The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll

November 3, 2002 (Release 141-1)

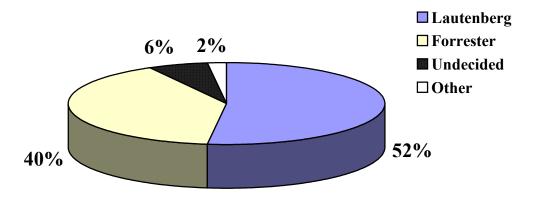
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DOWN THE STRETCH: LAUTENBERG—THE ONCE AND FUTURE SENATOR?

New Jerseyans appear to be ready to elect three-term Senator Frank Lautenberg to the seat now held by retiring U.S. Senator Robert Torricelli. Lautenberg holds a commanding 52 to 40 percent lead over Republican Douglas Forrester among likely voters in the latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll. Just 6 percent remain undecided with the election a few days away, although another 13 percent say they could change their mind before voting. Two percent say they plan to vote for some other candidate.

The lead for Lautenberg has continued to increase throughout the month of October. Just two weeks ago the Democrat's lead among likely voters was five percentage points (47 to 42 percent). The candidates started the month tied at 44 percent each according to earlier *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton-Rutgers surveys.



The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll • Eagleton Institute of Politics

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Lautenberg, who retired from his own Senate seat in 2000, has only been running for a month, having stepped in on October 1 to replace Torricelli. Torricelli had lost public support after having to apologize for errors of judgment in handling campaign contributions and trailed Forrester by double digits at the time he withdrew from the ballot at the end of September.

Cliff Zukin, director of the Rutgers-based poll commented, "Lautenberg's entry into this race completely changed the dynamics of the contest. In a heartbeat we went from a very unpopular Democratic incumbent running against a largely unknown Republican, to a popular Democratic quasi-incumbent running against a little-known Republican. Forrester has never been the focus. We first had an up-or-down vote on Torricelli and the Democrats lost; now it is mainly an up-or-down vote on Lautenberg and the Democrats look to be in very good shape."

The current poll was conducted between Sunday October 27 and Thursday October 31 with a scientifically selected statewide sample of 909 registered New Jersey voters. Of these, 800 said they would "definitely" or "probably" vote this coming Tuesday's election and are called *potential* voters. Pollsters also identified a smaller number of 458 they believe to be most *likely* to actually vote, representing about 50 percent of all registered voters in the state. Turnout in last year's gubernatorial election was 49 percent of registered. The sampling error for likely voters is ± 4.7 percent; it is ± 3.5 percent for the larger group of potential voters.

Lautenberg has solidified his base among Democrats, who have outnumbered Republicans in the New Jersey electorate over the recent years, and has a lead among the state's independent voters. Among potential voters, the latest poll shows 88 percent of Democrats intending to cast their ballots for Lautenberg. Republicans give their candidate slightly less support—82 of those in the GOP say they plan to vote for Forrester. These numbers are slightly up for Lautenberg and slightly down for Forrester from two weeks ago. Independents currently split 46 to 40 percent for Lautenberg.

And gender is again a big story in New Jersey. Lautenberg holds the narrowest of margins among men, with 47 percent supporting him and 42 percent Forrester. Just 8 percent say they are undecided and one percent will vote for someone else. Among

women, however, the 78 year-old Democrat has a 53 to 26 percent advantage, with a much larger 19 percent undecided and two percent intending to vote for someone else.

Although initially centering squarely on the ethical conduct of Torricelli, the New Jersey senate election has had no clear focus since he departed the race. When asked if there is a most important issue in determining for whom to vote, more than half of potential voters simply say "no." Remarkably, 59 percent tell interviewers no issue stands out. However, among those mentioning an issue of particular importance to them, Lautenberg appears to have been more effective at defining the campaign's agenda. About one-in-five (19 percent) mentioned assorted domestic that Lautenberg is emphasizing, such as guns, the environment, education, social security or abortion. Just three percent cite a concern with terrorism or national security—issues Forrester has stressed—as a primary reason for their vote.

With no issue center stage, Lautenberg appears to capitalize on his status as a quasi-incumbent—someone who has served the state before and for a long time. Just under half (46 percent) believe Lautenberg would accomplish more for New Jersey in the U.S. Senate; just under one-third (31 percent) think that Forrester would be the person to do so.

Lautenberg is ending this election season better regarded than in any of his other runs for the Senate. Roughly half of potential voters (46 percent) have a favorable opinion of Lautenberg, compared to half as many (22 percent) whose views of him are unfavorable. The positive number is even higher—53 percent—among *likely* voters. Comparable Eagleton polls taken in 1994, 1988 and 1982 show greater affection for Lautenberg now than was the case in earlier candidacies.

Views of Frank Lautenberg in October of Election Seasons

Likely Voters	<u>1982</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>2002</u>
Favorable	34%	40%	39%	53%
Unfavorable	10	9	25	30
No Opinion	56	51	35	17

Opinions about Forrester are modestly positive, but also reflect his status as a first time candidate in the state without a great deal of name recognition: 33 percent of potential voters have a favorable opinion of him and 23 percent an unfavorable one. Another 44 percent express no clear view of him, down just slightly from earlier readings of 47 and 49 percent earlier this month. Likely voters are divided 38 percent favorable to 29 percent unfavorable about Forrester, with one-third (32 percent) offering no opinion. New Jersey voters report a great deal of exposure to commercial advertising by the candidates. Just over 40 percent say they have heard or seen at least three ads for Forrester (42 percent) and a similar number have heard or seen this many Lautenberg commercials (44 percent).

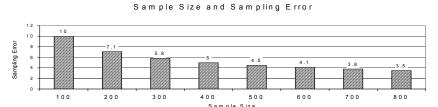
TV or Radio Ads	Seen None	Seen 1 to 3	Seen 3 to 5	Seen over 5	<u>Total</u>
For Forrester	33%	25%	23%	19%	100%
For Lautenberg	33%	24%	22%	22%	100%

In assessing the results of their final poll before election day Zukin noted, "This race and this electorate look very much like the one that elected Jim McGreevey Governor last year. We are a state with more Democrats than Republicans, and a Democratic candidate who also gets a majority of independents usually has a pretty easy time of it."

In 2001, McGreevey beat Republican Bret Schundler by 14 percentage points—56 to 42 percent, with the remaining two percent going to other candidates.

BACKGROUND MEMO - RELEASE (EP141-1) November 3, 2002

The latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll was conducted by telephone from October 27 to October 31 with a scientifically selected random sample of 909 New Jersey registered voters. The figures in this release are based on a subgroup of 800 potential voters – New Jerseyans who identified themselves as registered voters who will "definitely" or "probably" go to the polls this November. This release also includes results for a sub-sample of 458 voters who are considered most likely to go to the polls, based on their interest in the election and politics in general, as well as their past voting history. 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 likely voters is ± 4.5 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of likely voters in New Jersey were found to have a favorable opinion of a candidate, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 45.5 and 54.5 percent (50 ± 4.5) had all likely voters in New Jersey been interviewed, rather than just a sample. The sampling error for potential voters is ± 3.5 percent. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported for Republicans, Independents or Democrats, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. The following chart shows the relationship between sample size and sampling error.



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. The verbatim wording of all questions asked is reproduced in this background memo. The sample has been stratified based on county and the data have been weighted on age and education to insure an accurate proportional representation of the state. The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

"As you may know, there will be an election for United States Senator from New Jersey this coming November. Do you think you will definitely vote, probably vote, probably NOT vote, or definitely not vote in the election for Senator?" [Q2]

	<u>Definitely</u>	<u>Probably</u>	Probably <u>Not</u>	Definitely <u>Not</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31, 2002 Registered Voters	66%	22%	6%	3%	3%	100%	(909)
Past Surveys:							
October 13-17, 2002 Registered Voters	67%	21%	6%	4%	3%	101%	(916)
October 3-6, 2002 Registered Voters	65%	22%	6%	3%	3%	99%	(605)
Sept. 18 – 25, 2002 Registered Voters	60%	27%	7%	2%	3%	99%	(628)
Sept. 3 – 8, 2002 Registered Voters	58%	28%	8%	2%	4%	100%	(622)

COMPOSITE -- SENATE VOTE:

"If the election for Senator were held today, for whom would you vote – [ROTATE] Frank Lautenberg the Democrat, or Doug Forrester the Republican?" [Q3] *ASKED OF THOSE WHO MADE A CHOICE IN Q3:* "Are you very sure about voting for

[CANDIDATE FROM Q3] or might you change your mind before election day?" [Q4a]

IF "UNDECIDED" OR "DON'T KNOW" TO Q3 ASK: "At this moment do you lean more towards Lautenberg or more towards Forrester?" [Q4b]

	LA	UTENBE	RG	Undec-	FO	RRESTE	R			
-	<u>Firm</u>	<u>Soft</u>	Lean	ided	<u>Lean</u>	<u>Soft</u>	<u>Firm</u>	Other	Total	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	38%	8%	5%	14%	3%	4%	27%	2%	101%	(798)
Party AffiliationDemocratIndependent	72 33	11 7	5 6	9 12	 4	1 7	1 29	 3	99 101	(280) (232)
Republican	5	2	2	7	6	8	68	1	99	(232) (196)
<u>Gender</u> Male Female	37 38	6 9	4 6	8 19	4 2	4 5	36 19	1 2	100 100	(374)
	36	9	0	19	2	3	19	2	100	(424)
Region of NJNorthCentralSouth	40 40 33	7 5 10	5 4 5	14 11 15	3 3 4	4 4 5	27 30 27	1 2 2	101 99 101	(325) (202) (252)
Likely Voters	45	4	3	6	3	3	34	2	100	(458)
Past Surveys: October 13-17, 2002Potential Voters	33%	11%	3%	13%	4%	6%	29%	2%	101%	(793)
Party AffiliationDemocratIndependentRepublican	67 24 2	14 15 1	4 4 1	9 18 6	1 7 4	2 6 12	3 21 73	1 5 	101 100 99	(277) (233) (219)
<u>Gender</u> Male Female	29 36	8 13	2 4	11 14	4 3	7 6	36 23	3	100 100	(380) (413)
Likely Voters	37	7	3	8	3	3	36	3	100	(460)
October 3-6, 2002 Potential Voters	31%	11%	4%	13%	3%	8%	29%	1%	100%	(530)
Party AffiliationDemocratIndependentRepublican	63 26 6	17 14 1	5 4 1	10 15 8	1 6 3	2 8 14	1 26 66	1 1 1	100 100 99	(175) (145) (159)
<u>Gender:</u> Male Female	32 30	11 10	4 4	10 16	2 5	7 9	34 25	1	101 99	(250) (280)
Likely Voters	37	5	2	11	2	5	37		99	(298)

"When did you decide who to vote for – in the last few days, in the last couple weeks, in the last month or two, or did you know all along?" [Q5]

October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	Last few days	Last couple weeks 25%	Last month or two 20%	Knew all along 40%	DK/ Refused 4%	<u>Total</u> 99%	(n) (612)
<u>Vote Choice</u> LautenbergForrester	12 7	31 17	16 27	37 45	4 3	100 99	(363) (249)
Likely Voters	8	25	21	44	3	101	(395)
Past Surveys: October 13-17, 2002 Potential VotersLikely Voters	11% 9	27% 28	17% 15	41% 46	3% 2	99% 100	(621) (460)

[&]quot;Would you say that you favor **(CANDIDATE FROM Q3 OR Q4B)** more for his stands on the issues, more for his personal qualities – the kind of person he is, or more because he is a **(Democrat/Republican)?**" [Q6]

	<u>Issue</u> Stands	Personal qualities	<u>Party</u>	Refuses Choice	<u>DK</u>	Total	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	40%	12%	30%	15%	3%	100%	(675)
<u>Vote Choice</u> LautenbergForrester	43 36	12 12	28 33	14 17	3 3	100% 101%	(401) (274)
Party AffiliationDemocratIndependentRepublican	40 48 31	9 18 9	35 17 41	14 14 16	3 2 3	101 99 100	(254) (197) (179)
<u>Gender</u> Male Female	42 37	12 12	29 32	14 16	2 4	99 101	(339) (336)
Likely Voters	45	14	23	17	2	101	(421)

"Is your opinion of FRANK LAUTENBERG favorable or unfavorable, or don't you really have an opinion of him? *IF FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE*: Is that very [favorable/unfavorable] or somewhat [favorable/unfavorable]?" [Q7]

	Fav	orable	Unfavor				
	Very	Somewhat	Somewhat	Very	<u>DK</u>	Total	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31 2002 Potential Voters	24%	22%	8%	14%	31%	99%	(800)
Party Affiliation							
Democrat	45	30	1	1	23	100	(281)
Independent	21	23	9	18	28	99	(233)
Republican	4	16	18	31	31	100	(196)
<u>Vote Choice</u>							
Lautenberg	49	31	1		19	100	(363)
Forrester	2	13	19	40	26	100	(249)
Undecided	8	17	6	4	64	99	(172)
<u>Gender</u>							
Male	23	22	10	20	25	100	(374)
Female	26	23	6	9	36	100	(426)
Likely Voters	34	19	10	20	17	100	(458)
Past Surveys:							
October 13-17, 2002	22%	23%	10%	14%	32%	101%	(800)
Potential Voters							` ′
Likely Voters	27	23	10	20	21	101	(460)
October 3-6, 2002	20%	22%	5%	14%	39%	100%	(532)
Potential Voters Likely Voters	29	18	5	23	24	99	(298)
•	29	10	3	23	24	77	(298)
October 1994	15%	24%	13%	12%	35%	99%	(571)
Likely Voters							, ,
September 1994	13%	27%	9%	10%	41%	100%	(575)
Likely Voters	15,0	_,,,	<i>37</i> 0	10,0	.1,0	10070	(0,0)
September 1988	19%	21%	5%	4%	51%	100%	(575)
Likely Voters	17/0	21/0	370	7/0	21/0	10070	(373)
October 1982		34%	10%		56%	100%	(682)
Likely Voters	•	J T / U	1070		3070	100/0	(002)

"Is your opinion of Doug Forrester favorable or unfavorable, or don't you really have an opinion of him? IF FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE: Is that very [favorable/unfavorable] or somewhat [favorable/unfavorable]?" [Q8]

	Favorable		Unfavor	able			
	Very	Somewhat	Somewhat	Very	<u>DK</u>	Total	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	14%	19%	11%	12%	44%	100%	(800)
Party Affiliation							
Democrat	2	9	19	21	48	99	(281)
Independent	15	20	13	9	44	101	(233)
Republican	32	36	2	2	28	100	(196)
<u>Vote Choice</u>							
Lautenberg	1	9	21	22	47	100	(363)
Forrester	40	39	1	1	19	100	(249)
Undecided	4	12	4	4	76	100	(172)
<u>Gender</u>							
Male	19	20	13	12	37	101	(374)
Female	10	18	10	11	51	100	(426)
Likely Voters	19	19	14	15	32	99	(458)
Past Surveys:							
October 13-17, 2002Potential Voters	12%	21%	10%	10%	47%	100%	(800)
Likely Voters	18	22	12	13	35	100	(460)
October 3-6, 2002Potential Voters	14%	20%	6%	11%	49%	100%	(532)
Likely Voters	19	22	8	15	36	100	(298)
Sept. 18–25, 2002 Potential Voters	13%	21%	3%	6%	57%	100%	(547)
Sept. 3-8, 2002Potential Voters	10%	17%	5%	5%	63%	100%	(537)
Likely Voters	13	20	7	5	55	100	(357)

"How much interest do you have in the election for Senator - - a lot, some, a little or none at all?" [Q9]

	A Lot	<u>Some</u>	A Little	None at All	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	55%	27%	14%	3%	1%	100%	(800)
Party Affiliation							
Democrat	51	29	17	2	1	100	(281)
Independent	56	32	9	2	1	100	(233)
Republican	62	20	15	2	1	100	(196)
Past Surveys:							
October 13-17, 2002	48%	36%	14%	2%	1%	101%	(800)
Potential Voters	1070	3070	1170	270	170	10170	(000)
Party Affiliation	40					400	(a=0)
Democrat	48	35	14	2	1	100	(279)
Independent	46	36	14	3		99	(236)
Republican	53	34	12			99	(221)
October 3-6, 2002	50%	35%	11%	2%		98%	(532)
Potential Voters	3070	3370	11/0	2/0		9070	(332)
Party Affiliation							
Democrat	48	36	13	3	1	101	(175)
Independent	48	40	11	1		100	(145)
Republican	53	35	10	1	1	100	(160)
Sept. 3-8, 2002	41%	41%	16%	1%	1%	100%	(527)
Potential Voters	4170	4170	1070	170	170	100%	(537)
<u>Party Affiliation</u> Democrat	35	46	17	2		100	(184)
Independent	44	37	16	1		100	(142)
Republican	47	35	15	1	2 2	100	(142) (165)
Republican	7/	55	13	1	_	100	(103)

[&]quot;And how closely have you been following the campaign for Senator -- very closely, somewhat closely, or not very closely so far?" [Q10]

	Very <u>closely</u>	Somewhat <u>closely</u>	Not very <u>closely</u>	<u>DK</u>	Total	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	29%	48%	23%		100%	(800)
Party AffiliationDemocratIndependentRepublican	26 30 34	47 52 47	27 18 19	 	100 100 100	(281) (233) (196)
Past Surveys: October 13-17, 2002Potential Voters	26%	54%	19%	1%	100%	(800)
October 3-6, 2002Potential Voters	31%	46%	22%		99%	(532)
Sept. 3-8, 2002 Potential Voters	14%	45%	41%		100%	(537)

"Is there any one issue that stands out as the most important in determining who to vote for in this election, or not?" [IF YES:] "What is the \underline{most} important issue?" [Q11/12]

	Economy	<u>Int'l</u> <u>Issues</u>	Domestic Issues	Taxes	Personal Qualities	<u>Party</u> Control	Ballot Switch	None	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	4%	3%	19%	5%	5%	5%	1%	59%	101%	(800)
Party Affiliation										
Democrat	5	3	24	3	3	4		58	100	(281)
Independent	4	2	20	5	7	6	1	56	101	(233)
Republican	4	4	13	8	6	5	2	58	100	(196)
Vote Choice										
Lautenberg	5	3	25	4	4	6		53	100	(363)
Forrester	2	3	11	9	8	6	3	58	100	(249)
Undecided	3	2	18	1	2	2		71	99	(172)
<u>Gender</u>										
Male	5	3	15	6	6	7	2	56	100	(374)
Female	3	3	22	3	4	4		62	101	(426)
Likely Voters	4	4	22	6	7	8	2	48	101	(458)

[&]quot;Which candidate would accomplish more for New Jersey in the U.S. Senate - Forrester or Lautenberg?" [Q13]

	Both/ Neither/										
	Forrester	Lautenberg	Other	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>					
October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	31%	46%	5%	18%	100%	(800)					
Party Affiliation											
Democrat	2	79	3	15	99	(281)					
Independent	37	42	4	16	99	(233)					
Republican	71	12	4	13	100	(196)					
<u>Vote Choice</u>											
Lautenberg	2	87	2	9	100	(363)					
Forrester	84	3	3	10	100	(249)					
Undecided	15	27	11	47	100	(172)					
Likely Voters	36	52	3	9	100	(458)					
Past Surveys:											
October 13-17, 2002Potential Voters	31%	47%	6%	16%	100%	(800)					
Likely Voters	35	50	5	10	100	(460)					

"Have you seen or heard any campaign ads for [Lautenberg/Forrester] on TV or radio in the last week, or not? [IF "YES" ASK: How many—1 or 2, 3 to 5 or more than that?" [Q14/15]

Potential Voters	More than 5	<u>3 to 5</u>	<u>1 or 2</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
For Lautenberg	22%	22%	24%	33%	101%	(800)
For Forrester	19%	23%	25%	33%	100%	(800)

COMPOSITE: Exposure to campaign advertising for either candidate.

	<u>Both</u> candidates	<u>Lautenberg</u> <u>only</u>	<u>Forrester</u> <u>only</u>	Neither	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	58%	9%	9%	24%	100%	(800)
Likely Voters	63	9	10	19	101	(458)
Past Surveys: October 13-17, 2002Potential VotersLikely Voters	31% 32	6% 5	26% 30	37% 33	100% 100%	(800) (460)

[&]quot;There will also be an election for the U.S. House of Representatives in your district this November. If the election were held today, would you vote for the Republican candidate or the Democratic candidate?" [Q16]

	Republican	Democrat	Other	<u>Undecided</u>	Total	<u>(n)</u>
October 27-31, 2002 Potential Voters	33%	40%	2%	25%	100%	(800)
Party AffiliationDemocratIndependent	3 31	81 31	1 2	15 36	100 100	(281) (233)
Republican Likely Voters	85 37	6 42	1 2	8 19	100 100	(196) (458)
Past Surveys: October 13-17, 2002Potential VotersLikely Voters	35% 37	39% 39	2% 2	24% 22	100% 100	(800) (460)
October 3-6, 2002Potential VotersLikely Voters	35% 40	36% 38	1% 1	28% 22	100% 101	(532) (298)
September 3-8, 2002 Potential Voters Likely Voters	35% 40	38% 34	1% 1	26% 25	100% 100	(537) (357)

SENATE RACE: ALLOCATING UNDECIDED VOTERS

Originally 12 percent of the sample of likely voters said they were undecided. This dropped to 6 percent upon taking into account voters who leaned towards one of the candidates. After taking into account party preference, Congressional voting intentions and past voting behavior, among other considerations, we estimate the likely electorate was divided as follows as of October 31, 2002:

			Other		
October 27-31, 2002	Lautenberg	Forrester	Candidate	Total	<u>(n)</u>
Likely Voters	56 %	42 %	2 %	100 %	(458)