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**RUTGERS-EAGLETON POLL: NEW JERSEY VOTERS SUPPORT EDUCATION BOND, INCREASING COST OF BENEFITS FOR JUDGES**

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – Large majorities of likely New Jersey voters support each of two key issues that will be on the November ballot, according to a new Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. A proposed \$750 million higher education bond issue garners 62 percent support, up from 56 percent a month ago. Only 27 percent of voters oppose the bond, while 11 percent are unsure.

Even more voters – 70 percent – support a state constitutional amendment allowing the Legislature to require judges to pay more for their benefits. On this issue, just 18 percent of voters are opposed, while 12 percent have not made up their minds.

The higher education bond designates the money for new academic buildings and technological upgrades at New Jersey colleges and universities. The judges' benefits amendment was placed on the ballot after a heated battle between the Legislature and state Supreme Court over whether the former could require judges to pay more toward their pensions and health insurance.

“As we get closer to the election, support for the higher education bond seems to be solidifying, reflecting the lack of vocal opposition so far,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers. “The benefits amendment is even more popular, most likely reflecting a sense that judges, too, should be subject to the same increases in costs that all other state workers have endured.”

Results are from a poll of 790 registered voters conducted statewide among both landline and cell phone households from September 27-30. Within this sample, 619 respondents are identified as likely voters and are the subjects of this release. The likely voter sample has a margin of error of +/- 3.9 percentage points.

**Bond support continues to climb**

Support for the higher education bond issue has climbed steadily during the year, including a six-point jump since late August, as more independents have come on board while opposition has remained steady. Voters were much more divided – 48 percent for, 45 percent against – when the potential bond issue was thought to be more than \$1 billion in early 2012. The reduction to \$750 million appears to have made it much more palatable, Redlawsk noted.

Likely Democratic voters remain the strongest supporters (76 percent). Independent (57 percent) and Republican (46 percent) support has increased since August.

By 93 percent to 54 percent, blacks are stronger supporters of the bond issue than whites. Moreover, black support since August has increased 19 points while white support grew by only 3 points. The disparity is most likely due to a significant drop in blacks who say they are unsure (by 18 percentage points), while the number of whites who are uncertain has dropped by only six points.

“As black voters have become more aware of the bond issue, they’ve become stronger supporters,” said Redlawsk. “White voters are much less likely to support the bond, but their support at least has held steady.”

Though a majority of voters at all education levels support the new higher education funding, support increases with level of education attained. Voters who attended one of the Rutgers campuses are more likely than other college graduates to support the plan, at 69 percent. In addition, younger voters are much more positive – 81 percent of those ages 18 to 34 plan to vote yes, compared to 57 percent of those 65 or older. Support from younger voters is up 11 points since August, and up eight points among seniors.

Regionally, support among shore residents increased 16 points since August while support among voters in exurban areas declined by 6 points.

**Voters want judges to contribute more**

The amendment to have judges contribute more to the cost of their benefits has widespread support across nearly all groups. Overwhelming majorities of likely GOP (75 percent) and independent (73 percent) voters favor the amendment, as do two-thirds of Democrats.

Men are stronger supporters of the amendment than women: 74 percent to 67 percent. Whites are also more likely to support it than blacks, 72 percent to 66 percent. The differences are small and support is well above a majority in key demographic groups, Redlawsk observed.

“It is hard to imagine the judges’ benefits amendment failing to pass,” said Redlawsk. “For most voters, it seems like the right thing to do, even if the judges themselves argue it amounts to a reduction in pay. Voters don’t seem swayed by the argument that judge’s pay is related to judicial independence and therefore sacrosanct.”

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**QUESTIONS AND TABLES BEGIN ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE**

Questions and Tables

The questions covered in the release of October 5, 2012 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are New Jersey Likely Voters unless otherwise noted.

**Q. In November, New Jersey voters will have the chance to vote on a \$750 million bond for new academic buildings and technological upgrades at colleges and universities. If the election were today, would you support or oppose this bond for higher education?**

Likely Voters												
	Sept 2012	Aug 2012	Party ID		Ideology		Gender		Race			
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	White	Black
Support	62%	56%	77%	57%	46%	84%	64%	36%	57%	66%	54%	93%
Oppose	27%	27%	13%	31%	44%	10%	26%	47%	30%	24%	33%	6%
Don't Know	11%	17%	10%	11%	10%	6%	10%	17%	12%	10%	13%	1%
Unwt N=	614	684	230	210	169	142	302	164	310	304	481	56
		Age				Region						
		18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore		
Support		81%	62%	58%	57%	73%	65%	45%	68%	57%		
Oppose		12%	28%	30%	30%	17%	25%	43%	22%	28%		
Don't Know		7%	10%	12%	13%	10%	9%	12%	10%	15%		
Unwt N=		58	140	240	174	92	190	101	115	116		
		Income				Education						
		<50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	> 150K	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work			
Support		62%	63%	59%	61%	57%	64%	64%	63%			
Oppose		28%	25%	30%	33%	30%	27%	26%	26%			
Don't Know		11%	11%	11%	5%	13%	10%	10%	11%			
Unwt N=		119	185	128	105	119	146	200	147			
		Religion				Union Household		Attended Rutgers				
		Cath	Prot	Jewish	Other	Born Again	Public	No Union	Yes	No		
Support		53%	70%	63%	68%	66%	74%	59%	69%	61%		
Oppose		35%	22%	21%	20%	26%	20%	28%	19%	28%		
Don't Know		11%	8%	17%	12%	8%	6%	12%	11%	11%		
Unwt N=		269	166	56	105	86	96	457	101	513		

**Q. New Jersey voters will also have the chance to vote on an amendment to the state constitution letting the legislature require state judges to pay more toward their pensions and benefits. If passed, this will reverse a recent state Supreme Court decision that prevented this. If the election were today, would you support or oppose this constitutional amendment?**

	LV
Support	70%
Oppose	18%
Don't Know	12%
Unwt N=	617

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Race	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	White	Black
Support	66%	73%	75%	66%	71%	75%	74%	67%	72%	66%
Oppose	18%	20%	16%	22%	18%	16%	18%	18%	18%	15%
Don't Know	16%	7%	9%	13%	11%	9%	8%	15%	10%	19%
Unwt N=	229	211	172	142	303	166	310	307	484	55

	Age				Region				
	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore
Support	64%	72%	75%	67%	62%	71%	79%	69%	69%
Oppose	15%	19%	17%	20%	19%	20%	8%	22%	20%
Don't Know	21%	9%	8%	14%	19%	9%	13%	9%	11%
Unwt N=	57	141	241	175	91	191	104	115	116

	Income				Education			
	<50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	> 150K	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Support	69%	74%	71%	75%	68%	68%	70%	74%
Oppose	24%	15%	18%	18%	20%	17%	19%	16%
Don't Know	7%	11%	11%	7%	11%	15%	11%	10%
Unwt N=	120	184	127	106	120	146	200	149

	Religion				Union Household		
	Cath	Prot	Jewish	Other	Born Again	Public	No Union
Support	73%	70%	63%	69%	68%	69%	70%
Oppose	15%	18%	30%	19%	17%	21%	19%
Don't Know	12%	12%	7%	12%	15%	10%	11%
Unwt N=	269	170	55	104	88	96	459

**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll September 27-30, 2012**

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone from September 27-30, 2012 with a scientifically selected random sample of 790 New Jersey registered voters. This telephone poll included 655 landline respondents and 135 cell phone respondents, all acquired through random digit dialing. Within this sample 619 respondents were identified as likely voters by scoring responses to questions about interest in politics, in the presidential election, plans to vote, and vote history.

Data are weighted to represent known parameters in the New Jersey registered voter population, using gender, age, race, and Hispanic ethnicity matching to 2010 US Census Bureau data. Data are further weighted to ensure geographical representation by county. All results are reported with these weighted data. Weights are applied to the raw registered voter sample to ensure that it represents the registered voter population throughout the state of New Jersey. The likely voter screen is applied after all weighting and the likely voter sample is not weighted independently. The likely voter screen results in fewer independents and more partisans than in the overall registered voter sample since self-identified partisans are more likely to pass our screen and are more likely to vote in elections in general.

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 619 likely voters is +/-3.9 percentage points, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey likely voters favored a particular position, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.1 and 53.9 percent (50 +/-3.9) had all New Jersey likely 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 Incorporated and through our in-house calling center. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were 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.

**Weighted Sample Characteristics**  
**619 New Jersey Likely Voters**

40% Democrat	46% Male	16% 18-34	70% White
34% Independent	54% Female	27% 35-49	16% Black
26% Republican		31% 50-64	8% Hispanic
		26% 65+	6% Asian/Other/Multi