

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**August 12, 2010**

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

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## **VOTERS THINK GOV. CHRISTIE IS STUBBORN BUT INDEPENDENT AND SMART**

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J –New Jersey’s registered voters think Gov. Chris Christie is “stubborn,” but they also see him as “independent” and “smart,” according to a Rutgers-Eagleton Poll released today. About 4 in 10 Garden Staters think these words describe Christie “very well,” while fewer than 2 in 10 say they do not describe him at all. Given a set of four positive and four negative character traits, slightly more voters say the positive traits describe Christie very well.

The telephone poll of 751 registered voters statewide was conducted Aug. 5 to 8 and has a margin of error of +/-3.6 percentage points.

“New Jerseyans describe the governor as a smart leader, but they are also quite willing to call him stubborn,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science. “Many who say he isn’t doing a good job, describe him in positive terms.”

### **Positive and negative views of Christie**

Asked how strongly they agree with a random list of four positive (smart, independent, strong leader and reformer) and four negative traits (stubborn, uncaring, arrogant and bully) to describe Christie, three-quarters say stubborn “very” (42 percent) or “somewhat” well (34 percent). About the same percentage call him “very” (39 percent) or “somewhat” smart (37 percent). Seventy-four percent agree Christie is at least somewhat independent; 70 percent view him as a strong leader. Sixty-six percent call him a reformer, 60 percent arrogant, 49 percent a bully and 47 percent uncaring.

“That both the positive and negative descriptors fit is striking,” said Redlawsk, “that some of this is driven by partisanship is not. But a majority of Democrats say that all the positive traits are at least somewhat applicable, while a majority of Republicans (69 percent) agree that one negative – stubborn – applies. Republicans are very positive about the governor. Democrats see both positive and negative.”

Independents are mixed; a majority agrees that all the positive traits apply at least somewhat to Christie, as well as two negatives – stubborn (76 percent) and arrogant (59 percent).

“Stubborn can be seen both ways,” said Redlawsk. “The governor does seem to make it a virtue, but its possible coupling with arrogance in independent voters’ minds could suggest there is a thin line between a positive and negative assessment of such a trait.”

### **Favorability is positive, but job performance negative**

According to the poll, Christie’s favorability among registered voters has returned to February’s level (46 percent), but his unfavorable rating during the same stretch has increased 13 points to 39 percent. Only 15 percent of respondents today say they don't have an opinion of Christie, down from 29 percent in February.

At the same time, though almost half the voters say they have a favorable opinion of the governor, a majority think Christie is doing only a fair or poor job. Thirty-nine percent say he is doing a good job, but 33 percent say he is doing a fair job and 25 percent rate him poor. The state budget is the issue that most strongly influences attitudes toward Christie – 63 percent of voters think more could have been done to alleviate program cuts. Only 30 percent say they support the budget as passed.

### **Public employee union members are more negative**

Public employee union members (about 12 percent of respondents) are significantly more likely to say the negative traits describe Christie “very well.” More than half (57 percent) agree he is stubborn, while 49 percent call him arrogant, 41 percent a bully 34 percent uncaring. At the same time they are relatively likely to agree Christie is independent (41 percent) and smart (34 percent). Fewer see him as a reformer or leader (each 26 percent).

### **Perceptions of Christie as leader vary by employment status**

Among unemployed New Jerseyans, only 27 percent call Christie a strong leader, compared to 36 percent of registered voters; 35 percent of the jobless disagree with the description. However, more than half of retired New Jerseyans think Christie a strong leader, while 15 percent disagree. The evaluation of part-time or full-time workers is more mixed: about one third from each employment category think him a strong leader. About one-quarter from each disagree.

**A gender gap in perceptions**

Men and women hold different perceptions of Christie and his job performance. More men – 51 percent to 42 percent – feel favorable toward Christie and his job performance; 36 percent of men compared to 31 percent of women rate his work performance as fair.

Nearly 80 percent of women agree Christie is stubborn, 75 percent call him independent and 71 percent say he is smart. He is called smart (82 percent), a strong leader (76 percent) and independent (73 percent) by men. Almost half the men, compared to one-third of the women, think the bully label does not apply to Christie. By a 10-point margin, women are more likely to say Christie is not a strong leader.

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**QUESTIONS AND TABLE FOLLOW ON THE NEXT PAGE**

**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll August 6 – August 8, 2010  
Questions and Tables**

The questions covered in the release of August 12, 2010 are list below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. All percentages are of New Jersey Registered Voters.

**Q. Please rate how Governor Chris Christie is handling his job as Governor. Is it excellent, good, fair, or poor?**

Excellent	12%
Good	27%
Fair	33%
Poor	25%
DK	3%
N=	750

	Party			Ideology			Union Household		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Liberal	Middle	Conserv	No	Public Union	Other Union
Excellent	2%	12%	32%	1%	9%	28%	14%	7%	17%
Good	14%	30%	42%	10%	26%	41%	28%	21%	21%
Fair	44%	32%	18%	48%	36%	19%	35%	29%	21%
Poor	38%	23%	7%	39%	27%	9%	21%	40%	38%
DK	3%	4%	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
N=	277	298	163	137	409	186	569	126	47

	Education				Employment			
	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl
Excellent	8%	10%	19%	18%	12%	9%	20%	8%
Good	28%	24%	29%	26%	29%	14%	33%	22%
Fair	33%	38%	30%	26%	31%	35%	30%	40%
Poor	26%	25%	19%	29%	26%	39%	15%	24%
DK	4%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	6%
N=	240	242	150	115	383	79	143	143

	Race					Age				
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Other	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	
Excellent	15%	0%	11%	6%	30%	4%	11%	15%	19%	
Good	31%	12%	15%	24%	20%	13%	28%	28%	33%	
Fair	32%	37%	48%	35%	15%	37%	37%	28%	31%	
Poor	19%	48%	22%	36%	25%	42%	21%	26%	14%	
DK	3%	3%	4%	0%	10%	3%	3%	3%	3%	
N=	522	87	46	72	20	119	277	213	132	

*New Jersey Gov. Christie Perceptions – August 2010  
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll*

	Income				Gender	
	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K +	Male	Female
Excellent	8%	14%	15%	25%	16%	10%
Good	24%	28%	27%	26%	26%	27%
Fair	38%	30%	31%	32%	36%	31%
Poor	28%	25%	23%	17%	20%	29%
DK	2%	2%	4%	0%	2%	3%
N=	241	198	112	65	359	392

**Q. I am going to list some words that might describe Governor Christie. For each word, tell if it describes him very well, somewhat well, or not at all.**

**[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF LIST]**

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| A. Arrogant    | E. Smart         |
| B. Bully       | F. Strong Leader |
| C. Independent | G. Stubborn      |
| D. Reformer    | H. Uncaring      |

	Smart	Indepnt	Strong Leader	Reformer	Stubborn	Arrogant	Bully	Uncaring
<b><u>ALL</u></b>								
Very Well	39%	40%	36%	30%	42%	34%	25%	22%
Somewhat Well	37%	34%	34%	36%	34%	26%	24%	25%
Not at All Well	16%	19%	24%	26%	15%	32%	41%	45%
DK	8%	7%	6%	8%	9%	8%	9%	7%
N=	750	749	749	750	748	747	748	748
<b><u>DEMOCRAT</u></b>								
Very Well	22%	32%	22%	19%	50%	49%	35%	30%
Somewhat Well	41%	32%	36%	36%	28%	24%	28%	30%
Not at All Well	23%	26%	32%	34%	10%	16%	23%	29%
DK	14%	10%	10%	11%	12%	12%	14%	10%
N=	276	276	277	276	277	276	277	276
<b><u>INDEPENDENT</u></b>								
Very Well	37%	42%	35%	33%	41%	31%	24%	20%
Somewhat Well	42%	32%	35%	34%	36%	28%	25%	25%
Not at All Well	16%	20%	25%	25%	14%	34%	44%	48%
DK	5%	7%	5%	8%	9%	7%	7%	6%
N=	298	298	297	298	297	298	297	297
<b><u>REPUBLICAN</u></b>								
Very Well	71%	49%	62%	45%	31%	15%	10%	9%
Somewhat Well	23%	40%	29%	40%	38%	26%	18%	17%
Not at All Well	3%	8%	7%	11%	27%	57%	68%	71%
DK	2%	2%	2%	4%	5%	2%	2%	3%
N=	161	161	162	162	160	159	162	160

*New Jersey Gov. Christie Perceptions – August 2010  
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll*

	Smart	Indepnt	Strong Leader	Reformer	Stubborn	Arrogant	Bully	Uncaring
<b><u>MALE</u></b>								
Very Well	44%	40%	39%	34%	40%	31%	22%	17%
Somewhat Well	38%	33%	37%	36%	31%	28%	24%	27%
Not at All Well	12%	22%	19%	27%	18%	35%	48%	50%
DK	6%	6%	5%	6%	10%	6%	6%	5%
N=	359	359	358	360	357	357	359	358
<b><u>FEMALE</u></b>								
Very Well	34%	40%	32%	27%	43%	37%	28%	26%
Somewhat Well	37%	35%	32%	36%	36%	24%	25%	24%
Not at All Well	19%	17%	29%	27%	13%	30%	35%	41%
DK	10%	8%	7%	10%	9%	9%	12%	8%
N=	391	390	391	392	391	389	391	389
<b><u>PUBLIC EMPL UNION HH</u></b>								
Very Well	34%	41%	26%	26%	57%	49%	41%	34%
Somewhat Well	35%	32%	36%	37%	28%	18%	19%	28%
Not at All Well	24%	24%	33%	32%	10%	24%	35%	35%
DK	7%	3%	4%	5%	5%	9%	6%	3%
N=	127	127	126	127	126	126	126	127
<b><u>FT EMPLOYED</u></b>								
Very Well	36%	41%	33%	31%	42%	34%	25%	25%
Somewhat Well	42%	34%	38%	36%	35%	26%	24%	23%
Not at All Well	14%	19%	24%	25%	16%	31%	42%	46%
DK	8%	6%	6%	7%	8%	9%	9%	6%
N=	383	382	383	381	381	382	383	382
<b><u>PT EMPLOYED</u></b>								
Very Well	33%	35%	34%	28%	53%	40%	32%	32%
Somewhat Well	39%	36%	38%	36%	26%	25%	30%	26%
Not at All Well	24%	21%	25%	31%	13%	27%	30%	36%
DK	4%	8%	4%	5%	9%	8%	9%	6%
N=	79	77	77	78	78	77	78	78
<b><u>RETIRED</u></b>								
Very Well	57%	44%	53%	37%	37%	31%	24%	15%
Somewhat Well	23%	31%	26%	35%	35%	26%	20%	27%
Not at All Well	11%	17%	15%	19%	16%	37%	48%	50%
DK	9%	8%	7%	10%	12%	6%	8%	8%
N=	144	144	144	144	144	144	143	143
<b><u>NOT EMPLOYED</u></b>								
Very Well	32%	35%	27%	24%	42%	33%	24%	17%
Somewhat Well	38%	35%	32%	35%	32%	26%	26%	32%
Not at All Well	20%	22%	35%	31%	15%	35%	40%	44%
DK	10%	8%	6%	10%	12%	6%	10%	8%
N=	144	144	144	144	143	144	143	143

*New Jersey Gov. Christie Perceptions – August 2010  
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll*

**Q. The new state budget makes large cuts in many programs to help close the budget deficit. Do you support the new budget or do you think more could have been done to protect some programs from cuts?**

Support the budget	53%
More could have been done	39%
DK	8%
N=	751

	Party ID			Ideology			Union Household		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Liberal	Middle	Conserv	No	Public Union	Other Union
Support the budget	8%	37%	55%	10%	26%	54%	32%	24%	21%
More could have been done	84%	56%	40%	80%	67%	42%	60%	74%	79%
DK	7%	7%	5%	10%	7%	5%	9%	2%	0%
N=	277	298	161	138	410	186	571	127	47

	Education				Employment				
	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl	
Support the budget	22%	31%	38%	32%	31%	20%	40%	21%	
More could have been done	72%	61%	54%	62%	64%	68%	50%	73%	
DK	7%	8%	7%	6%	5%	12%	10%	7%	
N=	242	241	150	115	382	79	144	144	

	Race					Age			
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Other	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Support the budget	35%	8%	35%	15%	15%	15%	31%	34%	33%
More could have been done	59%	84%	57%	73%	80%	80%	64%	59%	55%
DK	6%	8%	8%	12%	4%	4%	6%	8%	12%
N=	523	89	47	72	20	120	279	214	132

	Income				Gender	
	under 50K	50K-<100K	100K-<150K	150K+	Male	Female
Support the budget	20%	34%	36%	46%	38%	22%
More could have been done	74%	63%	58%	49%	55%	71%
DK	6%	3%	6%	5%	7%	7%
N=	242	198	113	64	359	392

**Q. I'd like to ask about some people and organizations. Please tell me if your general impression of [NAME] is favorable or unfavorable, or if you do not have an opinion. ... Governor Christie**

Favorable	46%
Unfavorable	39%
DK	15%
N=	751

*New Jersey Gov. Christie Perceptions – August 2010  
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**Christie Favorability**

	Party ID			Ideology			Union Household		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Liberal	Middle	Conserv	No Union	Public Union	Other Union
Favorable	22%	49%	83%	21%	43%	76%	50%	31%	38%
Unfavorable	59%	38%	8%	65%	42%	14%	34%	57%	51%
DK	19%	13%	9%	14%	16%	10%	16%	13%	11%
N=	276	298	162	139	410	186	571	127	47

	Education				Employment			
	HS or Less	Grad Work	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl
Favorable	47%	47%	42%	52%	47%	32%	59%	41%
Unfavorable	36%	45%	42%	32%	40%	54%	25%	41%
DK	17%	8%	16%	15%	13%	14%	16%	18%
N=	242	115	241	151	383	79	144	143

	Race					Age			
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Other	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Favorable	52%	24%	49%	34%	38%	24%	47%	51%	58%
Unfavorable	36%	60%	30%	47%	24%	53%	39%	38%	26%
DK	12%	17%	21%	19%	38%	24%	14%	10%	15%
N=	523	89	47	73	21	119	280	213	132

	Income				Gender	
	under 50K	50K-<100K	100K-<150K	150K+	Male	Female
Favorable	37%	48%	52%	59%	50.8%	42.1%
Unfavorable	41%	42%	38%	40%	34.1%	43.4%
DK	22%	10%	10%	5%	14.8%	14.5%
N=	242	198	113	64	358	392

**CHRISTIE JOB PERFORMANCE by FAVORABILITY**

JOB PERFORMANCE	FAVORABILITY		
	Favorable	Unfavorable	DK
Excellent	27%	0%	0%
Good	51%	2%	16%
Fair	19%	40%	60%
Poor	1%	58%	12%
DK	2%	0%	12%
N=	347	292	109



**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll August 5-8, 2010**  
New Jersey Statewide Poll

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted from August 5-8, 2010 with a scientifically selected random sample of 751 registered voters from throughout the state of New Jersey. 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. This telephone poll included 660 landline respondents acquired through random digit dialing, supplemented by 71 interviews of randomly selected cell phone only households.

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 751 registered voters is +/-3.6 points, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey registered voters favored a particular position, one would be 95 percent confident that the true figure would be between 46.4 and 53.6 percent (50 +/- 3.6) had all New Jersey registered voters 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.

Data were collected by Braun Research, Incorporated, of Princeton, NJ and were analyzed by staff of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. For the landline respondents, the AAPOR response rate 3 was 18.0%, the refusal rate 2 was 26.3% and the cooperation rate 2 was 39.8%. For the cell phone respondents, the AAPOR response rate 3 was 9.1%, the refusal rate 2 was 30.0% and the cooperation rate 2 was 25.1%.

<b>Weighted Sample Characteristics (n=751 Registered Voters)</b>			
37% Dem	48% Male	16% 18-29	71% White
41% Independent	52% Female	38% 30-49	12% Black
22% Republican		23% 50-64	10% Hispanic
		19% 65+	6% Asian
			1% Other/Multiple