

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE AUGUST 19, 2011**

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**STEEP DROP FOR OBAMA IN NEW JERSEY;  
CHRISTIE SUPPORT MORE STABLE,  
BUT PLURALITY WOULD NOT VOTE TO REELECT HIM**

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J – New Jersey voters have become noticeably less positive about President Barack Obama, according to a new Rutgers-Eagleton Poll released today. Obama’s favorable rating has dropped to 44 percent, down 11 points from an April 2011 Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, while another 44 percent view him unfavorably, up 12 points.

Over the same period, support for Gov. Chris Christie is mostly unchanged, at 45 percent favorable and 47 percent unfavorable, compared to 44 percent to 42 percent four months ago. Even so, this is the first Rutgers-Eagleton Poll to show feelings about Christie more negative than positive, though the difference is within the margin of error for the poll. Asked if they would vote to re-elect Gov. Christie or prefer someone else, 42 percent say they would vote for Christie, while 49 percent would support someone else.

“The debt ceiling mess in Washington, along with the general economic malaise, has clearly taken its toll on how Garden Staters view the President,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. “Particularly significant are drops among both independents and Democrats. After having a mostly positive view of Obama, independents have shifted distinctly negative, while Democrats have become far less positive as well. Given his easy win in New Jersey in 2008, these results are even more striking. At the same time, Gov. Christie’s prospects are also tough.”

Results are from a Rutgers-Eagleton Poll of 615 registered voters conducted among both landline and cell phone households from August 9 - 15, with a margin of error for the full sample of +/- 3.9 percentage points.

**White Voters’ Support for Obama Weak**

Much of the change in Obama’s favorability stems from white voters, who have become very negative toward the president. More than half of whites (54 percent) view Obama unfavorably, while

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only 34 percent have a favorable view. Blacks remain strongly supportive, but even that support has slipped a few points, to 78 percent favorable and 12 percent unfavorable. Obama has lost support from both the middle and the left, with moderates evenly split 43 percent to 41 percent (compared to 58 percent favorable in April) and liberal support dropping to 71 percent favorable from 88 percent in April.

“Obama’s efforts to compromise appear to have not helped him in New Jersey,” said Redlawsk. “Conservatives and Republicans still overwhelmingly dislike him, while moderates have not been impressed, and liberals are getting frustrated. The result is an across-the-board decline. These numbers also certainly reflect the anger and frustration voters have with Washington. It’s worth noting that Congress’s rating is now only 14 percent favorable and 73 percent unfavorable in the Garden State.”

### **Obama Job Performance Grade Dips**

President Obama’s job performance grade has also declined significantly over the summer. Only 8 percent of voters now give him an A (compared to 14 percent in April) and 25 percent assign a B (32 percent in April.) Negative grades have increased, with 19 percent now grading him F, compared to 10 percent in April, and 18 percent giving him a D, up 2 points. Overall, Obama gets positive grades from 33 percent of voters, down 13 points, and negative grades from 37 percent, up 11 points. Another 30 percent assign him a grade of C, compared to 27 percent in April.

Conservative voters mostly give Obama a D or F, which is no surprise. What should worry the President is that liberal voters are much less positive than they were only a few months ago. Among liberals the most popular grade now is a C at 47 percent. In April liberals were more likely to give Obama a B, at 57 percent, but now only one-third still give him a B. Far fewer liberals (12 percent) give him an A than in April, when 20 percent did.

Moderate support for Obama’s job performance has also declined, with only one-third assigning an A or B, compared to 48 percent in April. Moderates are evenly split, with another third giving a grade of C and 32 percent assigning a D or F.

“While not entirely disastrous yet, the big picture for the President does not look good in New Jersey,” said Redlawsk. “He is losing support among his base while failing to make any inroads with more conservative voters. As long as the economy remains weak and voters so unsettled, the re-election campaign may be a challenge, even here.”

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### **Christie Favorability Rating Shows Little Movement**

The main story about Gov. Christie's support in New Jersey is that there has been little change. While the new results show a small increase in unfavorability, this change maintains the same small range the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll has reported throughout 2011. Independents are split, 47 percent favorable to 45 percent unfavorable, while 82 percent of Republicans are positive and 72 percent of Democrats are negative. Independents and Democrats have become more unfavorable toward the governor, while Republicans support has actually increased somewhat.

Union households and Blacks remain negative about Gov. Christie, with only 32 percent of public employee union households expressing a favorable impression, while 66 percent are unfavorable. While whites have a favorable impression, 53 percent to 40 percent, only 12 percent of Blacks are favorable, with 77 percent unfavorable.

For the most part, New Jersey's feelings about the Governor track with voters' views of the state as a whole, which have also shown little change. Asked if the state is currently going in the right direction, 43 percent agree, while 51 percent say the state is on the wrong track. This is little changed from April's 42 percent right direction, 49 percent wrong track numbers.

### **Christie Job Performance Grade Declines; Remains Highly Polarized**

Job performance grades for Gov. Christie remain highly polarized while declining over the past four months. Fewer than 1 in 5 voters gives him a middle grade of C, while 38 percent assign a grade of A (13 percent) or B (25 percent) and 43 percent give a D (24 percent) or F (19 percent). In an April Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, Christie received an A or B from 46 percent of voters, while only 35 percent assigned a D or F to his job performance. The new grades represent a movement of 8 points toward the negative for the Governor over the summer.

Moderates grade Gov. Christie much less favorably than they did four months ago. While 46 percent gave Christie an A or B in April, only 26 percent do so now, while 44 percent now give him a D or F, compared to only 31 percent in April. Liberals, never great fans of the governor, are even less positive now, with 11 percent grading him A or B (including only 1 percent A.) This is down by half from April, when 23 percent of liberals gave strong grades to Christie. Conservative voters remain supportive of Christie's job performance, but most (43 percent) give him a B rather than an A (24 percent).

"The overall story for Gov. Christie is that views of him personally have changed little, with voters remaining split between favorable and unfavorable," said Redlawsk. "But the last four months

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have not been as kind to his job performance grade, which has become more polarized and negative as the year has gone on. At least he can take solace in knowing the president has fallen harder. Where he once trailed President Obama's ratings, both leaders are now suffering equally in terms of how voters view them."

### **At the Moment New Jersey Voters Prefer Someone Else in 2013**

In a very early read on the 2013 New Jersey gubernatorial election, voters were asked whether, if the election were today, they would vote for Gov. Christie or someone else. Only 42 percent say they would vote for the Governor today, while 49 percent prefer someone else. As befits Christie's strong polarizing effect, only 7 percent are unsure.

Among those who voted for Christie in 2009, 78 percent say they would re-elect him, while 13 percent prefer someone else. More than 80 percent of 2009's Corzine voters say they want someone other than Christie in 2013, while 12 percent say they would vote for the governor. Christie's strongest support comes from voters over 65, who prefer him by 12 points, 50 percent to 38 percent. Only 32 percent of voters under 30 would vote for Christie, and 57 percent want someone else. Men are evenly split, with 46 percent supporting Christie and 45 percent preferring another candidate. Women, however, are strongly opposed to Christie; only 37 percent say they would vote for him. While 77 percent of Democrats want someone else and 79 percent of Republicans would vote for Christie, independents are split, with 45 percent saying they would re-elect him and 46 percent saying they would opt for someone else.

"We should take these results with a grain of salt, of course," said Redlawsk. "While no incumbent wants voters preferring to throw them out of office, the election is more than 2 years away. It's one thing for voters to say they want someone else, but entirely another to support a specific alternative. Without a clear Democratic alternative, voters don't have to make a real choice, so they can express concern now even if, in the end, they might vote for the governor. Still, these numbers give some sense of the uncertainty of the current political environment."

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**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll August 9-15, 2011**  
**Questions and Tables**

The questions covered in this release of August 19, 2011 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are Registered Voters.

**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?**

*Trend...*

	Aug 11 RV	Apr 11 RV	Feb 11 RV	Dec 10 Adult	Oct 10 LV	Sep 10 RV	Sep 10 LV	Aug10 RV
Right Direction	43%	42%	45%	38%	30%	41%	41%	37%
Wrong Track	51%	49%	48%	52%	65%	50%	50%	50%
DK	6%	9%	7%	9%	4%	9%	8%	12%
N=	611	759	808	902	546	830	656	750

*RV = Registered voters, LV = Likely Voters*

	Party ID			Ideology			Race			Public Union
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mid	Con	White	Black	Hisp	
Right Direction	16%	48%	70%	18%	39%	74%	50%	16%	39%	30%
Wrong Track	77%	45%	24%	74%	54%	24%	44%	80%	49%	66%
No Opin/DK	6%	7%	5%	8%	7%	3%	6%	4%	12%	4%
N=	190	301	116	106	364	115	417	73	49	103

	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Right Direction	41%	36%	51%	36%	41%	40%	47%	40%
Wrong Track	53%	49%	43%	62%	56%	55%	43%	54%
No Opin/DK	6%	15%	6%	2%	3%	5%	10%	6%
N=	272	70	153	97	131	134	193	137

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Right Direction	26%	42%	44%	51%	41%	47%	39%	40%	46%	39%
Wrong Track	63%	54%	51%	40%	55%	47%	52%	54%	48%	54%
No Opin/DK	11%	4%	5%	9%	5%	6%	9%	6%	6%	7%
N=	79	201	176	143	134	136	86	107	304	307

**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. [ROTATE]**

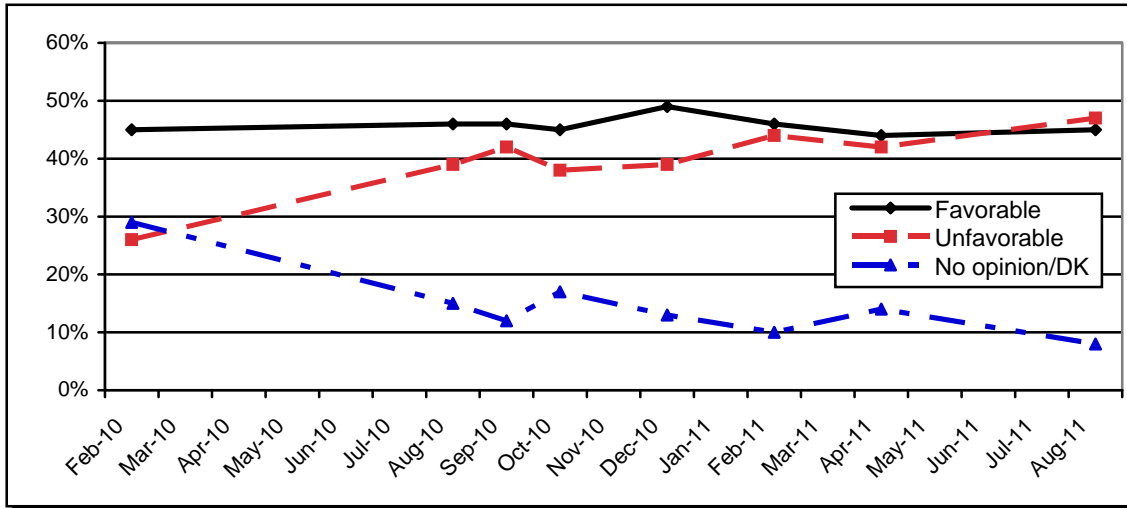
**Favorability Summary, August 2011**

	Pres. Obama	Gov. Christie	U.S. Congress	Tea Party	Sen. Lautenberg	Sen. Menendez	State Sen Sweeney	Pres in Legisl	Dems in Legisl	Reps in Legisl
Favorable	44%	45%	14%	23%	37%	35%	18%	32%	27%	
Unfavorable	44%	47%	73%	54%	30%	28%	24%	42%	46%	
No opn/DK	12%	8%	13%	23%	33%	37%	57%	26%	28%	
N=	609	615	613	613	615	615	614	612	614	

**Obama/Christie Ratings, August 2011**  
**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

**Governor Chris Christie Trend**

	Aug 11 RV	Apr 11 RV	Feb 11 RV	Dec 10 Voters	Oct 10 RV	Sept 10 RV	Aug 10 RV	Feb 10 RV
Favorable	45%	44%	46%	49%	45%	46%	46%	45%
Unfavorable	47%	42%	44%	39%	38%	42%	39%	26%
No Opn/DK	8%	14%	10%	13%	17%	12%	15%	29%
N=	613	769	810	665	879	911	751	881



**Gov. Christie Tabs**

	Party ID			Ideology			Race			Public Union
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mid	Con	White	Black	Hisp	
Favorable	20%	47%	82%	14%	43%	77%	53%	12%	41%	32%
Unfavorable	72%	45%	11%	76%	49%	16%	40%	77%	49%	66%
No Opin/DK	8%	8%	7%	11%	8%	6%	6%	11%	10%	2%
N=	190	304	114	106	363	115	418	73	51	102

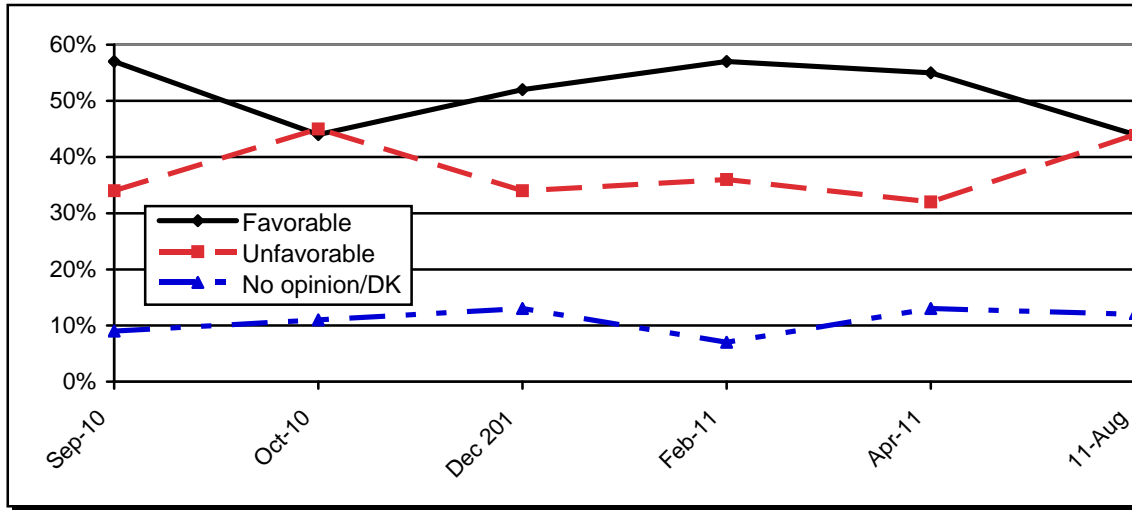
	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Favorable	45%	45%	50%	37%	39%	40%	51%	47%
Unfavorable	49%	52%	39%	53%	53%	53%	38%	47%
No Opin/DK	7%	3%	11%	10%	7%	6%	10%	6%
N=	271	72	153	97	131	137	192	137

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Favorable	35%	43%	46%	53%	43%	45%	46%	48%	52%	38%
Unfavorable	62%	51%	47%	34%	51%	50%	42%	49%	42%	53%
No Opin/DK	3%	6%	7%	13%	6%	5%	11%	3%	6%	10%
N=	82	199	177	143	135	135	89	107	307	306

**Obama/Christie Ratings, August 2011**  
**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

**President Barack Obama Trend**

	Aug 11 RV	Apr 11 RV	Feb 11 RV	Dec 10 Adults	Oct 10 RV	Sep 10 RV
Favorable	44%	55%	57%	52%	44%	57%
Unfavorable	44%	32%	36%	34%	45%	34%
DK/No opinion	12%	13%	7%	13%	11%	9%
N=	609	769	810	904	548	909



**President Barack Obama Tabs**

	Party ID			Ideology			Race			Public Union
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mid	Con	White	Black	Hisp	
Favorable	76%	36%	9%	71%	43%	23%	34%	78%	72%	47%
Unfavorable	13%	49%	84%	18%	41%	74%	54%	12%	16%	42%
No Opin/DK	11%	15%	8%	12%	16%	3%	12%	10%	12%	11%
N=	190	299	115	106	364	114	418	72	50	104

	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Favorable	45%	40%	41%	49%	47%	45%	38%	46%
Unfavorable	43%	38%	47%	42%	45%	39%	43%	49%
No Opin/DK	11%	22%	12%	10%	8%	15%	18%	5%
N=	272	70	151	97	130	133	194	136

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Favorable	40%	44%	48%	40%	48%	45%	44%	43%	40%	47%
Unfavorable	32%	48%	41%	48%	42%	41%	45%	52%	46%	42%
No Opin/DK	28%	8%	11%	12%	9%	14%	11%	5%	14%	10%
N=	79	201	175	142	132	137	85	107	303	306

[Order of Christie/Obama Job Performance questions that follow was randomized]

**Q. 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.**

*Trend...*

	Aug 11 RV	Apr 11 RV	Feb 11 RV
A	13%	14%	14%
B	25%	32%	24%
C	18%	20%	26%
D	24%	14%	15%
F	19%	21%	19%
DK	1%	0%	2%
N=	612	390	416

	Party ID			Ideology			Race			Public Union
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mid	Con	White	Black	Hisp	
A	2%	15%	24%	1%	12%	24%	15%	4%	10%	11%
B	11%	26%	48%	10%	24%	43%	31%	7%	18%	18%
C	18%	19%	15%	16%	19%	15%	18%	14%	24%	18%
D	31%	26%	6%	38%	26%	7%	21%	32%	60%	21%
F	38%	14%	3%	35%	18%	10%	14%	44%	15%	31%
N=	191	302	116	104	365	115	421	73	51	105

	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
A	11%	10%	16%	14%	14%	10%	13%	14%
B	26%	29%	27%	19%	19%	24%	29%	29%
C	20%	11%	18%	15%	13%	19%	21%	16%
D	25%	22%	19%	31%	27%	29%	22%	19%
F	18%	28%	18%	19%	26%	18%	13%	22%
N=	273	72	151	97	131	137	192	138

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
A	7%	10%	15%	17%	15%	12%	11%	11%	13%	12%
B	19%	25%	26%	28%	23%	21%	34%	29%	32%	19%
C	14%	18%	19%	18%	18%	18%	20%	15%	16%	20%
D	44%	23%	21%	18%	16%	27%	18%	34%	22%	26%
F	12%	23%	19%	17%	27%	21%	18%	11%	16%	22%
N=	82	201	177	142	135	137	89	107	305	308



**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.**

*Trend...*

	Aug 11 RV	Apr 11 RV	Feb 11 RV
A	8%	14%	11%
B	25%	32%	32%
C	30%	27%	30%
D	18%	16%	14%
F	19%	20%	12%
DK	1%	1%	1%
N=	612	390	416

	Party ID			Ideology			Race			Public Union
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mid	Con	White	Black	Hisp	
A	16%	6%	1%	12%	7%	7%	4%	28%	6%	10%
B	41%	22%	4%	32%	26%	11%	18%	33%	56%	23%
C	32%	33%	17%	46%	33%	9%	31%	29%	24%	28%
D	8%	20%	27%	5%	20%	24%	23%	10%	6%	22%
F	1%	18%	48%	4%	12%	48%	23%	0%	8%	16%
N=	191	301	115	105	363	115	417	72	50	104

	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
A	8%	3%	9%	9%	9%	7%	10%	5%
B	27%	37%	17%	21%	22%	36%	20%	22%
C	32%	27%	25%	37%	30%	26%	30%	36%
D	17%	22%	21%	14%	13%	16%	18%	25%
F	15%	10%	27%	17%	27%	15%	20%	12%
N=	270	72	152	97	131	137	191	137

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
A	0%	10%	7%	10%	10%	6%	4%	4%	7%	10%
B	47%	20%	25%	18%	21%	29%	27%	29%	22%	27%
C	27%	36%	30%	24%	33%	26%	41%	27%	34%	26%
D	16%	17%	19%	19%	19%	18%	17%	20%	19%	17%
F	7%	16%	19%	27%	16%	21%	11%	20%	18%	20%
N=	79	201	176	144	135	136	89	107	304	308

**Q. Thinking about New Jersey, if the 2013 election for governor were today, would you vote to re-elect Governor Christie, would you go with someone else or would you not vote?**

Re-elect Christie	42%
Someone else	49%
Not Vote	2%
DK	7%
N=	604

	2009 Christie Voters	2009 Corzine Voters
	78%	12%
	12%	81%
	1%	3%
	9%	4%
N=	239	247

**Obama/Christie Ratings, August 2011**  
**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Party ID			Ideology			Race			Public Union
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mid	Con	White	Black	Hisp	
Re-elect Christie	14%	45%	79%	15%	39%	74%	49%	7%	46%	31%
Someone else	77%	46%	11%	80%	51%	19%	41%	90%	44%	67%
Not Vote	5%	6%	10%	4%	7%	7%	3%	0%	2%	1%
DK	191	303	116	106	364	115	7%	3%	6%	1%
N=	14%	45%	79%	15%	39%	74%	420	72	50	104

	Employment				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Re-elect Christie	42%	39%	47%	34%	36%	40%	49%	41%
Someone else	53%	48%	41%	53%	54%	51%	41%	54%
Not Vote	1%	1%	2%	7%	4%	3%	1%	1%
DK	5%	11%	10%	6%	6%	6%	10%	45%
N=	273	72	152	97	130	137	194	138

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Re-elect Christie	32%	39%	44%	50%	39%	43%	43%	41%	46%	37%
Someone else	57%	55%	47%	38%	54%	51%	50%	52%	45%	54%
Not Vote	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	3%	0%	0%	1%	3%
DK	9%	3%	7%	11%	5%	3%	7%	6%	8%	6%
N=	82	201	177	142	134	137	89	107	307	306

**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll August 9-15, 2011**  
New Jersey Statewide Registered Voters Poll

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone from August 9-15, 2011 with a scientifically selected random sample of 615 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. Data are also weighted to the current NJ voter registration records by party. All results are reported with these weighted data. This telephone poll included 574 landline respondents supplemented with 41 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 615 registered voters is +/-3.9 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 53.9 and 46.1 percent (50 +/-3.9) 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>615 New Jersey Registered Voters</b>			
31% Democrat	50% Male	14% 18-29	72% White
50% Independent	50% Female	33% 30-49	12% Black
19% Republican		29% 50-64	9% Hispanic
		24% 65+	4% Asian
			3% Other/Multiracial