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CONTACT:

Ashley Koning, Director
Office: 848-932-8940
akoning@rutgers.edu

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Majorities Back Sherrill's Path to Fixing New Jersey's Structural Deficit

Voters support most items in the governor's first budget, with higher education being the lone exception

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (May 29, 2026) – As New Jersey enters the home stretch of budget season, majorities of voters back a multiyear approach to closing the state's structural deficit, consistent with the path laid out in Gov. Mikie Sherrill's budget proposal, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll.

Voters, who also support most of the specific items in her plan, were asked to choose how best to close the budget gap: a random half were asked about “the current proposed budget” and the other half about “Governor Sherrill's current proposed budget,” with all other wording identical.

Combined, 57% of voters favor continuing a reduction over the coming years to avoid disruptive cuts to public services. Twenty-nine percent prefer closing the gap more quickly through deeper structural reforms in pensions, health benefits and school funding. Five percent want to maintain current spending and accept the deficit, while about 9% are unsure. Attributing the budget to the governor made virtually no difference in voters' views, overall.

“A majority of New Jersey voters seem to be on Governor Sherrill's side when it comes to her 2027 ‘affordability budget,’” said [Ashley Koning](#), an assistant research professor and director of the [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling](#) at [Rutgers University-New Brunswick](#). “Her multiyear approach to the structural deficit is almost twice as popular as the alternative of faster, deeper cuts, and voters back most of the specific items in her budget by comfortable margins.”

When it comes to specific budget items, nearly all of Sherrill's proposals receive majority support. Eight in 10 voters (63% “strongly,” 17% “somewhat”) favor ending the practice of

adding new spending items to the budget in the final days before a vote. This large support is consistent across every demographic group, never dropping below 75% in any key demographic.

Nearly 7 in 10 support increasing down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers by \$5 million (45% "strongly," 24% "somewhat"); allocating \$33 million for a new youth mental health program in K-12 schools; (43% "strongly," 26% "somewhat"); and making the full \$7.3 billion pension payment to the state employee pension system (43% "strongly," 25% "somewhat").

Sixty-four percent support limiting the amount corporations can deduct from their state taxes to generate new revenue (48% "strongly," 16% "somewhat"); and 63% support limiting Stay NJ property tax relief to seniors with household incomes of \$250,000 or less, with a maximum benefit of \$4,000 (39% "strongly," 24% "somewhat").

About 6 in 10 support increasing total state aid for preschool and K-12 education statewide, with about two-thirds of school districts receiving more aid and about one-third receiving less (35% "strongly," 26% "somewhat") and preserving \$70 million in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for new affordable housing construction (38% "strongly," 22% "somewhat").

Voters are closely divided, however, when it comes to proposed cuts to higher education: Forty-two percent support reducing aid to four-year public colleges and universities (21% "strongly," 21% "somewhat"), while 47% oppose it (24% "strongly," 23% "somewhat"). Eleven percent are unsure.

"While most of Sherrill's budget items enjoy broad majority support, that support is being carried almost entirely by Democrats and independents," Koning said. "A majority of Republicans are in opposition to most of these proposals, including increased school aid, the youth mental health program and the corporate tax changes. The one item where Republicans align with Democrats and independents is ending the practice of adding spending items at the last minute before a budget vote. That budget-process reform is the only item where partisanship is not the dominant story."

Results are from a statewide poll of 859 registered voters in New Jersey from May 15 to May 19. The full registered voter sample has a margin of error of +/- 4.2 percentage points.

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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 56th year and with the publication of over 200 polls, ECPIP's mission is to provide scientifically sound, nonpartisan information about public opinion. In addition to its public polling, ECPIP partners with organizations, foundations, and public agencies to design and conduct custom survey research on issues of public concern. To

learn more about ECPIP, explore our published research and data archive, or inquire about our research services, please visit our website: eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. You can also visit our [Facebook](#), [Bluesky](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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.

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.

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 registered voters 18+ unless otherwise noted; all percentages are of weighted results. Interpret groups with sample sizes under 100 with extreme caution. Crosstabs may be suppressed or condensed in order to maintain statistical rigor.

NJ4A. New Jersey's structural deficit means the state spends more than it takes in on a recurring basis. If left unaddressed, the state's entire surplus could be depleted in less than two years. The current proposed budget reduces the deficit from approximately \$3 billion to approximately \$1.7 billion and aims to fully balance the budget by 2028.

To address New Jersey's structural budget deficit, which of the following approaches do you most support?

Note: This question was part of a split sample. Half of respondents received NJ4A and half received NJ4B.

Close the gap more quickly through deeper structural reforms in pensions, health benefits, and school funding	31%
Continue with gradual reduction over several years to avoid disruptive cuts	57%
Maintain current spending and accept the deficit	5%
Don't know	7%
Unweighted N=	419

NJ4B. New Jersey's structural deficit means the state spends more than it takes in on a recurring basis. If left unaddressed, the state's entire surplus could be depleted in less than two years. Governor Sherrill's current proposed budget reduces the deficit from approximately \$3 billion to approximately \$1.7 billion and aims to fully balance the budget by 2028.

To address New Jersey's structural budget deficit, which of the following approaches do you most support?

Note: This question was part of a split sample. Half of respondents received NJ4A and half received NJ4B.

Close the gap more quickly through deeper structural reforms in pensions, health benefits, and school funding	27%
Continue with gradual reduction over several years to avoid disruptive cuts	57%
Maintain current spending and accept the deficit	6%
Don't know	10%
Unweighted N=	435

[COMBINED NJ4A+NJ4B]

Close the gap more quickly through deeper structural reforms in pensions, health benefits, and school funding	29%
Continue with gradual reduction over several years to avoid disruptive cuts	57%
Maintain current spending and accept the deficit	5%
Don't know	9%
Unweighted N=	854

[COMBINED NJ4A+NJ4B]

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Quickly	18%	32%	41%	33%	24%	29%	27%	35%	25%	28%	29%
Gradual	69%	49%	49%	55%	59%	57%	57%	52%	56%	60%	57%
Maintain	6%	6%	3%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%	8%	4%	4%
Don't know	7%	12%	7%	6%	12%	9%	9%	7%	11%	8%	10%
Unwt N=	323	329	199	458	382	668	161	103	221	240	287

[COMBINED NJ4A+NJ4B]

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Quickly	26%	29%	37%	34%	27%	29%	17%	29%	24%	37%	21%
Gradual	55%	61%	46%	53%	57%	58%	68%	52%	62%	49%	70%
Maintain	6%	5%	8%	5%	9%	2%	7%	6%	5%	6%	3%
Don't know	13%	6%	8%	8%	8%	11%	8%	13%	9%	8%	6%
Unwt N=	293	487	133	181	200	237	103	112	197	294	247

NJ5. Below is a list of specific proposals in Governor Sherrill's recommended state budget. For each one, please indicate to what extent you support or oppose it.

Making the full \$7.3 billion pension payment to the state employee pension system

Strongly support	43%
Somewhat support	25%
Somewhat oppose	8%
Strongly oppose	11%
Don't know	13%
Unweighted N=	854

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly supp	58%	37%	28%	42%	43%	42%	46%	48%	42%	44%	40%
Smwht supp	23%	27%	24%	25%	24%	24%	27%	23%	24%	25%	26%
Smwht opp	5%	8%	15%	8%	9%	9%	7%	1%	8%	9%	13%
Strongly opp	4%	12%	21%	14%	9%	11%	10%	6%	10%	13%	13%
Don't know	10%	16%	12%	11%	15%	14%	11%	22%	16%	9%	7%
Unwt N=	326	326	199	457	383	667	162	104	223	242	282

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	41%	45%	61%	43%	35%	43%	35%	39%	45%	36%	58%
Smwht supp	26%	26%	15%	23%	28%	26%	32%	18%	25%	31%	23%
Smwht opp	8%	8%	7%	8%	13%	6%	9%	10%	7%	10%	5%
Strongly opp	10%	10%	3%	12%	17%	11%	12%	15%	10%	12%	6%
Don't know	15%	11%	15%	13%	7%	14%	12%	17%	13%	11%	9%
Unwt N=	294	488	103	237	133	180	201	111	201	292	246

NJ5. Below is a list of specific proposals in Governor Sherrill's recommended state budget. For each one, please indicate to what extent you support or oppose it.

Limiting Stay NJ property tax relief to seniors with household incomes of \$250,000 or less, with a maximum benefit of \$4,000

Strongly support	39%
Somewhat support	24%
Somewhat oppose	9%
Strongly oppose	19%
Don't know	8%
Unweighted N=	855

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly supp	49%	39%	24%	39%	40%	38%	43%	33%	37%	39%	45%
Smwht supp	26%	23%	23%	25%	24%	24%	24%	31%	24%	26%	19%
Smwht opp	7%	9%	12%	9%	8%	11%	5%	8%	8%	9%	9%
Strongly opp	6%	22%	36%	22%	17%	20%	17%	9%	21%	19%	25%
Don't know	12%	7%	5%	6%	11%	7%	11%	18%	11%	6%	1%
Unwt N=	326	327	199	460	381	667	163	104	223	240	285

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Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	41%	41%	43%	37%	33%	46%	39%	38%	36%	37%	47%
Smwht supp	24%	24%	22%	25%	28%	20%	27%	29%	26%	23%	20%
Smwht opp	8%	8%	5%	11%	12%	7%	6%	4%	8%	10%	13%
Strongly opp	19%	19%	12%	20%	23%	19%	21%	22%	20%	19%	15%
Don't know	8%	7%	19%	7%	4%	8%	7%	7%	10%	11%	4%
Unwt N=	294	487	104	238	133	181	199	111	201	293	246

NJ5. Below is a list of specific proposals in Governor Sherrill's recommended state budget. For each one, please indicate to what extent you support or oppose it.

Reducing aid to four-year public colleges and universities

Strongly support	21%
Somewhat support	21%
Somewhat oppose	23%
Strongly oppose	24%
Don't know	11%
Unweighted N=	855

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly supp	13%	23%	30%	26%	15%	20%	21%	17%	19%	23%	23%
Smwht supp	17%	19%	29%	20%	20%	23%	18%	22%	22%	20%	20%
Smwht opp	27%	23%	17%	24%	22%	24%	22%	19%	24%	23%	25%
Strongly opp	30%	24%	15%	19%	30%	21%	29%	25%	26%	26%	21%
Don't know	13%	12%	8%	10%	12%	12%	11%	18%	10%	8%	11%
Unwt N=	325	328	199	459	382	666	164	104	223	240	285

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	24%	19%	14%	19%	22%	23%	25%	28%	24%	18%	12%
Smwht supp	19%	22%	20%	15%	26%	26%	22%	15%	30%	18%	21%
Smwht opp	19%	27%	21%	26%	28%	15%	22%	16%	19%	30%	25%
Strongly opp	29%	21%	31%	30%	13%	24%	17%	25%	18%	22%	32%
Don't know	10%	12%	13%	9%	11%	12%	14%	15%	9%	11%	9%
Unwt N=	294	489	104	238	133	179	201	112	200	293	246

NJ5. Below is a list of specific proposals in Governor Sherrill's recommended state budget. For each one, please indicate to what extent you support or oppose it.

Ending the practice of adding new spending items to the budget in the final days before a vote

Strongly support	63%
Somewhat support	17%
Somewhat oppose	4%
Strongly oppose	7%
Don't know	9%
Unweighted N=	851

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly supp	57%	67%	64%	66%	59%	60%	66%	53%	62%	66%	67%
Smwht supp	22%	15%	11%	16%	18%	17%	18%	26%	16%	16%	13%
Smwht opp	4%	5%	4%	3%	6%	6%	1%	6%	3%	4%	4%
Strongly opp	4%	6%	13%	9%	5%	8%	3%	1%	4%	7%	12%
Don't know	12%	8%	7%	6%	12%	9%	10%	14%	14%	7%	3%
Unwt N=	325	324	199	459	378	664	162	104	222	242	280

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	58%	66%	61%	64%	74%	59%	58%	61%	68%	59%	65%
Smwht supp	19%	17%	15%	17%	14%	18%	20%	20%	12%	19%	16%
Smwht opp	5%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	2%	1%	4%	6%	6%
Strongly opp	7%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	12%	8%	6%	6%	8%
Don't know	11%	7%	15%	8%	4%	12%	8%	10%	10%	10%	5%
Unwt N=	294	484	103	238	132	181	197	111	199	292	245

NJ5. Below is a list of specific proposals in Governor Sherrill's recommended state budget. For each one, please indicate to what extent you support or oppose it.

Preserving \$70 million in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for new affordable housing construction

Strongly support	38%
Somewhat support	22%
Somewhat oppose	12%
Strongly oppose	25%
Don't know	3%
Unweighted N=	857

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly supp	67%	29%	5%	30%	45%	32%	49%	51%	35%	35%	34%
Smwht supp	24%	25%	14%	25%	19%	22%	24%	22%	22%	24%	19%
Smwht opp	3%	15%	20%	10%	14%	14%	8%	4%	13%	10%	17%
Strongly opp	4%	28%	56%	31%	19%	29%	15%	17%	28%	27%	26%
Don't know	3%	3%	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%	6%	2%	4%	3%
Unwt N=	326	329	199	459	384	669	163	104	223	242	285

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	46%	34%	55%	36%	30%	40%	32%	34%	39%	37%	41%
Smwht supp	20%	25%	21%	23%	18%	21%	24%	16%	20%	23%	30%
Smwht opp	12%	11%	4%	12%	17%	10%	16%	15%	13%	11%	7%
Strongly opp	20%	28%	13%	25%	32%	26%	27%	30%	24%	25%	18%
Don't know	3%	3%	6%	4%	3%	3%	1%	4%	4%	3%	3%
Unwt N=	296	489	103	238	133	181	202	112	202	292	247

NJ5. Below is a list of specific proposals in Governor Sherrill's recommended state budget. For each one, please indicate to what extent you support or oppose it.

Increasing down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers by \$5 million

Strongly support	45%
Somewhat support	24%
Somewhat oppose	12%
Strongly oppose	15%
Don't know	4%
Unweighted N=	854

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly supp	64%	42%	18%	40%	50%	38%	58%	66%	40%	48%	33%
Smwht supp	24%	21%	28%	24%	24%	26%	19%	14%	22%	23%	32%
Smwht opp	6%	14%	20%	13%	12%	13%	12%	6%	15%	11%	15%
Strongly opp	3%	18%	29%	20%	10%	18%	9%	10%	18%	14%	15%
Don't know	3%	5%	6%	4%	4%	5%	2%	4%	6%	3%	4%
Unwt N=	324	328	199	459	381	667	162	104	223	240	284

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	47%	44%	65%	40%	36%	51%	38%	44%	50%	42%	44%
Smwht supp	22%	25%	21%	25%	20%	23%	27%	18%	23%	27%	27%
Smwht opp	13%	12%	8%	11%	19%	9%	17%	15%	10%	13%	10%
Strongly opp	14%	15%	3%	17%	22%	12%	15%	19%	13%	12%	15%
Don't know	4%	4%	3%	6%	3%	5%	3%	4%	4%	5%	3%
Unwt N=	294	488	103	237	133	180	201	112	201	292	245

NJ5. Below is a list of specific proposals in Governor Sherrill's recommended state budget. For each one, please indicate to what extent you support or oppose it.

Allocating \$33 million for a new youth mental health program in K-12 schools

Strongly support	43%
Somewhat support	26%
Somewhat oppose	13%
Strongly oppose	14%
Don't know	5%
Unweighted N=	856

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly supp	73%	33%	9%	32%	54%	40%	50%	57%	46%	39%	35%
Smwht supp	19%	30%	30%	29%	23%	27%	25%	18%	22%	28%	31%
Smwht opp	3%	15%	26%	15%	10%	13%	11%	10%	16%	13%	13%
Strongly opp	3%	17%	27%	19%	9%	15%	11%	8%	12%	17%	17%
Don't know	2%	5%	8%	5%	4%	6%	3%	7%	5%	3%	4%
Unwt N=	325	328	200	459	383	667	164	104	223	240	286

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	49%	42%	58%	43%	32%	45%	37%	35%	46%	42%	52%
Smwht supp	26%	24%	27%	26%	20%	28%	27%	30%	23%	24%	26%
Smwht opp	13%	12%	6%	16%	20%	10%	12%	13%	14%	15%	8%
Strongly opp	10%	18%	4%	12%	22%	14%	19%	14%	13%	16%	10%
Don't know	2%	5%	5%	4%	6%	4%	5%	8%	3%	3%	5%
Unwt N=	294	489	104	237	133	180	202	111	202	293	246

NJ5. Below is a list of specific proposals in Governor Sherrill's recommended state budget. For each one, please indicate to what extent you support or oppose it.

Increasing total state aid for preschool and K-12 education statewide, with about two-thirds of school districts receiving more aid and about one-third receiving less

Strongly support	35%
Somewhat support	26%
Somewhat oppose	12%
Strongly oppose	19%
Don't know	8%
Unweighted N=	857

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly supp	55%	29%	11%	31%	38%	30%	44%	42%	38%	34%	28%
Smwht supp	30%	28%	17%	26%	27%	28%	24%	34%	21%	22%	30%
Smwht opp	5%	13%	21%	12%	12%	13%	8%	7%	11%	13%	14%
Strongly opp	3%	21%	43%	26%	12%	21%	16%	13%	20%	23%	21%
Don't know	8%	9%	7%	6%	10%	7%	9%	4%	10%	8%	8%
Unwt N=	326	328	200	460	383	668	164	104	223	242	285

**NJ Budget May 2026
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	35%	36%	51%	36%	21%	34%	31%	32%	36%	31%	44%
Smwht supp	26%	26%	31%	23%	22%	30%	28%	22%	24%	31%	26%
Smwht opp	14%	10%	5%	9%	20%	14%	13%	12%	14%	12%	9%
Strongly opp	16%	22%	11%	21%	26%	13%	24%	21%	21%	20%	15%
Don't know	10%	6%	3%	10%	12%	9%	4%	13%	6%	7%	5%
Unwt N=	295	489	104	238	133	181	201	112	201	293	247

NJ5. Below is a list of specific proposals in Governor Sherrill's recommended state budget. For each one, please indicate to what extent you support or oppose it.

Limiting the amount corporations can deduct from their state taxes to generate new revenue

Strongly support	48%
Somewhat support	16%
Somewhat oppose	14%
Strongly oppose	15%
Don't know	7%
Unweighted N=	853

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly supp	75%	44%	12%	44%	52%	45%	56%	66%	44%	42%	44%
Smwht supp	11%	21%	16%	17%	15%	17%	13%	8%	17%	18%	18%
Smwht opp	4%	16%	25%	13%	14%	15%	12%	10%	13%	15%	16%
Strongly opp	2%	14%	36%	20%	10%	17%	11%	7%	17%	18%	16%
Don't know	8%	5%	10%	5%	9%	7%	7%	9%	10%	6%	6%
Unwt N=	323	327	200	459	380	665	163	104	223	240	283

	Income		Region					Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	55%	46%	46%	48%	40%	54%	50%	43%	50%	50%	48%
Smwht supp	12%	19%	20%	15%	20%	11%	16%	16%	15%	15%	19%
Smwht opp	10%	14%	13%	14%	20%	15%	10%	12%	17%	13%	13%
Strongly opp	14%	16%	10%	15%	17%	15%	18%	21%	11%	16%	10%
Don't know	9%	6%	11%	9%	3%	5%	6%	8%	6%	6%	10%
Unwt N=	293	487	103	238	133	179	200	110	201	292	246

Methodology

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted via one-to-one SMS messaging that led respondents to an online version of the survey. Data was collected from May 15 to May 19, 2026, with a scientifically selected random sample of 859 New Jersey registered voters, 18 or older. The survey was administered in English only.

Data were weighted to represent the population of registered voters in New Jersey. A base weight was applied to account for unequal probabilities of selection arising from the stratified sample design. The sample frame was stratified by party registration, age, gender, and race/ethnicity, with cases released at differing rates across strata; base weights are the inverse of each respondent's selection probability within stratum, restoring the sample's correspondence to the underlying frame before subsequent adjustments. Following the creation of base weights, calibration was performed to align the sample with known population benchmarks on key demographic and political characteristics. Table 1 outlines the variables used in the calibration process and identifies the sources of the benchmark distributions.

The calibration was accomplished using iterative proportional fitting (IPF). This procedure balances each calibration variable to target benchmarks individually and iteratively. The entire set of calibration variables is cycled through until the weights converge across all dimensions. 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.

Table 1. Calibration Variable Definitions and Benchmark Sources

Variable (categories)	Source
Sex (M, F)	CPS 2024 Voting and Registration Supplement PUMS data ¹
Age (18-34, 35-49, 50-64, 65+)	CPS 2024 Voting and Registration Supplement PUMS data
Education (HS grad or less, some college / Assoc degree, 4-yr college grad, graduate degree)	CPS 2024 Voting and Registration Supplement PUMS data
Race (White~Hispanic, Black~Hispanic, Hispanic, Other/mixed~Hispanic)	CPS 2024 Voting and Registration Supplement PUMS data
Region (urban, suburb, exurban, Phila/south, shore)	L2 voter file
2024 recalled vote (Harris, Trump, other, did not vote) ²	New Jersey Voter Information Portal 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. The total sample design effect for this survey is 1.59.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. *Current Population Survey, November 2024: Voting and Registration Supplement [Public Use Microdata Sample]*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce. Released April 21, 2025. Available at [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov).

² Population targets for 2024 presidential vote choice combined certified results from the New Jersey Division of Elections (for the candidate split among voters) with the validated nonvoter rate among survey respondents from the L2 voter file (for the share who did not vote in 2024).

³ <https://www.nj.gov/state/elections/assets/pdf/election-results/2024/2024-official-general-results-president.pdf>

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 859 New Jersey adults is +/- 3.3 percentage points at a 95% confidence interval. The design effect is 1.59, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 4.2 percentage points. Thus, if 50% of New Jersey adults in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95% sure that the true figure is between 45.8 and 54.2% (50 +/- 4.2) if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error is only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Sampling error does not consider other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as selection bias, non-response bias, question wording, context effects, or reporting accuracy, which may contribute additional error.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by RumbleUp with sample from L2 Data. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP). Ashley Koning and Jessica Roman led analysis and preparation of this release, with assistance from David Martin. Questions covered in this release were paid for and sponsored by 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. For more information, please contact poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu.

Weighted Demographics
859 New Jersey Adults 18+
Overall Margin of Error = +/- 4.2 percentage points

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

		deff	MOE
Democrat	38%	1.68	+/- 7.0%
Independent	39%	1.58	+/- 6.8%
Republican	23%	1.45	+/- 8.3%
Man	50%	1.54	+/- 5.7%
Woman	50%	1.60	+/- 6.3%
White	64%	1.44	+/- 4.5%
Non-white	36%	1.31	+/- 8.8%
18-34	19%	1.41	+/- 11.4%
35-49	24%	1.62	+/- 8.4%
50-64	26%	1.55	+/- 7.9%
65+	31%	1.52	+/- 7.1%
<100K	43%	1.53	+/- 7.1%
100K+	57%	1.60	+/- 5.6%
Urban	14%	1.59	+/- 12.1%
Suburb	35%	1.44	+/- 7.6%
Exurban	14%	1.60	+/- 10.8%
Phil/South	18%	1.73	+/- 9.5%
Shore	19%	1.50	+/- 8.5%
HS or less	25%	1.23	+/- 10.3%
Some college	23%	1.47	+/- 8.4%
4-yr college grad	33%	1.50	+/- 7.0%
Grad work	19%	1.55	+/- 7.8%