

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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For more commentary from Professor Redlawsk see
<http://eagletonpoll.blogspot.com>

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Questions and tables are at the end of this release

**NEW JERSEY VOTERS GENERALLY FAVORABLE TO CHRISTIE
BUT DON'T LIKE HIS TAX CUT FOR THE WEALTHY**

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J – As Gov. Chris Christie prepares to give his budget address March 16, he has significant support from New Jersey registered voters, according to a Rutgers-Eagleton Poll released today. Christie is viewed favorably by 45 percent, and unfavorably by 26 percent. Another 26 percent feel neither favorable nor unfavorable toward him. Christie's positive rating comes though few voters say it is "very likely" he will be able to make the sweeping changes he proposes, and most oppose his call for cutting tax rates for wealthy New Jerseyans.

The telephone poll of 953 New Jersey adults conducted Feb. 19-22 included 886 registered voters out of 953 randomly selected adults. The registered voter sample reported here has a margin of error of +/-3.3 percentage points.

"Governor Christie has managed to solidify a strong net positive rating among New Jersey voters in a short time," said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. "While Democrats predictably view him very unfavorably, independents view Christie favorably by a 2-to-1 margin. Continuing support among independents will be important to Christie's ability to make changes in Trenton, since Democratic legislative leaders are likely to pay close attention to that."

Redlawsk also observed that more than a quarter of voters are not ready to give an opinion and may be swayed by what they see in the weeks following the budget address.

Christie's favorability rating falls between two national politicians. President Barack Obama is viewed favorably by 56 percent and unfavorably by 31 percent. Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, however, has little support in New Jersey, viewed favorably by only 27 percent and

unfavorably by 52 percent. Thus Christie's net positive rating of 19 percent, though not quite as high as Obama's 25 point margin, is far above Palin's 25 point negative rating.

Christie is viewed particularly positively by Evangelical Christians, 52 percent to 20 percent, and men, who give him a 54 percent to 22 percent favorable rating. Women are much less positive, supporting Christie 37 percent to 29 percent. Voters living in union households are also slightly positive, 42 percent to 35 percent. Black voters are negative, 40 percent to 22 percent. Voters over 65 are much more favorable than younger voters under 30. The former group views Christie favorably, 52 percent to 18 percent, while the latter group splits, 35 percent both favorable and unfavorable.

New Jersey's future looking better? Voters are not sure

Asked if the future of New Jersey is better, worse, or the same since Christie's defeat of former Gov. Jon Corzine, most believe prospects are about the same (42 percent), while 27 percent say "better" and 18 percent say "worse." Not surprisingly, Democrats and Corzine voters are much more likely to think the future will be worse, while half of Republicans and Christie voters say the future will be better. Evangelical Christians are not as positive, with only a quarter saying the future will be better, while 43 percent expect it to be the same.

Views of the future vary greatly by age. Registered voters under 30 are much more likely to say the future will be worse (29 percent) than better (14 percent), while 31 percent of voters 65 and over believe the future will be better, while only 9 percent think it will be worse. Likewise, high-income voters are twice as likely as lower-income voters to say the future will be better (40 percent to 20 percent).

Voters skeptical about sweeping changes

Significant skepticism that Christie's plans for a sweeping change in Trenton ever will come about appears to be softening voters' optimism for the future. A November post-election Rutgers-Eagleton Poll showed that only 5 percent of those who wanted Christie's top priority to be cutting taxes thought it was very likely to happen. The new poll shows that voters still are not sure change is really coming – only 7 percent think the "sweeping changes" proposed by Christie are "very likely" to happen, while 55 percent think they are "somewhat likely." More than one-

third (36 percent) say sweeping changes are not likely at all. Even Christie voters are somewhat skeptical, with only 17 percent saying sweeping changes are “very likely.”

“Voters recognize that while Governor Christie has an agenda of change and reform, politics in Trenton is complicated,” said Redlawsk. “They have seen governors come in before promising change and still their taxes go up, roads remain in terrible shape and state government doesn’t seem to change.”

No to tax cut for wealthy

Most voters agree that tax rates for New Jerseyans making \$400,000 or more per year should not be cut, despite Christie’s support for allowing the surcharge imposed on high earners to expire. A majority of virtually every demographic group opposes the cut, and even Republicans are not sure, with 46 percent supporting and 47 percent opposing the tax cut. Independents strongly oppose the tax cut, by a 2-to-1 margin, the same ratio among voters who are unsure of their opinion about Christie. Interestingly, even voters making more than \$150,000 per year oppose the tax cut, with only 35 percent supporting the cut and 64 percent opposing it.

“Governor Christie has built up a lot of favorability since he took office, but cutting taxes for high-earning New Jerseyans is very unpopular, even when we made clear that Christie supports the expiration of the surcharge on high-income filers,” said Redlawsk. “At the same time, there has been much less focus on this, and a lot more on his moves to cut costs, so overall the tax rate issue does not seem to be hurting him directly.”

QUESTIONS AND TABLES FOLLOW

**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll February 19-22, 2010
Questions and Tables**

The questions covered in the release of March 8, 2010 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. All percentages are of New Jersey registered voters.

**I'd like to ask about some people and organizations. Please tell me if your general impression of each one is favorable or unfavorable, or if you do not have an opinion. First, [next]:
[ROTATE]**

	Governor Chris Christie	President Barack Obama	Sarah Palin	Tea Party Movement
Favorable	45%	56%	27%	27%
Unfavorable	26%	31%	52%	29%
No Opinion	26%	12%	26%	34%
Don't Know	3%	1%	2%	10%
N=	881	885	885	885

General Impression of Chris Christie:

	Dem	Ind	Rep	Tea Party Favorable	M	F	Evangelical	Labor Household
Favorable	20%	48%	78%	68%	54%	37%	53%	42%
Unfavorable	43%	21%	8%	12%	22%	29%	20%	35%
No Opinion	32%	28%	13%	17%	22%	29%	27%	21%
Don't Know	5%	3%	1%	2%	2%	3%	1%	1%
N=	350	262	239	236	419	461	172	231

General Impression of Chris Christie:

	Voted For:			Race/Ethnicity			
	Christie	Corzine	Daggett	Black	White	Latino	Asian
Favorable	82%	13%	30%	22%	50%	37%	45%
Unfavorable	4%	55%	18%	40%	22%	38%	20%
No Opinion	13%	28%	52%	37%	24%	22%	35%
Don't Know	1%	4%	0%	1%	4%	0%	0%
N=	358	271	33	113	616	79	49

*Support for Governor Chris Christie
Feb. 2010 Rutgers-Eagleton Poll*

General Impression of Chris Christie:

	Income				Age			
	< 50K	50K – < 100K	100K- < 150K	150K +	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Favorable	42%	48%	39%	55%	35%	41%	49%	52%
Unfavorable	25%	23%	36%	24%	35%	28%	27%	18%
No Opinion	29%	26%	25%	18%	30%	30%	23%	24%
Don't Know	5%	3%	0%	2%	0%	0%	4%	6%
N=	285	239	142	98	112	244	323	202

After the election of Chris Christie as governor is the future of New Jersey better, about the same, or worse than it was?

Future of New Jersey:

	Adults Nov, 09	ALL	Dem	Ind	Rep	Tea Party Favorable	M	F	Evangelical	Labor Household
Better	29%	27%	10%	30%	50%	49%	36%	19%	26%	21%
About the Same	26%	41%	48%	39%	35%	30%	38%	44%	43%	46%
Worse	21%	18%	30%	15%	3%	9%	14%	21%	12%	21%
Don't Know	24%	16%	12%	16%	12%	12%	12%	15%	18%	11%
N=	903	881	349	263	239	236	418	463	170	232

Future of New Jersey:

	Voted For			Race/Ethnicity			
	Christie	Corzine	Daggett	Black	White	Latino	Asian
Better	53%	6%	12%	3%	33%	15%	27%
About the Same	30%	46%	67%	58%	39%	42%	39%
Worse	3%	35%	12%	27%	14%	25%	22%
Don't Know	14%	13%	9%	12%	13%	18%	12%
N=	359	270	33	113	614	81	49

*Support for Governor Chris Christie
Feb. 2010 Rutgers-Eagleton Poll*

Future of New Jersey:

	Income				Age			
	< 50K	50K – < 100K	100K- < 150K	150K +	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Better	20%	28%	28%	40%	14%	26%	29%	31%
About the Same	46%	43%	36%	36%	49%	42%	39%	41%
Worse	17%	15%	26%	16%	29%	18%	19%	9%
Don't Know	17%	13%	11%	7%	8%	13%	13%	19%
N=	285	240	145	97	110	245	324	204

Governor Christie has promised sweeping changes to cut taxes, increase government efficiency, and fix the budget deficit. Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, or not at all likely that he can accomplish what he plans?

Sweeping changes likely:

	ALL	Dem	Ind	Rep	Tea Party Favorable	M	F	Evangelical	Labor Household
Very Likely	7%	2%	6%	17%	14%	8%	6%	8%	4%
Somewhat Likely	55%	49%	52%	65%	64%	58%	52%	57%	54%
Not at All Likely	36%	47%	38%	15%	19%	32%	39%	31%	40%
Don't Know	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%	3%
N=	884	351	263	239	236	419	465	170	232

Sweeping changes likely:

	Voted For			Race/Ethnicity			
	Christie	Corzine	Daggett	Black	White	Latino	Asian
Very Likely	17%	0%	3%	4%	8%	4%	4%
Somewhat Likely	70%	40%	53%	46%	57%	47%	53%
Not at All Likely	9%	58%	44%	47%	32%	46%	37%
Don't Know	3%	2%	0%	3%	2%	4%	6%
N=	358	271	34	112	616	81	49

*Support for Governor Chris Christie
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Sweeping changes likely:

	Income				Age			
	< 50K	50K – 100K	100K- 150K	150K +	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Very Likely	7	6	9	6	4	7	6	10
Somewhat Likely	52	61	49	59	59	51	56	56
Not at All Likely	37	33	42	34	35	40	34	33
Don't Know	4	0	1	1	2	2	3	1
N=	283	239	144	99	111	245	324	203

Do you agree with Governor Christie that the state income tax rate should be cut for those making more than \$400,000 a year?

Agree with Christie on Tax Cut:

	ALL	Dem	Ind	Rep	Tea Party Favorable	M	F	Evangelical	Labor Household
Yes	34%	31%	37%	46%	44%	32%	36%	41%	26%
No	61%	68%	55%	47%	47%	63%	60%	55%	70%
Don't Know	5%	1%	5%	6%	7%	4%	4%	3%	4%
N=	880	351	261	237	232	415	465	170	232

Agree with Christie on Tax Cut:

	Voted For			Race/Ethnicity			
	Christie	Corzine	Daggett	Black	White	Latino	Asian
Yes	44%	22%	21%	37%	32%	44%	31%
No	50%	75%	73%	61%	62%	53%	65%
Don't Know	5%	3%	6%	2%	4%	2%	0%
N=	355	270	33	113	613	81	49

Agree with Christie on Tax Cut:

	Income				Age			
	< 50K	50K – < 100K	100K- < 150K	150K +	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Yes	37	32	26	35	34	34	30	40
No	60	64	67	64	64	64	66	52
Don't Know	3	4	6	1	2	2	3	8
N=	285	238	140	99	111	244	322	203

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll February 19-22, 2010

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted from February 19-22, 2010 with a scientifically selected random sample of 953 New Jersey adults yielding 886 registered voters. Data are weighted to represent known parameters in the New Jersey population, including gender, age, race, education, and Hispanic ethnicity. All results are reported with these weighted 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. The sampling error for a sample of 953 adults is +/-3.2 points, at a 95 percent confidence interval. The sampling error for 886 registered voters is +/-3.3 points. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey adults favored a particular position, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.8 and 53.2 percent (50 +/- 3.2) had all New Jersey adults been interviewed, rather than just a sample. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. 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.

Weighted Sample Characteristics (n=886 Registered Voters)			
40% Dem	47% Male	13% 18-29	70% White
33% Independent	53% Female	28% 30-49	13% Black
27% Republican		37% 50-64	10% Hispanic
		23% 65+	6% Asian
			1% Other/Multiple