

IMMEDIATE RELEASE MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022

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Majority of New Jerseyans Don't Have Much Trust in U.S. Supreme Court; Two-Thirds Disagree With Overturn of Roe, Worry About Court Overturning Other Individual Rights

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (October 3, 2022) – The majority of New Jerseyans don't have trust in the U.S. Supreme Court, according to a new Rutgers-Eagleton poll.

As justices start the new term today after overturning *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark ruling that established the constitutional right to abortion, six in 10 New Jerseyans say they don't have much trust (26 percent) or any trust at all (35 percent) in the judicial branch to operate in the best interests of the American people.

Just 17 percent say they trust the Court a "great deal," and 20 percent say a "fair amount."

Slightly more than half (51 percent) of New Jerseyans say the U.S. Supreme Court has too much power, while 41 percent say it has about the right amount; 4 percent say it has too little, and another 4 percent are unsure.

"The U.S. Supreme Court's overturning of *Roe* has revived the Culture Wars in American Politics and has impacted perceptions of the Court itself," said Ashley Koning, an assistant research professor and director of the [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling \(ECPIP\)](#) at [Rutgers University–New Brunswick](#). "Much like the rest of the country, more New Jerseyans disagree than agree with some of the biggest rulings that came out of the most recent term."

Sixty-eight percent of New Jerseyans disagree with the Court effectively overturning the 1972 *Roe v. Wade* decision and leaving abortion access up to the states as they see fit; 28 percent agree with the decision. Fifty-seven percent disagree with the Court's decision to limit the ability of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate carbon emissions from existing power plants (36 percent agree), and 51 percent disagree with the ruling that states are restricted in the limitations they can place on who is allowed to carry a concealed handgun

outside of the home for self-defense (42 percent agree).

On the other hand, half (50 percent) agree with the Court upholding a public school football coach's right to a postgame prayer on the field and declaring his firing for the prayer as a violation of his constitutional rights (40 percent disapproved of the decision).

Thinking of the future, 51 percent of New Jerseyans are "very concerned" and 14 percent are "somewhat concerned" that the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* could lead the way to overturning other decisions where the Court has recognized substantive due process claims to other individual rights, such as contraception, same-sex relationships and same-sex marriage. Eleven percent say they are "not very concerned," and 22 percent say "not at all concerned."

Partisanship permeates all views about the Court and its decisions. Republicans are much more trusting of the Court (64 percent "great deal" or "fair amount") than Democrats (18 percent) or Independents (38 percent) and are much more likely than their counterparts to believe the Court has just the right amount of power (66 percent). Democrats, on the other hand, feel the Court has too much power (73 percent), while independents are split between saying it has too much (48 percent) or just the right amount of (44 percent) power.

Two-thirds of Republicans agree with the Court's decisions on abortion access, firearms, the EPA, and prayer, compared with majority disagreement with the Court among Democrats on each of these decisions. Independents lie somewhere in the middle, disagreeing with the Court about *Roe* and the EPA, but siding with the Court when it comes to prayer and split about the decision regarding prayer.

Partisan differences also emerge in level of concern about overturning other decisions involving individual rights. Almost all Democrats (88 percent) and a solid majority of independents (63 percent) are concerned at some level about the possibility, while two-thirds (65 percent) of Republicans are not concerned.

"The Court has been a major motivating force for Republicans, yet there is some indication that Dobbs and the overall rightward swing of the Court may be motivating Democratic candidates and voters right now," said Kyle Morgan, research associate at the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling. "The upcoming midterms will be a true test as to whether the Court now motivates Democrats as it has Republicans in the past."

Other key demographics split in their views about the Supreme Court, as well. Women (61 percent) are more likely than men (41 percent) to believe the Supreme Court has too much power, more likely than men to have little trust in the Court (71 percent "not very" to "not much at all" versus 48 percent), disagree with the Court's decisions at higher rates than men, and are more concerned than men when it comes to the possibility of future decisions overturning individual rights (73 percent "very" to "somewhat versus 58 percent).

Black residents, Hispanic residents and those ages 18 to 34 are more likely than their counterparts to believe the Supreme Court has too much power and less likely to have trust in the Supreme Court.

Black residents are much more likely than any of their counterparts to disagree with the Court's concealed carry decision. Young adults are more likely than older adults to disagree with the Court on abortion access and EPA limitations.

The results are from a statewide poll of 1,018 adults contacted by live interviewers on landlines and cell phones from July 18 to July 27. The full sample has a margin of error of +/- 3.8 percentage points.

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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 John Cramer at john.cramer@rutgers.edu.

ABOUT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY–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

Home of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP) was established in 1971 and is the oldest and one of the most respected university-based statewide polling operations in the United States. Now in its 50th 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 START ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Questions and Tables

The questions covered in this release are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding. Respondents are New Jersey adults; all percentages are of weighted results. Interpret groups with samples sizes under 100 with extreme caution.

C1. Generally speaking, how much do you trust the United States Supreme Court to operate in the best interests of the American people—a great deal, a fair amount, not too much or not at all?

Great deal	17%
Fair amount	20%
Not too much	26%
Not at all	35%
Don't know	2%
Unweighted N=	1016

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Great deal	6%	15%	40%	25%	11%	19%	9%	12%	20%	10%	13%	25%	20%
Fair amount	12%	23%	24%	23%	17%	22%	11%	16%	22%	9%	24%	26%	20%
Not too much	31%	27%	17%	23%	30%	25%	39%	25%	24%	30%	24%	24%	27%
Not at all	50%	33%	17%	29%	41%	33%	38%	44%	32%	50%	36%	24%	31%
DK	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	377	442	184	472	531	633	139	124	104	209	287	319	196

**Supreme Court 2022
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Great deal	12%	17%	19%	23%	15%	13%	21%	16%	26%	17%	15%	18%	19%
Fair amount	24%	14%	20%	27%	17%	22%	20%	17%	21%	21%	21%	16%	20%
Not too much	22%	30%	32%	19%	32%	25%	21%	27%	28%	27%	28%	27%	23%
Not at all	41%	37%	27%	31%	36%	38%	38%	40%	22%	32%	36%	38%	38%
DK	1%	2%	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	3%	4%	0%	1%	0%
Unwt N=	155	307	199	241	144	330	168	186	188	125	270	336	282

**Supreme Court 2022
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

C2. Do you feel that the Supreme Court has too much power, too little power, or about the right amount of power?

Too much	51%
Too little	4%
About right	41%
Don't know	4%
Unweighted N=	1015

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Too much	73%	48%	22%	41%	61%	47%	65%	59%	45%	70%	54%	35%	48%
Too little	2%	3%	10%	5%	3%	3%	5%	7%	2%	4%	3%	5%	4%
About right	21%	44%	66%	53%	30%	47%	24%	30%	48%	23%	40%	57%	44%
DK	4%	5%	1%	2%	5%	3%	5%	3%	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%
Unwt N=	376	442	184	471	531	631	140	124	103	210	286	320	194

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Too much	59%	58%	48%	36%	57%	54%	50%	49%	43%	50%	56%	51%	46%
Too little	5%	5%	2%	3%	4%	4%	1%	6%	4%	5%	3%	5%	2%
About right	30%	33%	48%	57%	33%	39%	46%	41%	50%	42%	38%	40%	47%
DK	6%	4%	2%	3%	6%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%
Unwt N=	154	306	199	242	145	329	168	186	187	124	272	335	281

**Supreme Court 2022
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

C4. The United States Supreme Court announced some major decisions on a variety of issues this past term. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following decisions.

Overturing their 1973 decision in Roe v. Wade that established a woman’s constitutional right to an abortion and leaving abortion access up to the states as they see fit.

Agree	28%
Disagree	68%
Don’t know	3%
Unweighted N=	1011

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Agree	7%	27%	68%	37%	21%	32%	13%	25%	29%	19%	26%	34%	36%
Disagree	92%	69%	28%	60%	76%	66%	79%	70%	70%	79%	69%	62%	63%
DK	2%	4%	4%	4%	3%	2%	7%	4%	1%	2%	5%	5%	1%
Unwt N=	377	441	181	470	528	630	140	122	104	209	287	315	196

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Agree	23%	29%	27%	32%	24%	24%	31%	27%	41%	31%	28%	30%	23%
Disagree	70%	69%	71%	67%	68%	74%	68%	71%	55%	64%	68%	68%	76%
DK	6%	3%	2%	2%	8%	2%	1%	2%	4%	5%	4%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	154	305	198	241	144	327	166	186	188	123	268	335	282

**Supreme Court 2022
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

Ruling that states are restricted in the limitations they can place on who is allowed to carry a concealed handgun outside of the home for self-defense.

Agree	42%
Disagree	51%
Don't know	7%
Unweighted N=	1003

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Agree	24%	46%	67%	50%	35%	43%	29%	49%	44%	38%	44%	44%	46%
Disagree	68%	47%	30%	44%	58%	51%	66%	44%	46%	56%	50%	49%	49%
DK	8%	6%	3%	6%	7%	6%	5%	7%	10%	6%	6%	8%	5%
Unwt N=	373	439	181	467	523	628	137	123	100	209	286	314	190

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Agree	40%	45%	40%	44%	42%	41%	45%	38%	50%	44%	48%	37%	39%
Disagree	55%	49%	55%	50%	52%	52%	48%	55%	47%	48%	45%	58%	57%
DK	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%	7%	8%	8%	3%	8%	7%	5%	4%
Unwt N=	150	302	199	241	141	328	166	183	185	122	269	331	278

**Supreme Court 2022
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

Limiting the ability of the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate carbon emissions from existing power plants.

Agree	36%
Disagree	57%
Don't know	7%
Unweighted N=	1014

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Agree	19%	37%	63%	44%	29%	38%	36%	33%	32%	23%	38%	42%	43%
Disagree	75%	55%	30%	51%	61%	56%	55%	61%	57%	69%	54%	52%	52%
DK	6%	8%	7%	5%	9%	6%	9%	6%	11%	8%	8%	7%	4%
Unwt N=	378	440	183	473	528	631	140	123	104	208	286	320	195

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Agree	41%	33%	35%	38%	31%	33%	37%	36%	47%	45%	34%	33%	29%
Disagree	54%	61%	59%	56%	64%	59%	55%	59%	45%	47%	59%	60%	65%
DK	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%	8%	9%	5%	8%	8%	7%	7%	5%
Unwt N=	154	306	199	242	144	328	167	187	188	125	271	333	282

**Supreme Court 2022
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

Upholding a public school football coach’s right to a postgame prayer on the field and declaring his firing for the prayer as a violation of his constitutional rights.

Agree	50%
Disagree	40%
Don’t know	10%
Unweighted N=	1006

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Agree	36%	51%	69%	56%	43%	50%	50%	49%	48%	47%	45%	55%	51%
Disagree	55%	36%	25%	36%	45%	40%	40%	41%	40%	39%	44%	36%	44%
DK	9%	12%	6%	8%	12%	10%	11%	10%	12%	14%	11%	9%	5%
Unwt N=	374	437	183	468	525	629	138	123	100	209	283	315	194

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Agree	41%	53%	56%	51%	42%	44%	51%	56%	61%	53%	50%	48%	45%
Disagree	43%	39%	35%	43%	47%	46%	38%	34%	29%	35%	40%	43%	46%
DK	15%	8%	9%	6%	11%	10%	11%	9%	10%	12%	10%	8%	9%
Unwt N=	153	304	198	239	143	324	167	185	187	124	267	333	279

**Supreme Court 2022
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C5. How concerned are you that the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe v. Wade would lead the way to overturning other decisions where the Court has recognized individual rights, such as contraception, same-sex relationships, and same-sex marriage? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned or not concerned at all?

Very	51%
Somewhat	14%
Not very	11%
Not at all	22%
Don’t know	2%
Unweighted N=	1017

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	80%	46%	13%	42%	60%	48%	64%	55%	51%	63%	48%	48%	44%
Somewhat	8%	17%	17%	16%	13%	15%	14%	10%	20%	14%	14%	15%	13%
Not very	5%	13%	14%	13%	9%	11%	4%	14%	8%	9%	12%	8%	14%
Not at all	4%	22%	51%	29%	15%	24%	15%	19%	19%	11%	25%	26%	27%
DK	2%	1%	4%	1%	3%	2%	4%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Unwt N=	378	442	184	473	531	633	140	124	104	209	287	320	196

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Very	49%	54%	58%	47%	61%	51%	49%	51%	43%	39%	56%	55%	57%
Somewhat	17%	15%	13%	12%	7%	16%	16%	18%	11%	17%	14%	11%	13%
Not very	9%	8%	8%	18%	10%	13%	11%	7%	11%	12%	11%	9%	10%
Not at all	20%	21%	21%	23%	19%	19%	24%	22%	30%	26%	18%	24%	20%
DK	5%	2%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	3%	4%	5%	1%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	155	307	199	242	144	330	168	187	188	125	271	336	282

Methodology

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live interviewers July 18 to 27, 2022, with a scientifically selected random sample of 1,018 New Jersey adults, ages 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. This poll included 240 adults reached on a landline phone and 778 adults reached on a cell phone, all acquired through random digit dialing; 505 of the cell phone completes were acquired through one-to-one SMS text messaging by live interviewers that led respondents to an online version of the survey. Distribution of phone use in this sample is:

Cell	27%
Text to Web	50%
Landline	24%

The data were weighted to be representative of the residential adult population of New Jersey. The weighting balances sample demographics to target population parameters. The sample is balanced, by form and overall, to match parameters for sex, age, education, race/ethnicity, region and phone use. The sex, age, education, race/ethnicity, and region parameters were derived from 2019 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 corrects for different probabilities of selection across the telephone 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 final stage of weighting balances sample demographics, overall and 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 1,018 New Jersey adults is +/-3.1 percentage points at a 95

¹ NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2017–2019; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017–2019.

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.

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percent confidence interval. The design effect³ is 1.57, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 3.8 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.

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. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP). Jessica Roman 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 Demographics
1,018 New Jersey adults 18+
Overall Margin of Error = +/- 3.8 percentage points**

Please note: Totals may equal slightly more or less than 100% due to rounding.

		deff	MOE			deff	MOE
Man	48%	1.56	+/- 5.6%	White	56%	1.59	+/- 4.9%
Woman	52%	1.59	+/- 5.4%	Black	12%	1.67	+/- 10.7%
				Hispanic	19%	1.35	+/- 10.2%
18-34	26%	1.40	+/- 8.0%	Other	12%	1.37	+/- 11.3%
35-49	24%	1.59	+/- 7.3%				
50-64	28%	1.61	+/- 6.9%	<50K	22%	1.50	+/- 9.6%
65+	21%	1.58	+/- 8.8%	50K-<100K	38%	1.51	+/- 6.9%
				100K-<150K	19%	1.55	+/- 8.6%
Democrat	35%	1.67	+/- 4.7%	150K+	21%	1.52	+/- 7.8%
Independent	45%	1.62	+/- 4.2%				
Republican	20%	1.56	+/- 6.6%	Urban	16%	1.53	+/- 10.1%
				Suburb	35%	1.55	+/- 6.7%
HS or Less	29%	1.15	+/- 9.4%	Exurban	14%	1.59	+/- 9.5%
Some College	31%	1.30	+/- 6.8%	Phil/South	18%	1.52	+/- 8.8%
College Grad	22%	1.22	+/- 5.9%	Shore	17%	1.57	+/- 9.0%
Grad Work	18%	1.22	+/- 6.5%				

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 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.