

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**February 25, 2010**

*For more commentary from Professor Redlawsk see*  
<http://eagletonpoll.blogspot.com>

Contact: David Redlawsk, Ph.D.  
Email: [redlawsk@rutgers.edu](mailto:redlawsk@rutgers.edu)  
Phone: (732) 932-9384 ext. 285; (319) 400-1134 (cell)

*Questions and tables are at the end of this release*

## **RUTGERS-EAGLETON POLL FINDS NEW JERSEYANS HAVE LESS FAVORABLE VIEW OF THE TEA PARTY MOVEMENT**

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – New Jersey registered voters have a less favorable impression of the Tea Party movement than other states as shown in recent national polls, according to a new Rutgers-Eagleton poll. While CNN recently reported that more than one-third of American voters support the Tea Party movement, only 27 percent of New Jersey voters have a favorable impression of the group. While it is no surprise that Democrats do not view the movement favorably, New Jersey independent voters are not very supportive as well, with 29 percent expressing a favorable opinion, compared to 49 percent of Republicans and 10 percent of Democrats.

The poll of 953 New Jersey adults was conducted February 19-22, 2010 and has a margin of error of +/-3.3 percentage points. The registered voter sample of 886 has a margin of error of +/- 3.3 percentage points.

“The Tea Party movement has become somewhat of a force in American politics over the last year,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. “Our polling shows that in New Jersey, this force is primarily coming from Republicans, with independents significantly less favorable towards it.”

Not surprisingly, given its origins in opposition to President Barack Obama and the Democratic health care plan, the poll shows that 50 percent of voters who view the Tea Party favorably are Republicans even though Republicans make up only 27 percent of the registered voter sample. Independents comprise 35 percent of tea party supporters, while 15 percent are Democrats.

-more-

### **Many Tea Party supporters not active**

A favorable impression of the Tea Party does not necessarily mean that voters plan to be active in the movement. Only 19 percent of those with a favorable view say they are very likely to volunteer or attend a rally, with another 33 percent saying they are somewhat likely to do so. But nearly half say they are not at all likely to be active in the movement.

“The effect of Tea Party supporters on the political system will be at least partly dependent on how active individual voters are,” said Redlawsk. “Our results suggest that while organizers of Tea Party events can count on some very dedicated supporters, many who say they support the Tea Party do so in name only.”

### **Concerns about Republican Party**

While Tea Party support is strongly related to support for the Republican Party, Tea Party supporters also have their concerns with Republicans. Only 45 percent of those who view the Tea Party favorably also have a favorable view of Republicans in Congress, 53 percent say they mostly trust Republicans generally and 34 percent say Republican actions have made them angry. Even so, this is a much more positive view than those who do not support the Tea Party have of Republicans, with only 17 percent holding a favorable view, 25 percent expressing trust, and 50 percent expressing anger.

“The Tea Party movement in New Jersey is primarily Republican, but not in lockstep with establishment Republicans,” said Redlawsk. “It’s significant that more than one-third express anger at Republicans generally, and less than half view Republicans in Congress favorably. This suggests that Tea Party supporters are more of a risk to incumbent Republicans in a primary than to Democrats, who they would be unlikely to support in a general election whether or not there was a Tea Party movement.”

### **Tea Party supporters more favorable towards two-party system**

Reinforcing the idea that Tea Party supporters are not necessarily looking outside the two-party system, these voters are more likely to favor the existing two-party system than are those who do not view the Tea Party favorably. While about 38 percent of both groups of voters say they would like nonpartisan elections, 39 percent of Tea Party supporters think the current two-party system works reasonably well, compared to only 26 percent of nonsupporters. Only 23 percent of those viewing the Tea Party favorably see a need for more than two political parties.

“The fact that voters who like the Tea Party movement are even more supportive of the two-party system than those who do not should give the media pause in how they represent this group, at least in New Jersey” said Redlawsk. “This is not a breakaway movement as much as it seems like an effort to define the direction of the Republican Party.”

**Demographics of New Jersey Tea Party supporters**

The Tea Party movement in New Jersey is viewed most favorably in the exurban northwest of the state and much less likely to come from urban New Jersey. While 27 percent of all New Jersey voters have a favorable impression of the Tea Party, this rises to 31 percent of exurban residents, compared to only 21 percent of urban dwellers. Very few blacks (only 5 percent) have a favorable impression of the Tea Party movement, but more than half (54 percent) of the very small sample of Asian voters express a favorable view, compared to 29 percent of all whites and 24 percent of Latino voters. Tea Party supporters are more likely to be male, with 31 percent of men favorable, compared to 24 percent of women. Higher income also defines those who view the Tea Party movement favorably. While only 18 percent of voters making less than \$50,000 have a favorable view, 30 percent of those making more than \$50,000 do.

**Questions and Tables begin on the next page**

**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll February 19-22, 2010  
Questions and Tables**

The questions covered in the release of February 25, 2010 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. All percentages are of New Jersey registered voters.

**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]**

	The Tea Party movement	Democrats in Congress	Republicans in Congress
Favorable	27%	35%	25%
Unfavorable	29%	42%	48%
No Opinion	34%	22%	26%
Don't Know	10%	1%	1%
N=	885	885	885

Impression of Tea Party Movement	<u>Party ID</u>			<u>Age</u>				<u>Gender</u>	
	Dem	Rep	Ind	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	Male	Fem
Favorable	10%	49%	29%	27%	23%	32%	30%	31%	23%
Not Favorable	90%	51%	71%	73%	77%	68%	71%	70%	77%
<i>Unfavorable</i>	<i>45%</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>28%</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>29%</i>
<i>No Opinion</i>	<i>36%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>37%</i>	<i>44%</i>	<i>40%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>37%</i>
<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>11%</i>
N=	351	240	285	115	392	201	173	419	466

*New Jersey Tea Party Support  
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll*

-5-

<b>Impression of Tea Party Movement</b>	<u>Race</u>				<u>Income</u>			
	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Latino</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>&lt; 50K</b>	<b>50K – &lt; 100K</b>	<b>100K- &lt; 150K</b>	<b>150K +</b>
Favorable	54%	5%	24%	29%	18%	33%	25%	32%
Not Favorable	46%	95%	77%	71%	82%	67%	75%	68%
<i>Unfavorable</i>	20%	51%	28%	27%	28%	25%	38%	30%
<i>No Opinion</i>	22%	39%	46%	33%	38%	35%	35%	33%
<i>Don't Know</i>	4%	6%	2%	12%	16%	7%	3%	5%
N=	46	109	81	611	286	240	144	99

<b>Impression of Tea Party Movement</b>	<u>Education</u>				<u>Employment Status</u>			
	<b>HS or Less</b>	<b>Some College/ AA</b>	<b>4-year Degree</b>	<b>Grad School</b>	<b>Full Time</b>	<b>Part Time</b>	<b>Retired</b>	<b>Not Employed</b>
Favorable	26%	30%	26%	24%	26%	28%	30%	24%
Not Favorable	74%	70%	74%	76%	74%	72%	70%	76%
<i>Unfavorable</i>	23%	25%	35%	47%	33%	23%	30%	25%
<i>No Opinion</i>	35%	38%	34%	27%	35%	37%	24%	43%
<i>Don't Know</i>	16%	7%	6%	3%	7%	12%	17%	8%
N=	324	239	199	123	398	109	174	198

<b>Impression of Tea Party Movement</b>	<u>Religion</u>				<u>Evangelical</u>	
	<b>Cath</b>	<b>Prot</b>	<b>Jewish</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Favorable	28%	28%	13%	22%	35%	22%
Not Favorable	72%	72%	87%	78%	65%	78%
<i>Unfavorable</i>	26%	27%	44%	43%	21%	31%
<i>No Opinion</i>	36%	36%	28%	29%	35%	34%
<i>Don't Know</i>	11%	10%	15%	6%	9%	10%
N=	420	278	39	125	161	718

<b>Impression of Tea Party Movement</b>	<u>Region</u>			<b>Philly</b>	
	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Suburban</b>	<b>Exurban</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Shore</b>
Favorable	21%	27%	35%	24%	28%
Not Favorable	79%	73%	65%	76%	72%
<i>Unfavorable</i>	38%	32%	25%	25%	25%
<i>No Opinion</i>	29%	34%	29%	44%	36%
<i>Don't Know</i>	12%	8%	10%	8%	11%
N=	138	281	134	170	162

**[SPLIT SAMPLE, RANDOM HALF ASSIGNED TO EITHER A OR B]  
[VERSION A]**

**How likely are you to support the Tea Party Movement by doing things like volunteering or attending a rally? Is it very likely, somewhat likely, or not at all likely?**

	RV	Tea Party Favorable	All others
Very Likely	8%	19%	3%
Somewhat Likely	17%	33%	10%
Not at all likely	71%	45%	83%
Don't Know	3%	2%	4%
N=	467	142	325

**[VERSION B]**

**Regardless of your party affiliation, do you consider yourself a supporter of the tea party movement, or not?**

	RV	Tea Party Favorable	All others
Yes	27%	82%	10%
No	53%	13%	65%
Don't Know	20%	5%	25%
N=	417	96	321

**[SPLIT SAMPLE, RANDOM HALF ASSIGNED TO EITHER A OR B]  
[VERSION A]**

**Next, I'd like to ask you if you mostly trust the following groups and people. First, do you mostly trust [insert], yes or no? Next...**

**[ROTATE]**

Yes	RV	Tea Party Favorable	All Others
Trust Tea Party	25%	76%	8%
Trust Republicans	32%	53%	23%
Trust Democrats	47%	28%	54%
N=	433	111	321

**[VERSION B]**

**Next, I'd like to ask you if the actions of the following groups and people make you feel angry. First, does/do) [insert] make you angry, yes or no? Next...**

**[ROTATE]**

Yes	RV	Tea Party Favorable	All Others
Tea Party makes Angry	26%	4%	34%
Republicans make Angry	46%	34%	50%
Democrats make Angry	42%	66%	32%
N=	453	126	327

[ALL]

**I'm going to read three statements about political parties, and I'd like you to say which ONE you agree with MOST:**

[ROTATE]

	RV	Tea Party Favorable	All Others
The current two-party system of Democrats and Republicans works reasonably well.	30%	39%	26%
We need more than two political parties to give us more choice.	29%	23%	31%
We need elections where candidates run as individuals, without any party labels at all.	38%	37%	38%
Don't Know (Vol)	3%	0%	5%
N=	883	235	648

### **Rutgers-Eagleton Poll February 19-22, 2010**

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted from February 19-22, 2010 with a scientifically selected random sample of 953 New Jersey adults yielding 886 registered voters. Data are weighted to represent known parameters in the New Jersey population, including gender, age, race, education, and Hispanic ethnicity. 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. The sampling error for a sample of 953 adults is +/-3.2 points, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey adults favored a particular position, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 45.9 and 54.1 percent (50 + 3.3) had all New Jersey adults 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.

<b>Weighted Sample Characteristics (n=953 adults)</b>			
40% Dem	48% Male	16% 18-29	69% White
34% Independent	52% Female	43% 30-49	13% Black
26% Republican		22% 55-64	10% Hispanic
		19% 65+	5% Asian
			3% Other/Multiple