![Rutgers Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling]

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2020

CONTACT:
 Dr. Ashley Koning, Director
 Office: 848-932-8940
 Cell: 908-872-1186
 akoning@rutgers.edu

All press releases available at https://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu/press_releases/. Follow the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/RutgersEagletonPoll and Twitter @EagletonPoll.

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll: Biden Holds Large Lead in New Jersey, but Voters Don't Trust Polls to Get the Winner Right; About Half of Voters Have Already Voted
Booker ahead by wide margin in reelection bid; majority support for marijuana and veteran ballot measures, voters split on redistricting

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (October 29, 2020) – With less than a week until Election Day, former Vice President Joe Biden continues to lead President Donald Trump by a double-digit margin among New Jersey voters, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. Biden wins big among all registered voters (59 percent to 37 percent) and by a similar margin with likely voters (61 percent to 37 percent); few in either scenario are undecided at this point.

Biden's lead stems from large support among Democratic stalwarts like women (70 percent), non-white voters (78 percent), those in the lowest income bracket (66 percent), urban residents (78 percent), voters in the South near Philadelphia (60 percent), and those with college (65 percent) or graduate degrees (68 percent). But the former vice president also pulls ahead of Trump with other coveted voting blocs like independents (54 percent), senior citizens (62 percent), those in higher income brackets (55 percent), those with less than a college education (56 percent), and suburban (61 percent) and exurban (61 percent) voters. Biden narrowly wins among men (51 percent) and is tied with Trump among white voters (49 percent to 49 percent).

"New Jersey has not been a contested state in presidential elections for the past few decades, and this year is no different," said Ashley Koning, assistant research professor and director of the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP) at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. "Much like his lead nationally, Biden's wide margin over Trump in the Garden State has endured throughout the campaign and has only been solidified in the final days of the race."

Yet despite participating in this very survey, just 9 percent of registered voters have a "great deal" of trust in public opinion polls to correctly predict the winner of the 2020 presidential

election; another 34 percent trust them "a fair amount," while the rest either trust them "not very much" (33 percent) or "not at all" (21 percent). Republicans, followed by independents, are the most skeptical, with about two-thirds saying they trust the polls "not very much" or "not at all." Democrats, on the other hand, trust to some extent that the polls will correctly predict the winner.

"After a perceived failure of the polls in 2016, pre-election polling has been met with much hesitation and skepticism this election cycle, making 2020 potentially consequential for the future of the survey industry," said Koning. "But we have to remember that surveys are blunt instruments and snapshots in time. They cannot account for the number of other factors that affect Election Day results, like turnout and late movement of undecided and third-party voters. Polls are not meant to be predictive but rather explanatory, a scientific estimate of why people feel and do what they do."

About half of registered voters – 47 percent – say they have already voted in New Jersey. Democrats in the Garden State are especially likely to have already cast their ballots – 54 percent, compared to 44 percent of independents and 38 percent of Republicans. Almost all of those who have yet to vote say they will definitely do so in the coming days, whether by mail or in person.

"Like the rest of the country, voters in the Garden State are casting their ballots early in unprecedented numbers," noted Koning.

About nine in 10 registered voters say they are interested in politics to some degree and have been following news about the presidential candidates this election cycle at least "somewhat closely."

Like his fellow Democrat at the top of the ticket, U.S. Sen. Cory Booker has a large lead against Republican challenger Rik Mehta in his reelection bid. Among registered voters, he wins 59 percent to 30 percent; among likely voters, 61 percent to 31 percent.

There is also strong support for marijuana legalization and regulation, with 61 percent of likely voters for it and 34 percent against it. There is even stronger support for a constitutional amendment that would make peacetime veterans eligible to receive a property tax deduction (78 percent for versus 16 percent against). Opinions on delaying the legislative redistricting process are more mixed: 46 percent are for it, 32 percent are against it, and 22 percent are still unsure.

The Democratic figures at the top of this year's ballot get high marks from likely voters. Sixty one percent of likely voters are favorable toward Biden, and 55 percent are favorable toward his running mate, U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris. Similarly, 56 percent have a favorable impression of Booker.

Trump and his running mate, Vice President Mike Pence, do not fare nearly as well. Trump

continues to receive low favorability (37 percent) and job approval (39 percent) ratings. Likewise, 37 percent of voters have a favorable view of Pence.

Results are from a statewide poll of 1,001 adults contacted by live callers on landlines and cell phones from October 18 – 24. The full sample has a margin of error of +/- 3.8 percentage points; the subsample of 972 registered voters has a margin of error of +/- 3.8 percentage points, and the subsample of 872 likely voters has a margin of error of +/- 4.0 percentage points. Interviews were done in English and, when requested, Spanish.

# # #

Broadcast interviews: Rutgers University–New Brunswick has broadcast-quality TV and radio studios available for remote live or taped interviews with Rutgers experts. For more information, contact Neal Buccino neal.buccino@echo.rutgers.edu.

ABOUT RUTGERS—NEW BRUNSWICK
Rutgers University–New Brunswick is where Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, began more than 250 years ago. Ranked among the world's top 60 universities, Rutgers's flagship university is a leading public research institution and a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities. It is home to internationally acclaimed faculty and has 12 degree-granting schools and a Division I Athletics program. It is the Big Ten Conference's most diverse university. Through its community of teachers, scholars, artists, scientists, and healers, Rutgers is equipped as never before to transform lives.

ABOUT THE EAGLETON CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEREST POLLING (ECPIP)
Home of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, ECPIP was established in 1971 and is the oldest and one of the most respected university-based state survey research centers in the United States. Now in its 48th year and with the publication of over 200 polls, ECPIP's mission is to provide scientifically sound, non-partisan information about public opinion. To read more about ECPIP and view all of our press releases, published research, and data archive, please visit our website: eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. You can also visit our Facebook and Twitter.

ABOUT THE EAGLETON INSTITUTE OF POLITICS
The Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling is a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. The Eagleton Institute studies how American politics and government work and change, analyzes how the democracy might improve, and promotes political participation and civic engagement. The Institute explores state and national politics through research, education, and public service, linking the study of politics with its day-to-day practice. To learn more about Eagleton programs and expertise, visit eagleton.rutgers.edu.

QUESTIONS AND TABLES CAN BE FOUND AT THIS LINK: https://go.rutgers.edu/b2k47wbn

Methodology

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live callers October 18 to 24, 2020, with a scientifically selected random sample of 1,001 New Jersey adults, 18 or older. Persons without a telephone could not be included in the random selection process. Respondents within a household are selected by asking randomly for the youngest adult male or female currently available. If the named gender is not available, the youngest adult of the other gender is interviewed. The poll was available in Spanish for respondents who requested it. This telephone poll included 400 adults reached on a landline phone and 601 adults reached on a cell phone, all acquired through random digit dialing. Distribution of household phone use in this sample is:

Cell Only:	40%
Dual Use, Reached on Cell:	20%
Dual Use, Reached on LL:	38%
Landline Only:	2%

The data were weighted to be representative of the non-institutionalized adult population of New Jersey. The weighting balanced sample demographics to target population parameters. The sample is balanced, by form, to match parameters for sex, age, education, region, race/ethnicity and phone use. The sex, age, education, race/ethnicity and region parameters were derived from 2018 American Community Survey PUMS data. The phone use parameter was derived from estimates provided by the National Health Interview Survey Early Release Program.[1] Weighting was done in two stages. The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection among the RDD samples associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent's telephone usage patterns. This adjustment also accounts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample.[2] The second stage of weighting balanced sample demographics, by form, to match target population benchmarks. This weighting was accomplished using SPSSINC RAKE, an SPSS extension module that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using the GENLOG procedure. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on survey estimates. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target population.

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data.

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. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. In this poll, the simple sampling error for 1,001 New Jersey adults is +/-3.1 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. The design effect[3] is 1.5, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 3.8

---

[1] NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2014–2018; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013–2018.

[2] Buskirk, T. D., & Best, J. (2012). Venn Diagrams, Probability 101 and Sampling Weights Computed for Dual Frame Telephone RDD Designs. Journal of Statistics and Mathematics, 15, 3696-3710.

[3] Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be

percentage points. Thus, if 50 percent of New Jersey adults in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95 percent sure that the true figure is between 46.2 and 53.8 percent (50 +/- 3.8) if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample. The simple sampling error for 972 New Jersey registered voters is +/-3.1 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. The design effect is 1.5, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 3.8 percentage points. The simple sampling error for 872 New Jersey likely voters is +/-3.3 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. The design effect is 1.5, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 4.0 percentage points.

Sampling error does not consider 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. with sample from Dynata. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP). Dr. Kyle Morgan assisted with analysis and preparation of this report. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process. Full questionnaires are available on request, and can also be accessed through our archives at eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. For more information, please contact poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu.

Weighted Sample Characteristics

1,001 New Jersey Adults

Male	48%	**Democrat**	41%	**18-34**	26%	**HS or Less**	29%	**White**	58%
Female	52%	**Independent**	36%	**35-49**	25%	**Some College**	30%	**Black**	12%
		Republican	23%	**50-64**	29%	**College Grad**	22%	**Hispanic**	18%
				65+	20%	**Grad Work**	19%	**Other**	12%

972 New Jersey Registered Voters

Male	48%	**Democrat**	42%	**18-34**	25%	**HS or Less**	29%	**White**	59%
Female	52%	**Independent**	34%	**35-49**	25%	**Some College**	30%	**Black**	12%
		Republican	24%	**50-64**	29%	**College Grad**	22%	**Hispanic**	17%
				65+	20%	**Grad Work**	19%	**Other**	11%

872 New Jersey Likely Voters

Male	48%	**Democrat**	44%	**18-34**	21%	**HS or Less**	26%	**White**	60%
Female	52%	**Independent**	31%	**35-49**	25%	**Some College**	30%	**Black**	12%
		Republican	25%	**50-64**	31%	**College Grad**	24%	**Hispanic**	16%
				65+	23%	**Grad Work**	21%	**Other**	11%

---

incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response.