Oct. 05	Statewide Sept. 07	Statewide Oct. 07
Campaign ads in the mail	25%	64%	24%	49%
Radio or TV ads	30%	49%	23%	43%
News or advertising on an Internet web site	11%	13%	10%	14%
An article or articles in the newspaper	43%	58%	42%	56%
N =	596	355	701	519

\*2005 wording was “your Assembly race”

	Likely voters – Clean Elections Districts (10/05)	Likely voters – Clean Elections Districts (10-11/07)
Campaign ads in the mail	60 %	82%
Radio or TV ads	44 %	55%
News or advertising on an Internet web site	8 %	12%
An article or articles in the newspaper	58 %	74%
Clean Elections literature from the state	---	28%
N=	347	441

\*2005 wording was “your Assembly race”

	14 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	24 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	37 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)
Campaign ads in the mail	91%	81%	73%
Radio or TV ads	74%	55%	32%
News or advertising on an Internet web site	13%	13%	10%
An article or articles in the newspaper	78%	74%	69%
Clean Elections literature from the state	35%	24%	26%
N=	152	155	134

\*2005 wording was “your Assembly race”

	Statewide Sept. 05	Statewide Oct. 05	Statewide Sept. 07	Statewide Oct. 07
The candidates’ issue positions	31%	29%	25%	25%
The personal characteristics of the candidates	32%	44%	38%	45%
Don’t know/Refused	38%	28%	37%	29%
N =	596	355	701	519

\*2005 wording was “the Assembly race”

	Likely voters – Clean Elections Districts (10/05)	Likely voters – Clean Elections Districts (10-11/07)
The candidates' issue positions	22 %	41%
The personal characteristics of the candidates	45 %	42%
Don't know/Refused	33 %	17%
N=	347	441

\*2005 wording was “the Assembly race”

	14 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	24 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)	37 <sup>th</sup> District – Likely voters (10-11/07)
The candidates' issue positions	38%	52%	31%
The personal characteristics of the candidates	42%	36%	48%
Don't know/Ref.	20%	12%	20%
N=	152	155	134

\*2005 wording was “the Assembly race”

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