

**CONTACT:**

Ashley Koning, PhD  
Director, Eagleton Center for Public  
Interest Polling  
Eagleton Institute of Politics  
Rutgers, the State University of  
New Jersey  
Office: 848-932-8940  
Cell: 908-872-1186  
[akoning@rutgers.edu](mailto:akoning@rutgers.edu)

Nathan W. Link, PhD  
Assistant Professor  
Rutgers University, Camden  
[Nathan.Link@rutgers.edu](mailto:Nathan.Link@rutgers.edu)

Jordan M. Hyatt, PhD, JD  
Director, Center for Public Policy  
Associate Professor of Criminology  
and Justice Studies  
Drexel University, College of Arts  
and Sciences  
[jhyatt@drexel.edu](mailto:jhyatt@drexel.edu)

All news releases are available on the [ECPIP website](#). Follow the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

## **Plurality of New Jerseyans Support Cannabis Tax Revenue Being Used for Education and Public Health Initiatives**

New Brunswick, N.J. (February 13, 2023) – With racial justice in mind, New Jersey’s recent cannabis legalization and decriminalization laws aimed to redress historical harms associated with the war on drugs by investing in those communities most impacted. However, it is unclear what the government meant by “investing.”

When asked where they would like to see tax revenue generated from cannabis sales spent, half of New Jerseyans agreed that the state should invest in education and public health initiatives. These latest results are from a Rutgers-Eagleton Poll in partnership with researchers Nathan Link of Rutgers University – Camden and Jordan Hyatt of Drexel University.

“The Cannabis Regulatory Commission has been holding public hearings on how to spend the revenue, and there is no better way to assess what the public thinks than by taking a representative sample of all New Jerseyans,” said Ashley Koning, an assistant research professor and director of the [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling \(ECPIP\)](#) at [Rutgers University–New Brunswick](#). “While education and public health initiatives edge their way to the top, preferences span a number of important state issues, with a notable number of New Jerseyans wanting to prioritize things like affordable housing and transportation.”

Slightly more than one in five people polled support spending cannabis revenue on education (23 percent) and public and community health initiatives including drug treatment centers (21 percent). Less than one in five say it should be spent on affordable housing development (15 percent), transportation and infrastructure (13 percent), and ever fewer support funding for police, courts, and prisons (11 percent). New Jerseyans least support using the revenue for

campaigns on the dangers of substance use (four percent). Thirteen percent give another answer or are unsure what the revenue should be spent on.

When first and second priorities are combined, about half of all New Jerseyans agree that the revenue should be spent on education and public health initiatives.

“This is a big deal and a needed conversation,” said [Nathan Link](#), assistant professor and graduate director in the [Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice at Rutgers—Camden](#). “What sets this legislation apart from that of the other states that have legalized and decriminalized cannabis are the critical benefits for social and racial justice that arise from implementing a permanent funding structure that potentially targets schools, health, and the well-being of people living in New Jersey’s most disadvantaged communities.”

Democrats (25 percent) and independents (25 percent) are more likely than Republicans (16 percent) to say investing in education should be the top priority. Republicans instead say the top priority for revenue should be funding police, courts and prisons (21 percent).

“Investment preferences are divided by familiar partisan lines,” said Jessica Roman, a research associate of the [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling \(ECPIP\)](#) at [Rutgers University–New Brunswick](#). “Republicans’ first priority for the revenue is reminiscent of their overall ‘tough on crime’ approach, whereas police, court, and prison funding is the farthest thing from Democrats’ minds.”

Black residents (38 percent) are more likely than residents of other races and ethnicities to feel the state should primarily invest the revenue in affordable housing development.

Results are from a statewide poll of 1,006 adults contacted by live interviewers on landlines and cell phones from Aug. 30 to Sept. 8, 2022. The full sample has a margin of error of +/- 3.8 percentage points. This research received funding from the Drug Enforcement and Policy Center at the Moritz College of Law of The Ohio State University.

###

**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 [Megan Schumann](#).

**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 50<sup>th</sup> 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](http://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu). You can also visit our [Facebook](#) page and [Twitter](#) profile.*

**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](http://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% due to rounding. Respondents are New Jersey adults; all percentages are of weighted results. Interpret groups with samples sizes under 100 with extreme caution.*

---

**M6A** In your opinion, what should be the state government’s top priority when it comes to using the sales tax revenue generated from legal cannabis purchases? Should the state government use the revenue to invest in ...

Education	23%
Public health and community health initiatives, including drug treatment centers	21%
Affordable housing development	15%
Transportation and infrastructure	13%
Funding for police, courts, and prisons	11%
Campaigns on the dangers of substance use and abuse	4%
Other	10%
Don’t know	3%
<b>Unweighted N=</b>	<b>993</b>

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
<b>Education</b>	25%	25%	16%	21%	25%	22%	20%	27%	21%	25%	26%	20%	21%
<b>Public health</b>	23%	24%	13%	19%	23%	24%	16%	19%	21%	21%	20%	21%	23%
<b>Housing</b>	22%	10%	11%	12%	18%	11%	38%	11%	15%	21%	16%	8%	16%
<b>Transport/Infra</b>	13%	12%	15%	17%	9%	13%	11%	16%	9%	14%	12%	15%	11%
<b>Police, etc.</b>	5%	12%	21%	14%	9%	13%	0%	14%	8%	6%	8%	17%	13%
<b>Substance camp.</b>	4%	5%	3%	3%	5%	3%	5%	4%	6%	3%	4%	4%	4%
<b>Other</b>	7%	10%	16%	11%	9%	10%	6%	8%	17%	8%	10%	12%	8%
<b>DK</b>	2%	3%	6%	3%	3%	4%	4%	2%	4%	2%	3%	4%	5%
<b>Unwt N=</b>	403	388	191	525	457	600	105	162	105	226	239	312	206

**Cannabis 2023**  
**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
<b>Education</b>	16%	24%	22%	24%	18%	26%	25%	20%	23%	19%	25%	23%	25%
<b>Public health</b>	18%	20%	22%	26%	20%	22%	19%	22%	22%	18%	17%	28%	26%
<b>Housing</b>	26%	20%	12%	6%	20%	15%	9%	14%	14%	16%	17%	13%	10%
<b>Transport/Infra</b>	15%	12%	14%	15%	15%	14%	14%	8%	14%	11%	16%	13%	11%
<b>Police, etc.</b>	10%	9%	10%	12%	11%	9%	11%	15%	11%	16%	11%	6%	9%
<b>Substance camp.</b>	4%	4%	6%	3%	5%	4%	6%	4%	2%	3%	4%	4%	4%
<b>Other</b>	6%	10%	10%	13%	8%	6%	14%	16%	10%	9%	9%	12%	11%
<b>DK</b>	6%	2%	4%	2%	2%	5%	3%	1%	4%	6%	2%	2%	3%
<b>Unwt N=</b>	144	285	179	281	160	349	136	174	174	129	235	360	265

**M6B And what do you think should be the state government’s *second* priority? Should the state government use the revenue to also invest in ...**

Education	21%
Public health and community health initiatives, including drug treatment centers	20%
Transportation and infrastructure	17%
Affordable housing development	15%
Funding for police, courts, and prisons	11%
Campaigns on the dangers of substance use and abuse	7%
Other	6%
Don’t know	3%
<b>Unweighted N=</b>	<b>953</b>

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
<b>Education</b>	23%	18%	22%	22%	20%	19%	32%	18%	20%	22%	19%	23%	19%
<b>Public health</b>	26%	18%	10%	16%	23%	16%	24%	22%	27%	19%	25%	16%	18%
<b>Transport/Infra</b>	16%	19%	15%	23%	11%	19%	9%	20%	15%	19%	20%	17%	11%
<b>Housing</b>	18%	16%	7%	12%	17%	14%	17%	15%	19%	15%	12%	16%	18%
<b>Police, etc.</b>	5%	13%	23%	11%	12%	14%	3%	14%	5%	12%	7%	9%	18%
<b>Substance camp.</b>	7%	6%	9%	7%	8%	8%	9%	8%	3%	6%	4%	10%	9%
<b>Other</b>	3%	6%	12%	7%	5%	8%	3%	2%	4%	3%	9%	7%	4%
<b>DK</b>	1%	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	1%	7%	3%	3%	2%	3%
<b>Unwt N=</b>	391	374	179	507	436	571	103	157	103	220	232	300	193

**Cannabis 2023**  
**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
<b>Education</b>	22%	21%	18%	23%	29%	18%	22%	19%	20%	18%	20%	24%	24%
<b>Public health</b>	24%	21%	28%	13%	15%	21%	21%	17%	23%	21%	23%	14%	20%
<b>Transport/Infra</b>	10%	16%	18%	22%	17%	18%	14%	18%	17%	14%	15%	23%	20%
<b>Housing</b>	16%	13%	15%	15%	16%	16%	15%	13%	14%	13%	16%	18%	12%
<b>Police, etc.</b>	10%	15%	9%	9%	8%	12%	14%	12%	11%	14%	10%	9%	11%
<b>Substance camp.</b>	15%	6%	3%	7%	9%	9%	2%	7%	6%	9%	9%	5%	3%
<b>Other</b>	1%	7%	6%	8%	3%	4%	9%	9%	7%	5%	5%	6%	9%
<b>DK</b>	3%	1%	4%	4%	2%	1%	3%	5%	2%	5%	2%	1%	2%
<b>Unwt N=</b>	137	276	175	270	155	333	132	170	163	118	229	350	253

**Methodology**

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live interviewers August 30 to September 8, 2022, with a scientifically selected random sample of 1,006 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. This telephone poll included 291 adults reached on a landline phone and 715 adults reached on a cell phone, all acquired through random digit dialing; 327 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:

<b>Cell</b>	39%
<b>Text to Web</b>	33%
<b>Landline</b>	29%

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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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.

A series of weight variables was computed. One weight for estimates based on the total sample (“weight”), plus separate weights for each of the split samples.

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

---

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.



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 1,006 New Jersey adults is +/-3.1 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. The design effect<sup>3</sup> is 1.52, 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. with sample from Dynata. The questionnaire was developed by researchers from Rutgers University-Camden, Drexel University and the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPiP). All data analyses were completed in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPiP). 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](http://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu). For more information, please contact [poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu](mailto:poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu).

**Weighted Demographics**  
**1,006 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.*

		<b>deff</b>	<b>MOE</b>			<b>deff</b>	<b>MOE</b>
<b>Man</b>	48%	1.54	+/- 5.3%	<b>White</b>	57%	1.52	+/- 4.9%
<b>Woman</b>	52%	1.47	+/- 5.5%	<b>Black</b>	12%	1.48	+/- 11.6%
				<b>Hispanic</b>	19%	1.45	+/- 9.2%
<b>18-34</b>	27%	1.40	+/- 7.7%	<b>Other</b>	12%	1.51	+/- 11.8%
<b>35-49</b>	23%	1.41	+/- 7.5%				
<b>50-64</b>	29%	1.58	+/- 6.9%	<b>&lt;50K</b>	22%	1.45	+/- 9.8%
<b>65+</b>	21%	1.64	+/- 8.7%	<b>50K-&lt;100K</b>	35%	1.44	+/- 6.9%
				<b>100K-&lt;150K</b>	18%	1.53	+/- 9.0%
<b>Democrat</b>	38%	1.51	+/- 6.0%	<b>150K+</b>	24%	1.44	+/- 7.0%
<b>Independent</b>	42%	1.52	+/- 6.1%				
<b>Republican</b>	20%	1.48	+/- 8.5%	<b>Urban</b>	17%	1.46	+/- 9.3%
				<b>Suburb</b>	36%	1.53	+/- 6.4%
<b>HS or Less</b>	30%	1.10	+/- 8.9%	<b>Exurban</b>	14%	1.52	+/- 10.3%
<b>Some College</b>	29%	1.24	+/- 7.1%	<b>Phil/South</b>	18%	1.55	+/- 9.2%
<b>College Grad</b>	24%	1.17	+/- 5.5%	<b>Shore</b>	17%	1.52	+/- 9.1%
<b>Grad Work</b>	17%	1.15	+/- 6.4%				

<sup>3</sup> 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.

