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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EDITOR'S NOTE: ATTENTION EDITORS, Rutgers-Eagleton Poll Director David Redlawsk may be contacted at 319-400-1134, 732-932-9384, ext. 285, or redlawsk@rutgers.edu. Visit <http://eagletonpoll.blogspot.com> for a link to specific questions and full tables.

Garden Staters Like Their Communities Better than Their State

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ – New Jersey residents continue to have mixed views about living in the Garden State, continuing a trend identified in April 2010, according to a new Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. While 78 percent of New Jerseyans feel positive about the communities in which they live, they are far more negative about the state itself, with a majority thinking New Jersey has become a worse place to live over the past five to ten years. Just over half feel positive about living in New Jersey, and half say they take a lot of pride in living in the state. Still, one in five says they take little or no pride in being part of the Garden State.

“New Jerseyans have a strong sense of liking their own communities even as they are less positive about the state as a whole,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers. “Nine years ago when we asked about the state’s direction, only 26 percent said New Jersey had become a worse place to live. But today 52 percent believe things have gone downhill in recent years. Still, these negative feelings about the state do not translate into dislike for the local communities in which people live.”

The poll of 906 New Jersey adults was conducted December 2-6. The full sample has a margin of error of +/- 3.3 percentage points.

Local communities rate highly

Asked to rate their own community as a place to live, 37 percent of New Jerseyans say their community is excellent and 41 percent rate it as good, while 16 percent say their community is only fair, and 6 percent call it a poor place to live.

Those living in exurban areas of the state are much more likely to believe their local communities are excellent places to live (55 percent) than those living in other areas of the state. Only 20 percent of urban residents think their local communities are excellent, while somewhat more than a third of those living in suburban, shore, and Philadelphia areas agree.

Exurban residents are least likely to say their communities are only fair or poor at 11 percent, while 19 percent of shore area, 21 percent of suburban, and 22 percent of Philadelphia area residents say the same. Urban residents are most likely to dislike their communities, with 39 percent calling their community a fair or poor place to live.

Asked why they rate their community as they do, respondents have a wide range of answers. Among those feeling positive (excellent or good) about their community, 27 percent say it is the people that make it a good place to live, while 22 percent cite the safety of their community. About 13 percent say the environment, open space, and local beauty makes them feel positive, and 9 percent say the accessibility of their locale is what matters. Education is named by 8 percent.

Among those who feel more negative (fair or poor) toward their local community, the top responses include the people living there (19 percent), followed by economic hard times and unemployment (15 percent), crime (15 percent), lack of public services and problems with government (14 percent) and taxes (12 percent).

“The good news is that most New Jerseyans do like their communities and have many good reasons for doing so,” said Redlawsk. “And while ‘people’ are named as a reason to dislike a community as well as to like it, other reasons for feeling unhappy about where they live represent the litany of problems many communities do face.”

New Jerseyans remain less positive about the state; distinctly negative about its direction

While attitudes towards local communities are quite positive, feelings about the state as a whole are no better than they were when the same question was asked nine months ago. Only 14 percent say New Jersey is an excellent place to live, while another 39 percent say it is good. But 32 percent say as a place to live New Jersey is only fair, and 14 percent say it is poor.

The 53 percent who rate the state as excellent or good is about the same as an April 2010 Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, which found 52 percent giving a positive rating to the state. But this remains at the bottom of ratings over the past three decades. Archival data from the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll show that the next lowest rating was in 1990, with 59% of New Jerseyans rating the state as an excellent or good place to live while polls in the 1980s, mid and late 1990s, and 2000s reveal that more than 6 in 10 gave positive ratings to the state.

Ironically, while rating their own communities lower, those living in urban northeastern New Jersey view the state itself more favorably than in all other regions of the state. Nearly two-

thirds (64 percent) of urban residents say New Jersey is an excellent or good place to live, compared to 60 percent of suburbanites, 51 percent of exurban residents, 49 percent living in the Philadelphia area and 46 percent of those in shore counties. Those living in counties comprising the shore and in the Philadelphia suburbs are more likely to view New Jersey as a poor place to live, at 21 percent and 17 percent respectively.

Asked about the progress of the state over the last 5 to 10 years, only 15 percent think New Jersey has become a better place to live. A majority (52 percent) says the Garden State has become a worse place to reside, while another 29 percent say there has been no appreciable change. The last time this question was asked, in an April 2001 *Star-Ledger*-Eagleton Poll, only 26 percent thought the state had become a worse place to live over the preceding five to ten years, while 29 percent thought it had become better, and 39 percent reported no change.

When asked about pride in their state, 50 percent say they take a lot of pride in living in New Jersey, while 30 percent take some pride. But 13 percent say they take little and 6 take no pride in living in the state. Even so, despite more negative views towards the state as a place to live, voters are relatively positive in terms of pride in their state. The 80 percent who take at least some pride in living in New Jersey is little changed from April 2001, when 81 percent took pride in the state, though it is a decline from the 86 percent who felt that way in 1994.

“Garden Staters have a complicated relationship with their state,” said Redlawsk. “It almost seems a point of pride to complain about it. And clearly people feel things have gotten worse in the past decade. The positives are that New Jerseyans like their communities and retain significant pride in living in the state, and it is still the case that a slim majority feels positive about the state as a whole. Perhaps things will look better if and when the economy picks up.”

Race and income related to beliefs about local community; not attitudes toward state

Whites and upper income residents are far more positive about their local communities than are lower income and African Americans in New Jersey. While 84 percent of whites say their community is a good or excellent place to live, only 54 percent of African Americans agree. Likewise while 70 percent of those with household incomes under \$50,000 feel positive about their local community, 91 percent of upper income respondents like where they live. On the other hand, there are no significant differences by race or income in attitudes toward the state of New Jersey itself.

Questions and Tables follow on the Next Page

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll December 2-6, 2010

Questions and Tables

The questions covered in the release of Dec 16, 2010 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q. Now let's talk about the community where you live. How would you rate your community as a place to live? Is it excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

Excellent	37%
Good	41%
Only fair	16%
Poor	6%
N=	906

	Party ID			Children		Region				
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Philly	Shore
Excellent	32%	36%	43%	38%	36%	20%	38%	55%	36%	38%
Good	40%	43%	37%	40%	42%	41%	41%	34%	42%	43%
Only fair	19%	14%	16%	17%	16%	26%	16%	9%	14%	16%
Poor	9%	6%	4%	6%	6%	13%	5%	2%	8%	3%
N=	291	390	206	295	605	131	189	114	259	210

	Age				Education			
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Excellent	26%	39%	34%	44%	30%	37%	39%	51%
Good	49%	39%	39%	42%	38%	45%	44%	37%
Only fair	17%	16%	20%	10%	23%	12%	13%	11%
Poor	8%	6%	7%	5%	9%	6%	4%	2%
N=	142	330	236	193	342	238	198	123

	Race				Income			
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	under 50K	50K-<100K	100K-<150K	150K+
Excellent	42%	21%	27%	28%	27%	38%	39%	56%
Good	42%	33%	44%	47%	43%	40%	51%	35%
Only fair	13%	27%	29%	14%	19%	17%	8%	8%
Poor	4%	20%	0%	11%	11%	5%	2%	1%
N=	627	107	59	88	293	237	132	88

New Jersey Quality of Life—December 2010
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

Q. In just one or two words, please tell me what makes quality of life in your local community:
[insert response to previous question (excellent, good, only fair, poor)]. [Record open-ended]

Positive: People	21%	Negative: Economy/unemployment	3%
Positive: Safety	18%	Negative: Taxes	2%
Positive: Beauty/environment	11%	Negative: Government/politics	2%
Positive: Accessibility/convenience	8%	Negative: Services and Amenities	1%
Positive: Education	7%	Positive: Diversity	1%
Positive: Quiet	5%	Negative: Education	1%
Positive: Services and Amenities	4%	Positive: Cleanliness	1%
Negative: People	4%	Negative: Commodity prices	1%
Negative: Crime	3%	Other/Uncodable/DK	7%

N= 871

	Party ID			Children		Region				
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	Urban	Suburb	Exurb	Philly	Shore
Positive: People	20%	20%	20%	17%	22%	11%	24%	18%	22%	23%
Positive: Safety	18%	18%	16%	21%	16%	18%	17%	15%	17%	21%
Positive: Beauty/environment	7%	13%	12%	9%	11%	5%	7%	25%	9%	10%
Positive: Accessibility/convenience	6%	8%	10%	6%	8%	11%	6%	6%	6%	9%
Positive: Education	8%	7%	6%	13%	4%	2%	11%	8%	7%	7%
Positive: Quiet	5%	3%	6%	3%	6%	4%	5%	4%	7%	1%
Positive: Services and Amenities	5%	4%	5%	4%	5%	9%	3%	5%	4%	3%
Negative: People	2%	5%	4%	2%	4%	2%	3%	4%	6%	3%
Negative: Crime	5%	3%	2%	2%	4%	9%	1%	0%	4%	2%
All Other	24%	20%	20%	23%	21%	30%	24%	15%	20%	21%
N=	290	389	205	295	605	131	191	114	259	210

	Age					Education			
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	HS only	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	
Positive: People	24%	20%	19%	19%	18%	26%	20%	14%	
Positive: Safety	23%	22%	14%	11%	16%	16%	23%	8%	
Positive: Beauty/environment	7%	10%	11%	14%	11%	10%	11%	8%	
Positive: Accessibility/convenience	4%	6%	7%	10%	3%	8%	12%	11%	
Positive: Education	4%	8%	7%	7%	4%	5%	9%	14%	
Positive: Quiet	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	6%	3%	5%	
Positive: Services and Amenities	3%	2%	5%	8%	4%	3%	4%	8%	
Negative: People	4%	3%	6%	2%	8%	2%	1%	1%	
Negative: Crime	9%	2%	3%	2%	3%	4%	4%	2%	
All Other	17%	23%	22%	23%	28%	20%	15%	18%	
N=	143	332	235	193	344	237	198	124	

New Jersey Quality of Life—December 2010
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

	Race				Income			
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Under 50K	50K <100K	100K <150K	150K+
Positive: People	21%	17%	17%	23%	22%	18%	16%	25%
Positive: Safety	16%	22%	29%	15%	18%	18%	24%	18%
Positive: Beauty/environment	13%	5%	5%	4%	6%	14%	14%	10%
Positive: Accessibility/convenience	9%	3%	3%	6%	6%	8%	7%	12%
Positive: Education	7%	5%	10%	7%	3%	6%	16%	7%
Positive: Quiet	4%	5%	0%	8%	4%	5%	4%	6%
Positive: Services and Amenities	5%	1%	5%	6%	5%	2%	4%	7%
Negative: People	4%	4%	9%	2%	7%	4%	0%	1%
Negative: Crime	3%	7%	5%	2%	4%	3%	2%	0%
All Other	20%	33%	16%	27%	25%	24%	14%	14%
N=	627	106	58	88	294	237	132	87

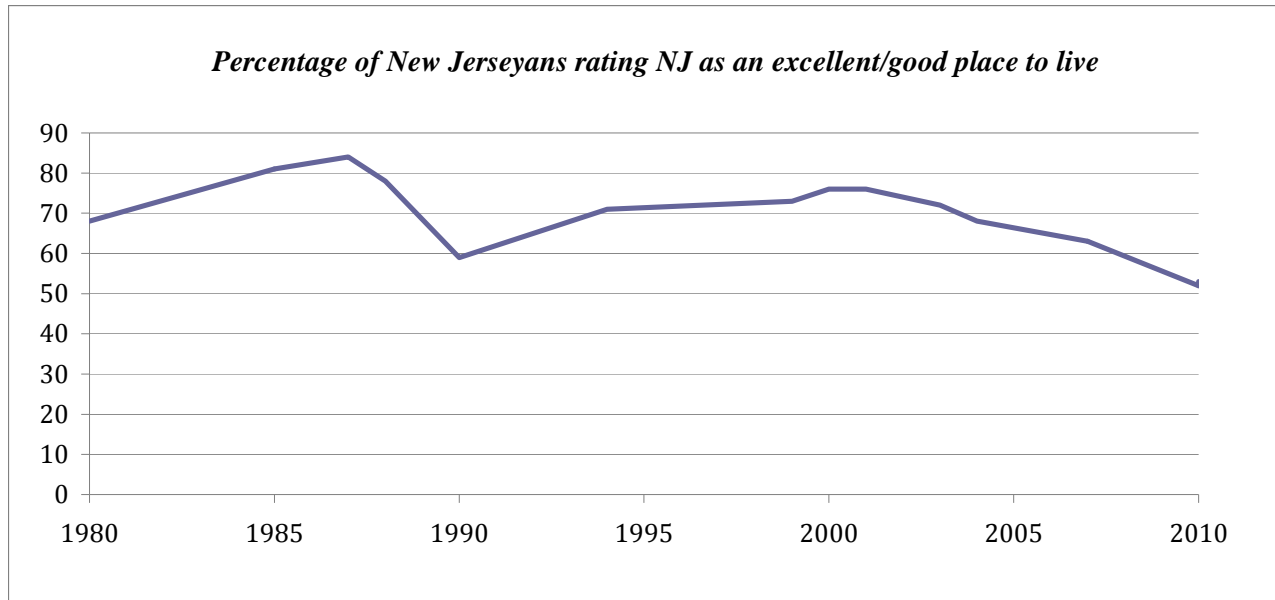
Crosstabs by Response to Community as a place to live: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor

	Community as a Place to Live			
	Excellent	Good	Only Fair	Poor
Positive: People	28%	26%	-	-
Positive: Safety	20%	24%	7%	-
Positive: Beauty/Environment	13%	14%	2%	-
Positive: Education	12%	6%	3%	-
Positive: Accessibility	8%	10%	3%	-
Positive: Quiet	6%	5%	2%	-
Positive: Services and Amenities	5%	5%	2%	-
Negative: People	-	-	20%	15%
Negative: Crime	-	-	14%	19%
Negative: Econ/Unemployment	-	-	10%	25%
Negative: Taxes	-	-	8%	11%
Negative: Government/Politics	-	-	8%	7%
Negative: Services and Amenities	-	-	4%	10%
Negative: Education	-	-	6%	3%
All Other	8%	11%	11%	10%
N=	329	359	128	56

Q. And overall, how would you rate the state of New Jersey as a place to live? Is it excellent, good, only fair or poor?

Excellent	14%
Good	39%
Only fair	32%
Poor	14%
DK	1%
<hr/>	
N=	906

Trend over time



	Party ID			Children		Region				
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Philly	Shore
Excellent	14%	13%	15%	9%	16%	18%	11%	14%	15%	13%
Good	43%	41%	31%	42%	38%	46%	49%	37%	34%	33%
Only fair	32%	30%	37%	32%	32%	31%	29%	35%	34%	33%
Poor	10%	15%	17%	16%	12%	4%	11%	12%	17%	21%
DK	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
N=	291	389	205	296	604	132	189	115	259	208

	Age				Education			
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Excellent	18%	10%	12%	19%	14%	12%	12%	19%
Good	36%	37%	40%	44%	38%	37%	45%	38%
Only fair	35%	34%	33%	27%	31%	35%	34%	30%
Poor	9%	18%	15%	8%	17%	15%	10%	11%
DK	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	2%
N=	143	331	295	191	342	238	196	124

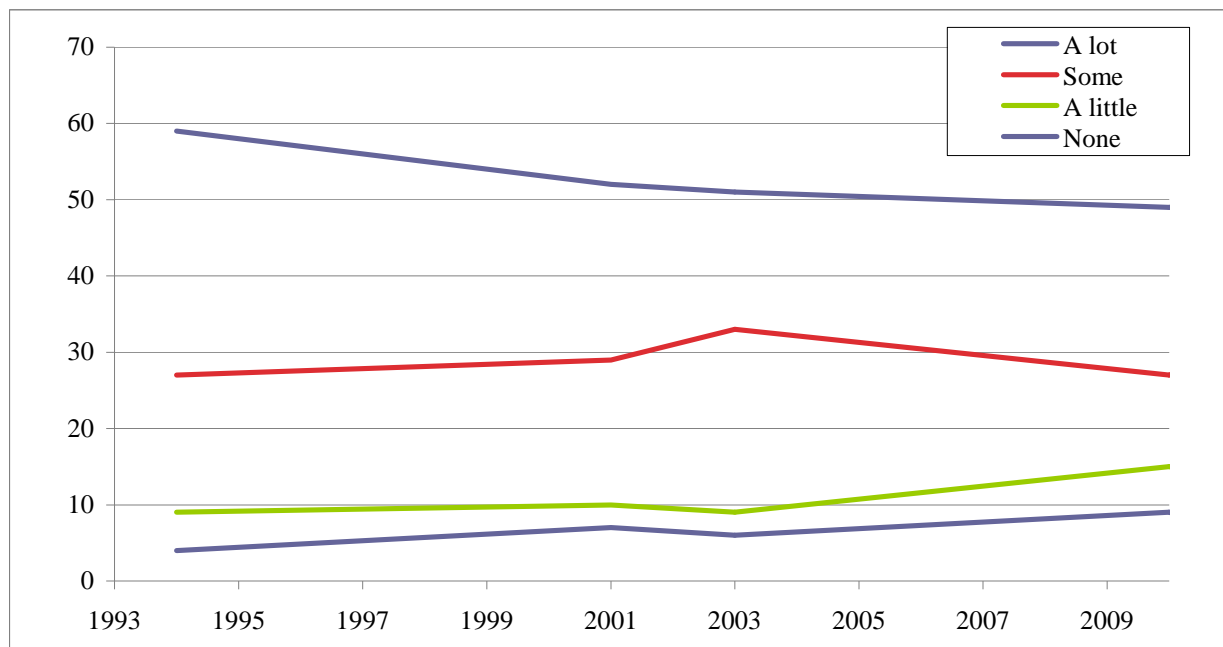
New Jersey Quality of Life—December 2010
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

	Race				Income			
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	under 50K	50K-<100K	100K-<150K	150K+
Excellent	14%	18%	5%	13%	12%	11%	11%	25%
Good	40%	36%	36%	40%	42%	34%	40%	30%
Only fair	30%	36%	46%	29%	32%	37%	32%	31%
Poor	14%	8%	14%	18%	12%	16%	16%	14%
DK	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
N=	627	107	59	87	295	238	132	87

Q. How much pride do you take in living in New Jersey - a lot, some, a little or none?

A lot	50%
Some	30%
A little	13%
None	6%
N=	906

Trend chart: How much pride do you take living in New Jersey?



	Party ID			Children		Region			Philly	Shore
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	Urban	Suburb	Exurban		
A lot	59%	43%	50%	55%	41%	50%	45%	41%	52%	57%
Some	26%	34%	30%	28%	35%	36%	38%	39%	21%	26%
A little	11%	16%	11%	11%	18%	10%	13%	14%	20%	8%
None	4%	7%	9%	6%	6%	4%	4%	5%	6%	10%
N=	292	389	205	604	294	131	189	115	260	210

New Jersey Quality of Life—December 2010
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

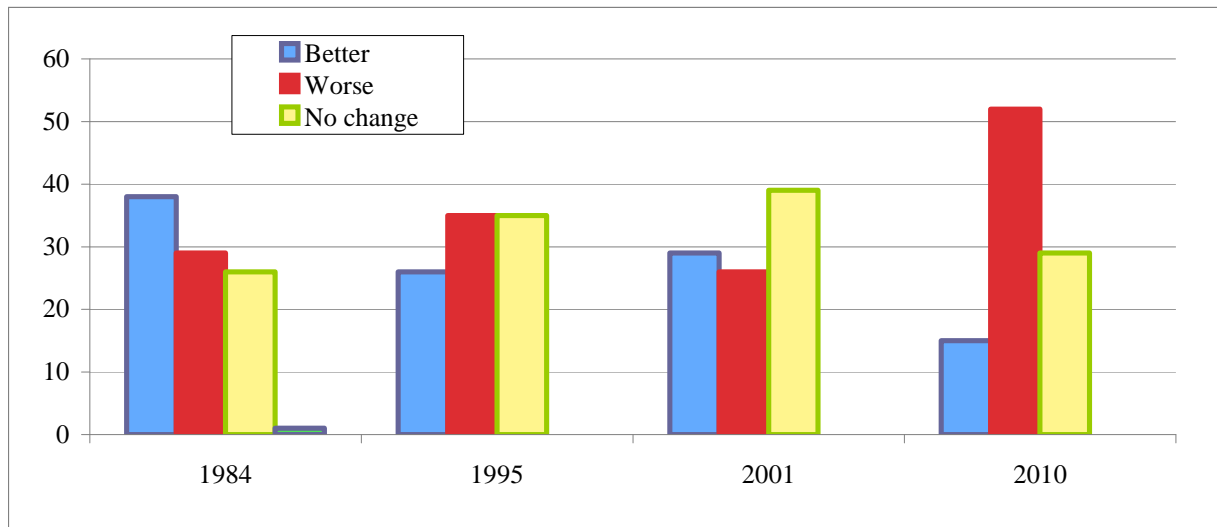
	Age				Education			Grad Work
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	
A lot	45%	44%	50%	63%	59%	48%	39%	48%
Some	36%	34%	26%	24%	24%	33%	39%	27%
A little	13%	14%	16%	8%	12%	14%	13%	17%
None	6%	7%	8%	3%	5%	6%	8%	7%
N=	142	330	235	193	342	237	197	124

	Race				Income			
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	under 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+
A lot	50%	55%	27%	61%	53%	52%	43%	43%
Some	30%	28%	54%	22%	26%	27%	42%	34%
A little	13%	13%	19%	12%	14%	14%	10%	15%
None	7%	4%	0%	6%	6%	6%	4%	8%
N=	628	106	59	87	294	237	132	88

Q. Thinking back over the last 5 to 10 years, would you say that New Jersey has become a better or worse place to live, or hasn't changed at all?

Better	15%
Worse	52%
No Change	29%
DK	4%
N=	906

Trend for Question: "Thinking back over the last 5 or 10 years, would you say that New Jersey has become a better or worse place to live, or hasn't changed?"



New Jersey Quality of Life—December 2010
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

	Party ID			Children		Region				
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Philly	Shore
Better	18%	13%	14%	13%	19%	27%	13%	12%	15%	12%
Worse	47%	53%	58%	52%	52%	40%	50%	60%	50%	59%
No Change	31%	30%	25%	30%	27%	30%	32%	25%	30%	27%
DK	4%	3%	2%	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%	5%	2%
N=	291	390	205	604	296	130	190	115	260	209

	Age				Education			
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Better	20%	14%	13%	16%	11%	16%	18%	19%
Worse	53%	54%	53%	48%	55%	54%	49%	46%
No Change	23%	30%	30%	31%	28%	27%	29%	34%
DK	4%	2%	5%	5%	5%	3%	4%	2%
N=	142	330	235	193	342	238	197	123

	Race				Income			
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	50K- under 50K	<100K	100K-<150K	150K+
Better	13%	19%	32%	20%	14%	10%	19%	17%
Worse	54%	50%	34%	49%	51%	58%	47%	55%
No Change	30%	26%	25%	28%	30%	29%	30%	28%
DK	3%	5%	8%	3%	4%	2%	3%	0%
N=	627	108	59	87	294	237	131	87

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll December 2-6, 2010
New Jersey Statewide Poll

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone from December 2-6, 2010 with a scientifically selected random sample of 906 New Jersey adults. 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 725 landline respondents and 181 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 a sample of 906 adults is +/-3.3 percent, 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 46.7 and 53.3 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.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by Braun Research, Inc., of Princeton, New Jersey. The questionnaire was developed and all data analysis was completed in house at the Eagleton Institute of Politics Center for Public Interest Polling. 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 (N=906 New Jersey Adults)			
32% Dem	48% Male	16% 18-29	69% White
45% Independent	52% Female	37% 30-49	12% Black
23% Republican		26% 50-64	10% Hispanic
		21% 65+	6% Asian
			3% Other

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