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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EDITOR'S NOTE: ATTENTION EDITORS, Rutgers-Eagleton Poll Director David Redlawsk may be contacted at 319-400-1134, 732-932-9384, ext. 285, or redlawsk@rutgers.edu. Visit <http://eagletonpoll.blogspot.com> for a link to specific questions and full tables.

**In the Aftermath of 2010 Elections, Republicans Want Congress to Fix Health Care Reform;
Democrats Want Job Creation**

NEW BRUNSWICK – New Jersey Democrats and Republicans have differing priorities for the new U.S. Congress, according to a Rutgers-Eagleton Poll released today. While Democrats name “jobs” as their top priority, Republicans focus on fixing the health care reform law as the most important task for Congress. Independents, while having favored Republican congressional candidates by 11 points (46 percent to 35 percent voting Democrat) agree with Democrats that jobs are the most important issue that needs to be fixed in the next Congress.

“Republicans and Democrats continue to have different priorities even after all the talk of coming together in compromise to resolve the country’s problems,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. “Partisans are simply on different wavelengths – for Republicans jobs rank only fourth as a priority, while only one in ten Democrats wants to see health care re-opened.”

The poll of 906 New Jersey adults was conducted December 2-6. The full sample has a margin of error of +/- 3.3 percentage points.

The 2010 Congressional election: Independents continue to lean Republican

Of those interviewed, 64 percent said they voted and could recall the direction of their vote. Partisans did not deviate from their parties: 94 percent of both Democrats and Republicans say they voted for a congressional candidate from their party. Independents, however, continued to lean Republican as they did in last year’s gubernatorial election, with 46 percent of independents voting Republican and 35 percent voting Democrat. A surprising 19 percent of independents said they voted for a third party candidate.

“As is nearly always the case, those who identify with a party voted for a candidate from that party,” said Redlawsk. “But Democrats have to be worried that independent voters continue to show a strong preference for Republican candidates.”

Looking Forward: What Should Congress Do?

Asked in an open-ended question to name the “single most important thing” they would like Congress to “fix” in the upcoming session, 21 percent of New Jersey adults say jobs are most important, while 16 percent say the economy overall should be first. Another 16 percent say health care is the priority, while 12 percent say taxes are too high, and eight percent worry about the budget deficit.

Priorities differ widely by party however. For Democrats, jobs are the clear top priority at 26 percent, followed by the economy in general at 19 percent, and fixing health care at 11 percent. Two other issues – tax cuts and the deficit – each gather the support of 6 percent of Democrats. Republicans, however, put fixing health care at the top of their list, at 23 percent, followed by the economy (20 percent), tax cuts (18 percent), jobs (15 percent), and the budget deficit (11 percent). Independents share both parties’ priorities, though jobs (20 percent) are at the top of their list, followed by health care (15 percent), tax cuts (13 percent), the economy (11 percent) and the budget deficit (8 percent).

Redlawsk cited two key findings from the survey. “First, Republicans are just less concerned about jobs than either Democrats or independents. They focus on repealing or reshaping the recent health care reform law. Second, for all the focus in Washington on the budget deficit, it’s not what anyone wants Congress to make its top priority, given the current economic environment.”

Republicans expect some priorities to get done, Democrats and independents pessimistic

Overall, few New Jerseyans think it “very likely” that the priority they consider “most important” will “actually get done.” Their pessimism is reflected in the fact that only 7 percent say it is “very likely” Congress will address their concerns come January while another 42 percent say it is “somewhat likely” and 48 percent say it is “not at all likely.”

Republicans however, are more optimistic, reflecting their success in the election. A majority (60 percent) says that it is very or somewhat likely that Congress will accomplish what they see as the most important task, while 39 percent of Republicans think this is not at all likely. Only 46 percent of Democrats feel at all positive, while 51 percent are negative about the prospects of action on their issue. And despite leaning Republican in their votes, independents are no more optimistic than Democrats.

On specific issues, a majority of those focused on jobs and the economy think there is some chance Congress will effectively address these issues, while about 6 in 10 focused on tax cuts and the deficit think it is not at all likely Congress will fix these issues. Those who want health care fixed are also less than optimistic: 44 percent say Congress say it is at least somewhat likely Congress will act, while 51 percent say it is not at all likely.

Republicans want representatives to stick to their beliefs; Democrats want compromise

While the majority of Garden State residents want their representatives to compromise to get laws passed, Republicans are 19 points more likely than Democrats to want their representatives to “stick to their beliefs.” Across all New Jerseyans, the desire for compromise is fairly strong, with 54 percent calling for legislators to work together, compared to 38 percent who say sticking to beliefs is more important. But this is driven by Democrats and independents, and reflected in the voting results, where 65 percent of those who voted Democrat want representatives to compromise, compared to only 44 percent of those who voted Republican.

Education appears strongly related to support for compromise. While only 48 percent of those with a high school education or less support compromise, more than 60 percent of college graduates and post-graduates call for compromise in order to get laws passed.

New Jerseyans who feel favorable to the Tea Party movement are even less likely to want compromise than other Republicans. While 50 percent of Republicans want their representatives to stick to their beliefs, 60 percent of those who support the Teas Party movement hold this view.

“The desire for compromise seems a bit one-sided from a partisan perspective,” said Redlawsk. “To some extent this reflects some of the personalities of partisans, as liberals appear more read to compromise than conservatives. But also, winners are less likely to want compromise than those who lose. Even so, for compromise to work, both sides must be willing to give, as reflected in the tax cut extension bill now working through Congress.”

Questions and Tables follow on the Next Page

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll December 2-6, 2010
Questions and Tables

The questions covered in the release of Dec 14, 2010 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q. Many people were not able to vote in the recent election because they got sick or they just did not have time. Which of the following best describes you?

I voted in the election	74%
I tried to vote but was not able to	10%
I did not try to vote	16%
N=	906

[ASK ONLY IF DID NOT VOTE]

Q. Which would you say is the MAIN reason that you did not vote? Was it [ROTATE 1-4]:

Personal Reasons	37%
Did not like the candidates	12%
Did not like how the campaign was conducted	6%
Not registered to vote	22%
Some other reason	22%
DK	1%
N=	237

[ASK ONLY IF VOTED]

Q. Did you vote for a Democrat, Republican, or some other candidate for U.S. Congress?

Democrat	47%
Republican	45%
Some other candidate	8%
N=	577

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Republican	4%	46%	94%	11%	38%	79%
Democrat	94%	35%	6%	78%	54%	14%
Some other candidate	2%	19%	1%	11%	7%	7%
N=	196	213	163	104	302	165

	Education				Employment			
	HS or less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl
Republican	39%	54%	51%	36%	47%	40%	46%	42%
Democrat	52%	39%	42%	56%	46%	46%	47%	51%
Some other candidate	9%	7%	7%	8%	8%	14%	7%	7%
N=	188	140	136	111	291	58	132	93

	Race				Age			
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Republican	55%	7%	17%	35%	41%	46%	42%	48%
Democrat	38%	92%	71%	45%	55%	45%	50%	44%
Some other candidate	8%	2%	12%	20%	4%	9%	8%	8%
N=	422	75	33	35	59	219	162	133

	Income				Gender	
	under 50K	50K-<100K	100K-<150K	150K+	Male	Female
Republican	34%	44%	49%	61%	50%	40%
Democrat	58%	45%	44%	36%	42%	52%
Some other candidate	8%	11%	7%	3%	8%	8%
N=	162	174	92	71	283	294

Q. In just one or two words, please tell me the SINGLE most important thing you would like Congress to fix when the Republicans take over the U.S. House in January? [Record Open Ended]

Mentions of [] as first mention

Jobs	21%	Social Security	2%
Economy	16%	End wars/Bring Troops home	2%
Health Care	16%	Bi-Partisan Compromise	2%
Tax Cuts	12%	Medicare	1%
Budget Deficit	8%	The Environment	1%
Education	4%	Others < 1%	14%
N =			842

	Party ID			Vote Choice		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Dem	Rep	Other
Jobs	26%	20%	15%	24%	15%	28%
Economy	19%	11%	20%	18%	18%	14%
Health Care	11%	15%	23%	11%	20%	21%
Tax Cuts	6%	13%	18%	7%	17%	9%
Budget Deficit	6%	8%	11%	6%	14%	2%
Other	32%	33%	15%	34%	15%	26%
N=	263	363	199	253	254	43

	Ideology			Education			
	Lib	Middle	Conserv	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Jobs	21%	22%	18%	21%	24%	22%	14%
Economy	16%	17%	13%	16%	12%	18%	19%
Health Care	17%	13%	22%	12%	21%	16%	14%
Tax Cuts	8%	12%	15%	12%	11%	10%	18%
Budget	4%	7%	13%	5%	10%	9%	10%
Other	34%	30%	19%	34%	23%	24%	26%
N=	144	477	203	310	223	188	118

	Employment				Race			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic
				Empl				
Jobs	20%	23%	20%	25%	19%	24%	27%	27%
Economy	18%	15%	13%	13%	17%	17%	16%	6%
Health Care	15%	14%	19%	16%	17%	8%	6%	22%
Tax Cuts	15%	9%	11%	8%	12%	8%	18%	9%
Budget	9%	5%	8%	7%	8%	6%	4%	8%
Other	24%	33%	29%	32%	27%	37%	29%	28%
N=	403	99	176	160	590	97	57	74

	Age				Income			Gender		
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K-	100K-	150K	Male	Female
					<100K	<150K	+			
Jobs	25%	22%	18%	21%	29%	20%	17%	7%	22%	20%
Economy	9%	17%	19%	14%	12%	16%	14%	27%	17%	15%
Health Care	15%	13%	18%	17%	12%	15%	21%	14%	12%	19%
Tax Cuts	5%	16%	11%	11%	9%	15%	12%	19%	14%	10%
Budget	8%	9%	7%	7%	4%	9%	8%	15%	12%	4%
Other	38%	24%	27%	30%	34%	25%	28%	18%	24%	32%
N=	123	318	223	173	268	222	130	86	403	439

Q. How likely is it that this will actually get done? Is it very likely, somewhat likely, or not at all likely?

Very likely	7%
Somewhat likely	42%
DK	48%
N=	839

	Party ID			Vote Choice		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Dem	Rep	Other
Very Likely	6%	6%	8%	6%	8%	5%
Somewhat Likely	40%	40%	52%	37%	49%	29%
Not at all Likely	51%	51%	39%	55%	41%	62%
DK	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	5%
N=	260	362	199	253	254	42

Most Important Issue:						Other
	Jobs	Economy	Health Care	Tax Cuts	Budget	Issues
Very Likely	9%	5%	2%	6%	3%	9%
Somewhat Likely	44%	52%	44%	34%	37%	40%
Not at all Likely	44%	40%	51%	59%	60%	47%
DK	3%	2%	3%	1%	0%	4%
N=	177	132	130	101	65	234

Q. Thinking about Congress in Washington and the State legislature in Trenton, which is more important: that our representatives [ROTATE] stick to their beliefs or compromise to get laws passed?

Stick to Beliefs	38%
Compromise	54%
DK	8%
N=	900

	Party ID			Vote Choice			Tea Party Impression	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Dem	Rep	Other	Favorable	Unfav
Stick to Beliefs	31%	37%	50%	27%	50%	33%	60%	27%
Compromise	60%	56%	42%	65%	44%	56%	36%	66%
DK	9%	6%	7%	8%	5%	11%	4%	7%
N=	290	386	203	271	257	45	242	358

Most Imp Issue:						Other
	Jobs	Economy	Health Care	Tax Cuts	Budget	Issues
Stick to Beliefs	40%	36%	41%	44%	31%	39%
Compromise	52%	56%	54%	48%	63%	56%
DK	8%	8%	5%	9%	6%	5%
N=	177	132	129	101	65	232

	Ideology			Education			
	Lib	Middle	Conserv	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Stick to Beliefs	27%	36%	55%	42%	40%	35%	29%
Compromise	67%	57%	36%	48%	55%	60%	63%
DK	6%	7%	9%	10%	5%	6%	8%
N=	152	524	203	341	237	196	122

	Employment				Race			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Stick to Beliefs	40%	38%	32%	40%	40%	33%	22%	43%
Compromise	53%	59%	56%	52%	53%	56%	70%	54%
DK	7%	3%	13%	8%	7%	11%	8%	3%
N=	421	112	193	169	623	107	59	86

	Age				Income			Gender		
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- 150K	150K +	Male	Female
Stick to Beliefs	45%	42%	35%	30%	41%	41%	37%	35%	38%	38%
Compromise	53%	51%	57%	57%	50%	51%	59%	61%	53%	55%
DK	2%	7%	8%	13%	9%	9%	3%	5%	9%	7%
N=	142	329	234	191	293	236	129	88	426	474

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll December 2-6, 2010

New Jersey Statewide Poll

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone from December 2-6, 2010 with a scientifically selected random sample of 906 New Jersey adults. Data are weighted to represent known parameters in the New Jersey population, using gender, age, race, and Hispanic ethnicity matching to US Census Bureau data. All results are reported with these weighted data. This telephone poll included 725 landline respondents and 181 cell phone respondents, acquired through random digit dialing.

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 906 adults is +/-3.3 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. 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 46.7 and 53.3 percent (50 +/-3.3) 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.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by Braun Research, Inc., of Princeton, New Jersey. The questionnaire was developed and all data analysis was completed in house at the Eagleton Institute of Politics Center for Public Interest Polling. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, a non-partisan academic center focused on the study and teaching of politics and the political process.

**Weighted Sample Characteristics
(N=906 New Jersey Adults)**

32% Dem	48% Male	16% 18-29	69% White
45% Independent	52% Female	37% 30-49	12% Black
23% Republican		26% 50-64	10% Hispanic
		21% 65+	6% Asian
			3% Other

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