

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**APRIL 8, 2011**

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** ATTENTION POLITICAL EDITORS, Rutgers-Eagleton Poll Director David Redlawsk may be contacted at 319-400-1134, 732-932-9384, ext. 285, or [redlawsk@rutgers.edu](mailto:redlawsk@rutgers.edu). Visit <http://eagletonpoll.blogspot.com/> for more questions and tables.

**NEW JERSEY VOTERS REMAIN SPLIT ON GOV. CHRISTIE;  
IMPRESSIONS OF OBAMA SIGNIFICANTLY MORE POSITIVE**

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J – After becoming less positive following introduction of the budget, New Jersey voters remain split on their impression of Gov. Chris Christie, according to a new Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. While 44 percent of registered voters give the governor a favorable rating, 42 percent view him unfavorably and 14 percent have no opinion. In February, 46 percent viewed the governor favorably and 44 percent unfavorably.

“We’re seeing essentially the same numbers we did last month. Christie’s favorability rating has not rebounded to prebudget address numbers.” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. “In December, positive views were 10 points higher than negative. Following the budget address, negatives went up and positives went down, where they have stayed.”

President Barack Obama’s favorability rating stands at 55 percent, with 32 percent viewing him unfavorably and 13 percent reporting no opinion. Obama’s position has not changed much either from the 57 percent to 36 percent recorded in late February.

Results are from a Rutgers-Eagleton Poll of 773 registered voters conducted among both landline and cell phone households from March 28 to April 4, with a margin of error for the full sample of +/- 3.5 percentage points.

**Christie job performance grade improves**

Job performance ratings for Gov. Christie remain polarized, but improved, based on a revised question introduced by the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll in February. To validate the new question, a random half of voters was asked to assign Gov. Christie a job performance letter grade from A to F. The other half used the traditional rating scale of “excellent” to “poor.” Half samples have a margin of error of +/- 4.9 percentage points.

More of those grading Gov. Christie give him an “A” (14 percent) or “B” (32 percent) than a “D” (14 percent) or “F” (21 percent); 20 percent place him in the middle at “C”. This 46 percent positive to 35 percent negative is an improvement from the 38 (A, B) to 34 percent (D, F) rating Christie received in February.

Voters asked the traditional question seem more negative about the governor: 16 percent rate him “excellent” and 26 percent “good,” for a 42 percent positive rating. Negative ratings are higher, with 30 percent “fair” and 27 percent “poor,” totaling 57 percent negative. These ratings show little change from February.

“This shows how careful we must be in interpreting what voters are telling us,” said Redlawsk. “Traditionally we have viewed a ‘fair’ rating as bad, making it look like Christie has negative job performance ratings, but (often) positive favorability ratings. Our revised question – using a grading scale everyone understands – shows something different. While “A” and “B” are a good match for “excellent” and “good”, many who say “fair” in one version would give a “C” if they could, which is not a failing grade.”

Redlawsk noted that this changes the interpretation from “New Jerseyans are moderately favorable toward Gov Christie, but unhappy with his job performance” to “voters are moderately favorable both toward Christie himself and the job he is doing” thus creating more consistency.

Much of the polarization in Gov. Christie’s job performance grade is tied to ideology. Liberals are clearly negative about the governor while conservatives are more split than many might expect. About one-third of liberals give the governor an “F” while conservatives (41 percent) and moderates (34 percent) are most likely to give Christie a “B.” Only 27 percent of conservatives give the governor an “A,” 17 percent give a “C” and 15 percent give grades of “D” or “F”.

Moderates are most polarized. While 46 percent give Christie an “A” or “B”, 31 percent give him a “D” or “F” and 22 percent assign a “C”. Conservatives and Liberals are less split: 68 percent of conservatives assign an “A” or “B” and 60 percent of liberals give a “D” or “F.”

“There is little polarization within ideologues,” said Redlawsk. “Liberals rate the governor quite low, while conservatives give him good – though not great – grades. But moderates really are split, though on balance currently more positive than negative.”

### **Obama job performance grade mostly unchanged**

President Obama’s job performance grade has remained mostly stagnant since late February. Among voters grading the president’s job performance, 14 percent give him an “A,” 32 percent a “B,” 27 percent a “C,” 16 percent a “D,” and 10 percent an “F.” Obama’s 46 percent positive (A, B) and 26 percent negative (D, F) grades compare to 43 percent positive and 26 percent negative in February.

Of voters responding to the standard question, 13 percent say Obama is doing an “excellent” job as president, compared to 11% in February. Thirty-four percent say “good” (38 percent in February) while 31 percent say “fair”—the same as February. Another 22 percent describe Obama’s job performance as “poor,” up two points from February.

On the grading scale, 60 percent of conservatives give Obama a grade of “D” or “F,” while 22 percent of moderates and 4 percent of liberals concur. Liberals are most likely to give the President a grade of “B” (57

percent), with another 20 percent giving him an “A”. Few conservatives give the president marks of “A” or “B” (8 percent total), but 48 percent of moderates do.

### **New Jerseyans Support Libya Action**

Voters were asked if they supported or opposed Obama’s decision to use military attacks to enforce the Libyan no-fly zone: 49 percent support the decision, 38 percent oppose it, and 13 percent are unsure. Support comes men (55 percent vs. 44 percent of women), Democrats (56 percent support vs. 47 percent of Republicans and 45 percent of Independents), and liberals (57 percent support, compared to 47 percent from conservatives and 48 percent from moderates.) Among those who feel favorable toward Obama, 58 percent support the decision, while 41 percent of those unfavorable toward him also support the attacks.

“While support for the Libyan attacks is not overwhelming, the decision does not appear to have hurt Obama’s favorability or job performance rating,” said Redlawsk. “What’s interesting is that relatively large shares of those who otherwise don’t like the president are supportive of this particular action on his part.”

### **Sen. Menendez still relatively unknown, but more favorable than unfavorable**

Fewer voters are willing to give an impression of Sen. Robert Menendez now than in late February when 38 percent had no opinion. In the new poll, 32 percent report favorable impressions and 24 percent unfavorable, but 44 percent have no opinion about the Senator. In February, 34 percent were favorable and 28 percent unfavorable.

Placed in context with Sen. Frank Lautenberg, New Jersey voters are relatively non-opinionated about senators. While 38 percent of New Jerseyans have a favorable impression of Lautenberg and 28 percent have an unfavorable view, 34 percent have no opinion.

Democrats are most likely to view Menendez favorably, with 52 percent favorable. Only 10 percent of Republicans are favorable, while 25 percent of independents agree. Forty-five percent of Republicans, 8 percent of Democrats, and 28 percent of independents view Menendez unfavorably. More independent voters (46 percent) report having no opinion of Menendez than Democrats (40 percent) and Republicans (44 percent).

“While Sen. Menendez continues to toil in relative anonymity for a U.S. Senator, his overall rating among those who venture an opinion remains positive, and not much less so that Sen. Lautenberg,” said Redlawsk. “Even so, with 2012 on the horizon, Sen. Menendez seems to have some work cut out to re-introduce himself to New Jersey voters. In particular, independents are slightly negative at this time. To win he will need to improve his standing among these voters.”

**QUESTIONS AND TABLES FOLLOW ON THE NEXT PAGE**

**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll March 28 – April 4, 2011  
Questions and Tables**

The questions covered in the release of April 8, 2011 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are Registered Voters.

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**[SPLIT BALLOT. RANDOM HALF OF RESPONDENTS GIVEN LETTER GRADE (A-F) VERSION 1 OF JOB QUESTION; REMAINING GIVEN VERSION 2, “EXCELLENT...POOR” NO RESPONDENT GOT BOTH VERSIONS]**

**[VERSION 1 – LETTER GRADE VERSION]**

**Q. 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.**

	Apr 2011 RV	Trend Feb 2011 RV
A	14%	11%
B	32%	32%
C	27%	30%
D	16%	14%
F	10%	12%
DK	1%	1%
N=	390	416

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
A	28%	9%	3%	20%	16%	2%
B	45%	36%	7%	57%	32%	6%
C	21%	32%	30%	17%	31%	29%
D	3%	12%	39%	3%	16%	30%
F	2%	11%	21%	1%	6%	30%
N=	124	160	99	81	222	81

	Employment			Education				
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
A	9%	10%	17%	25%	21%	20%	8%	9%
B	33%	32%	26%	35%	36%	17%	27%	47%
C	28%	26%	28%	24%	19%	35%	33%	21%
D	22%	9%	14%	9%	16%	17%	16%	15%
F	8%	20%	14%	7%	8%	11%	15%	7%
N=	170	50	86	79	82	100	103	106

**Christie/Obama Ratings April 2011**  
**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
A	14%	9%	17%	16%	24%	14%	4%	9%	12%	16%
B	44%	30%	26%	29%	33%	37%	23%	39%	34%	29%
C	21%	29%	32%	25%	17%	33%	32%	24%	23%	32%
D	12%	20%	17%	14%	14%	10%	32%	10%	18%	14%
F	8%	11%	9%	16%	9%	6%	9%	17%	11%	10%
N=	90	122	92	79	101	86	74	63	201	189

**[EXCELLENT/POOR SCALE – VERSION 2]**

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

	Apr 2011 RV	Trend				Sept 2010 RV
		Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Adults	Dec 2010 Voters	Oct 2010 Likely Voters	
Excellent	13%	11%	9%	9%	14%	22%
Good	34%	38%	29%	28%	25%	32%
Fair	31%	31%	34%	32%	30%	23%
Poor	22%	20%	27%	30%	29%	22%
DK	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%
N=	378	395	904	664	552	909

	Party ID				Ideology	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Excellent	22%	6%	1%	24%	10%	3%
Good	54%	28%	8%	45%	38%	11%
Fair	23%	39%	35%	27%	36%	20%
Poor	2%	26%	56%	4%	15%	66%
N=	151	142	74	80	219	71

	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Excellent	6%	17%	17%	23%	20%	15%	9%	11%
Good	32%	47%	31%	38%	32%	31%	44%	29%
Fair	40%	24%	21%	21%	20%	37%	26%	38%
Poor	22%	8%	31%	18%	28%	16%	22%	22%
N=	181	37	86	68	76	86	104	112

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Excellent	16%	9%	14%	15%	22%	13%	7%	4%	12%	14%
Good	47%	31%	36%	30%	39%	32%	43%	25%	31%	37%
Fair	28%	41%	25%	23%	23%	37%	26%	48%	33%	29%
Poor	9%	18%	25%	32%	16%	17%	24%	23%	24%	20%
N=	37	146	118	70	75	83	64	70	162	216

**[LETTER GRADE VERSION 1]**

**Q. 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.**

	Apr 2011 RV	Trend Feb 2011 RV
A	14%	14%
B	32%	24%
C	20%	26%
D	14%	15%
F	21%	19%
DK	0%	2%
N=	390	416

	Party ID				Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv	
A	3%	12%	31%	4%	12%	27%	
B	16%	35%	44%	19%	34%	41%	
C	22%	23%	13%	17%	22%	17%	
D	26%	10%	4%	28%	13%	2%	
F	32%	19%	8%	32%	18%	13%	
N=	124	161	99	81	223	81	

	Employment			Education					
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	
A	14%	9%	23%	7%	10%	13%	22%	10%	
B	38%	29%	25%	27%	22%	34%	32%	37%	
C	17%	15%	18%	32%	26%	17%	20%	18%	
D	13%	20%	9%	14%	15%	15%	12%	13%	
F	18%	27%	24%	20%	28%	21%	14%	21%	
N=	170	51	86	79	82	100	103	106	

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
A	6%	13%	19%	19%	7%	12%	16%	23%	16%	12%
B	25%	41%	33%	23%	16%	34%	42%	41%	30%	33%
C	18%	19%	22%	19%	31%	15%	16%	18%	16%	25%
D	20%	15%	9%	12%	15%	17%	13%	12%	16%	11%
F	32%	13%	17%	27%	31%	22%	13%	7%	22%	20%
N=	90	122	93	79	101	86	74	63	201	190

**[EXCELLENT/POOR SCALE – VERSION 2]**

**Q. 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?**

	Apr 2011 RV	Trend					
		Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Adults	Dec 2010 Voters	Oct 2010 RV	Sept 2010 RV	Aug 2010 RV
Excellent	16%	14%	17%	21%	16%	12%	22%
Good	26%	28%	22%	23%	29%	27%	23%
Fair	30%	30%	26%	23%	24%	33%	27%
Poor	27%	26%	28%	29%	28%	25%	25%
DK	1%	2%	6%	6%	3%	3%	3%
N=	377	395	900	660	876	750	911

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Excellent	3%	15%	39%	0%	13%	38%
Good	17%	31%	38%	18%	27%	38%
Fair	41%	28%	12%	32%	35%	14%
Poor	39%	26%	9%	50%	25%	8%
N=	150	142	74	80	218	71

	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Excellent	14%	2%	20%	23%	17%	19%	12%	15%
Good	27%	21%	31%	21%	20%	23%	41%	19%
Fair	36%	42%	23%	20%	30%	27%	29%	34%
Poor	23%	35%	24%	35%	29%	31%	18%	31%
N=	181	37	85	68	74	86	104	112

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Excellent	15%	14%	16%	17%	18%	7%	9%	25%	18%	14%
Good	23%	20%	29%	40%	20%	25%	27%	25%	34%	21%
Fair	24%	42%	21%	24%	28%	35%	37%	29%	26%	33%
Poor	39%	25%	34%	17%	33%	32%	26%	21%	22%	31%
N=	37	146	118	69	74	83	64	70	162	215

**[ALL RESPONDENTS RECEIVED REMAINING QUESTIONS]**

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

	Apr 2011 RV	Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Adults	Oct 2010 Likely Voters	Sept 2010 RV	Sept 2010 LV	Aug 2010 RV
Right Direction	42%	45%	38%	30%	41%	41%	37%
Wrong Track	49%	48%	52%	65%	50%	50%	50%
DK	9%	7%	9%	4%	9%	8%	12%
N=	759	808	902	546	830	656	750

**Q. 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]**

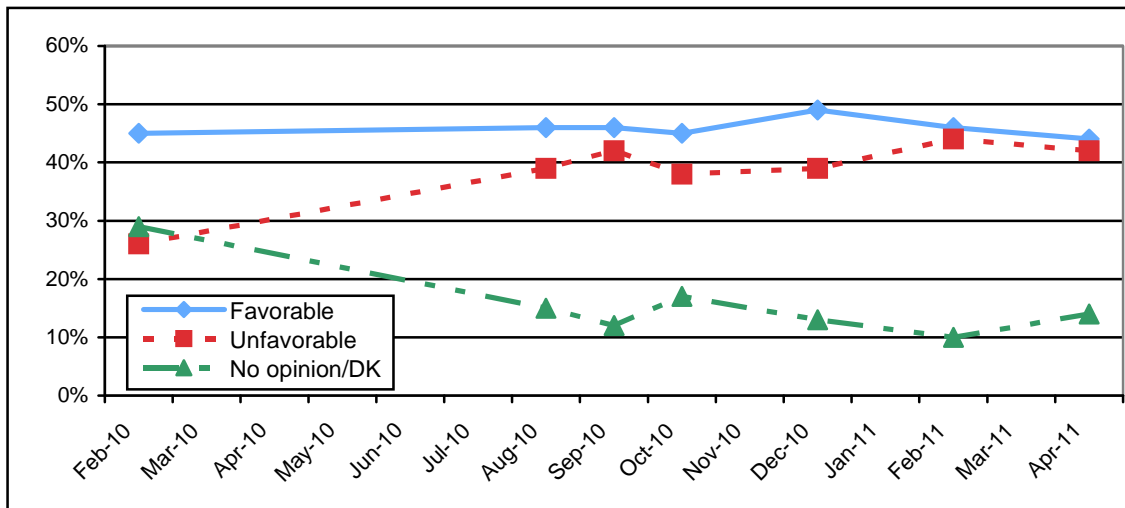
**Favorability Summary, April 2011 [Respondent received questions in random order]**

	President Obama	Governor Christie	Sen Lautenberg	Sen Menendez	Dems in Trenton	Reps in Trenton	Tea Party
Favorable	55%	44%	38%	32%	39%	32%	21%
Unfavorable	32%	42%	28%	24%	33%	34%	47%
No opinion/DK	13%	14%	34%	44%	29%	34%	32%
N=	769	768	768	766	765	766	768

**Governor Chris Christie**

	Apr 2011 RV	Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Voters	Oct 2010 RV	Sept 2010 RV	Aug 2010 RV	Feb 2010 RV
Favorable	44%	46%	49%	45%	46%	46%	45%
Unfavorable	42%	44%	39%	38%	42%	39%	26%
No Opinion/DK	14%	10%	13%	17%	12%	15%	29%
N=	769	810	665	879	911	751	881

**Christie Favorability Trends**





*Christie/Obama Ratings April 2011  
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll*

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Favorable	18%	49%	79%	13%	45%	76%
Unfavorable	65%	35%	16%	76%	37%	17%
No Opin/DK	16%	16%	5%	11%	17%	7%
N=	18%	49%	79%	13%	45%	76%

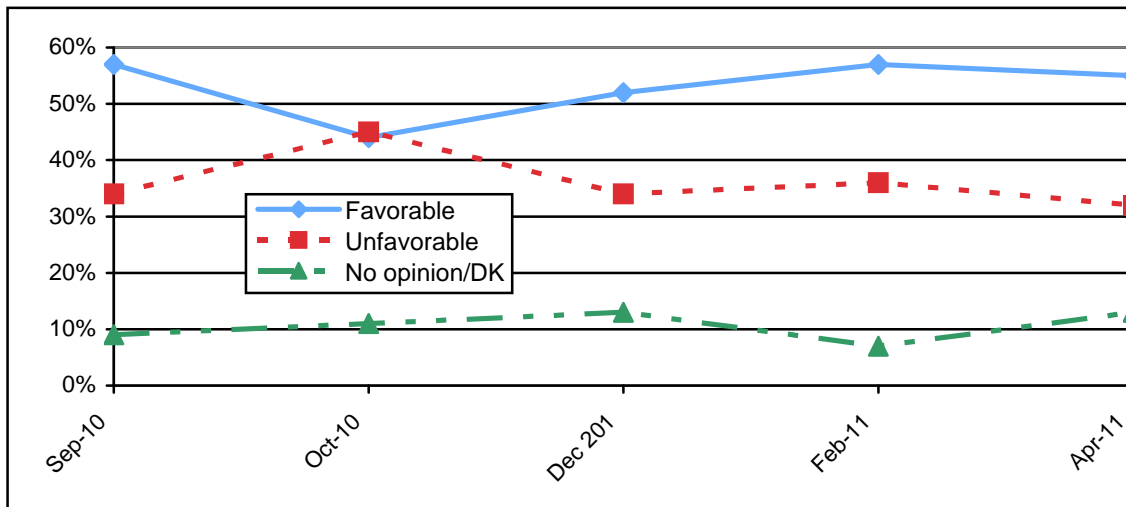
	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Favorable	48%	31%	52%	33%	36%	41%	53%	44%
Unfavorable	40%	50%	39%	47%	43%	43%	38%	43%
No Opin/DK	13%	19%	9%	21%	21%	16%	9%	13%
N=	352	88	172	147	157	185	209	216

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K-<100K	100K-<150K	150K+	Male	Female
Favorable	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	32%	34%	53%	67%	48%	40%
Unfavorable	22%	45%	51%	52%	51%	47%	41%	27%	40%	44%
No Opin/DK	54%	39%	41%	38%	18%	18%	6%	7%	12%	15%
N=	24%	16%	7%	9%	176	170	138	132	361	407

**President Barack Obama**

	Apr 2011 RV	Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Adults	Oct 2010 RV	Sep 2010 RV
Favorable	55%	57%	52%	44%	57%
Unfavorable	32%	36%	34%	45%	34%
DK/No opinion	13%	7%	13%	11%	9%
N=	769	810	904	548	909

**Obama Favorability Trends**



*Christie/Obama Ratings April 2011  
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll*

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Favorable	88%	46%	16%	88%	56%	14%
Unfavorable	4%	35%	75%	5%	28%	75%
DK	7%	19%	10%	7%	17%	11%
N=	275	303	172	161	441	152

	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Favorable	52%	56%	53%	63%	60%	52%	49%	59%
Unfavorable	34%	24%	39%	24%	29%	31%	39%	28%
DK	14%	19%	8%	13%	11%	17%	12%	12%
N=	351	89	173	147	158	184	210	217

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K-<100K	100K-<150K	150K+	Male	Female
Favorable	57%	52%	56%	54%	61%	62%	46%	43%	53%	56%
Unfavorable	20%	33%	34%	39%	26%	26%	41%	40%	37%	28%
DK	22%	15%	9%	7%	13%	11%	13%	17%	10%	16%
N=	127	270	209	150	176	171	138	132	361	409

**Senator Robert Menendez**

	Apr 2011 RV	Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Voters
Favorable	32%	34%	29%
Unfavorable	24%	28%	27%
No Opin/DK	44%	38%	44%
N=	766	810	664

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Favorable	52%	25%	10%	59%	28%	14%
Unfavorable	8%	28%	45%	12%	20%	50%
No Opin/DK	40%	46%	44%	29%	52%	37%
N=	274	302	173	161	439	153

	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Favorable	31%	31%	38%	26%	34%	28%	29%	36%
Unfavorable	28%	12%	29%	17%	15%	23%	28%	28%
No Opin/DK	40%	57%	33%	56%	51%	50%	43%	36%
N=	349	89	171	147	155	185	208	217

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K-<100K	100K-<150K	150K+	Male	Female
Favorable	34%	27%	31%	39%	40%	39%	23%	18%	34%	30%
Unfavorable	11%	25%	28%	29%	13%	24%	30%	36%	31%	18%
DK	55%	48%	40%	32%	48%	37%	47%	46%	35%	52%
N=	127	268	209	148	176	167	138	132	361	405

**Q. Now, on a DIFFERENT ISSUE, do you support or oppose President Obama's decision to use military attacks to enforce the Libyan no-fly zone?**

Support	49%
Oppose	38%
Don't Know	13%
N=	755

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv	Male	Female
Support	56%	45%	47%	57%	48%	47%	55%	44%
Oppose	31%	43%	41%	31%	40%	40%	38%	38%
Don't Know	13%	12%	12%	12%	11%	14%	7%	18%
N=	268	300	170	160	431	148	358	396

	Pres. Obama Impression	
	Fav	Unfav
Support	58%	41%
Oppose	28%	48%
Don't Know	14%	11%
N=	409	245

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**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll March 28-April 4, 2011**  
New Jersey Statewide Registered Voters Poll

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone from March 28 - April 4, 2011 with a scientifically selected random sample of 773 New Jersey registered voters. 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 692 landline respondents and 81 cell phone respondents, acquired through random digit dialing.

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 773 registered voters is +/-3.5 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 46.5 and 53.5 percent (50 +/-3.5) 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 the Eagleton Institute of Politics Center for Public Interest Polling at Rutgers University using an in-house CATI system. The questionnaire was developed and all data analysis was 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 focused on the study and teaching of politics and the political process.

<b>Weighted Sample Characteristics</b>			
<b>773 New Jersey Registered Voters</b>			
36% Democrat	47% Male	17% 18-29	66% White
42% Independent	53% Female	36% 30-49	13% Black
22% Republican		28% 50-64	10% Hispanic
		19% 65+	7% Asian
			4% Other/Multiracial