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Voters say N.J. on Wrong Track, Christie Leads Incumbent

Just one in five voters (21%) say New Jersey is on the right track and, according to the most recent poll by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind™, Republican Chris Christie continues to lead the Democratic incumbent governor by a margin of 45%-39% in the race for governor. Another 15% say they are unsure. "Even though it's early in the campaign, it is remarkable that a Republican is running ahead in New Jersey," said Peter Woolley, a political scientist and director of the poll.

Christie, the former U.S. Attorney for New Jersey, has increased his statewide name recognition to 87%, up 25 points since April. However, his ratio of favorable to unfavorable opinion has shifted away from him even as Corzine has begun advertising. One-third of New Jersey voters (34%) say they have a favorable view of Christie versus one quarter (25%) who have an unfavorable view, up from 12% in April. Another quarter (28%) say they have not formed an opinion. "Christie still has upside potential," said Woolley, "and part of the campaign this summer will be the race to define him."

Among all voters, 54% say their view of Corzine is unfavorable, while 31% say their view is favorable. "The governor's key weakness right now is among Democrats," said Woolley. Forty-eight percent of Democrats say their view of Corzine is favorable but 37% say their view is unfavorable. In fact, only two-thirds of Democratic voters (66%) support Corzine, while one in five (20%) say they prefer Christie and 13% are undecided.

"The governor's numbers contrast strongly with support for the president," added Woolley. Among all voters, 61% approve of the way Barack Obama is handling his job, including 86% of Democrats. But one quarter of voters who approve of Obama (27%) say they prefer Christie and another 15% say they haven't decided. In contrast to Obama's 61%-29% approval rating, Corzine's approval stands at 36%-49%.

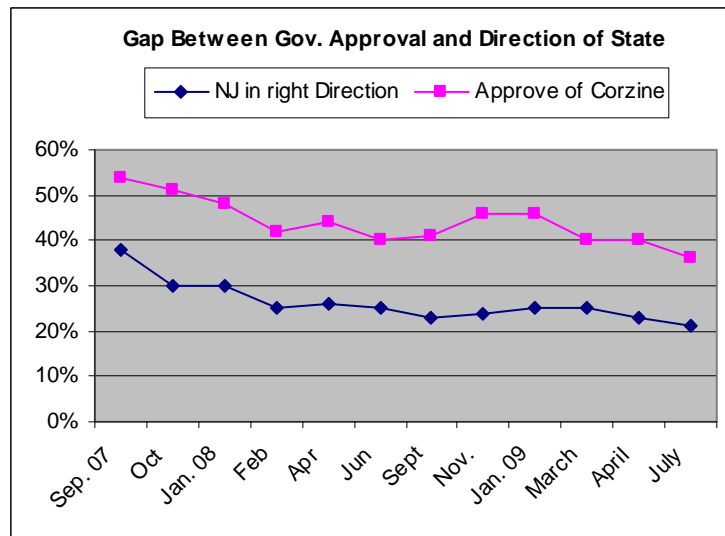
Christie also edges Corzine on two secondary measures. Asked which candidate is better described as "honest, trustworthy," Christie comes out ahead by 33%-24%. Asked which candidate better "understands the concerns of the average person," Christie wins 40%-28%. Corzine bests Christie only on the question of which candidate "has the background and experience to be a good governor," 42%-29%.

Most voters accept the tax increases contained in the new budget. A majority (55%) say it's a good idea to eliminate the property-tax deduction on state income tax for those earning more than \$250,000, while 37% say it's a bad idea. These numbers have turned around sharply since April when voters were asked about making the cut-off \$150,000. In that case, two-thirds (66%) were opposed. In addition, 64% say increasing taxes on wine and liquor is a good idea to raise money for the state; 31% say it's a bad idea. A majority (56%) say that it's a good idea to limit property tax rebates to senior citizens and others making less than \$75,000. A majority (52%) say it's a good idea to force state workers to take nine unpaid days off, while 40% say it's a bad idea. And 50% say eliminating 7,000 state jobs is a bad idea; an idea that was dropped from the budget considerations.

"The state budget may be squared away for the governor," said Woolley. "But clearly the election is not."

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 803 registered voters statewide was conducted by telephone from June 22, 2009, through June 29, 2009, and has a margin of error of +/- 3.5 percentage points.

*Methodology, questions, and tables are available on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>
Radio actualities at 201.692.2846 For more information, please call 201.692.7032.*



Methodology, Questions, and Tables

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from June 22, 2009 through June 29, 2009 using a randomly selected sample of 803 registered voters statewide. The margin of error for 803 randomly selected respondents is +/- 3.5 percentage points. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers. PublicMind interviews are conducted by professionally trained interviewers use a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a land-line phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected. Results are mathematically weighted to match known demographics.

US1: In your opinion, do you believe that the country is moving in the right direction or do you believe it has gotten off on the wrong track?

	All	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.	Men	Women
Right direction	49%	71	37	20	48	49
Wrong track	41%	19	47	68	42	39
Unsure/Refused	11%	9	15	11	10	12

Right/wrong direction trend

	Apr	Mar	Jan.	Oct.
Right direction	51%	51%	34%	13%
Wrong track	37%	37%	52%	78%
Unsure/Refused	11%	12%	13%	9%

Obama approval, current

US2: In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?											
	All	Party			Race		Ideology			Gov. Corzine*	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Non-white	Lib	Mod	Cons	Approve	disapprove
Approve	61%	86	52	28	54	83	89	65	33	87	39
Disapprove	29%	9	30	59	34	11	6	23	59	9	49
Unsure	10%	5	19	13	11	6	5	12	8	4	13

Obama approval, previous measures

	April	March	Jan.*	Bush Jan 09
Approve	66%	66%	72%	21%
Disapprove	22%	21%	10%	70%
Unsure/Refused	12%	13%	18%	9%

*January question asked how Obama was handling his transition to the presidency.

Question US3 held for release

Question: Now, turning to New Jersey... In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or do you think the state has gotten off on the wrong track?

	All	Party			Public employee household	
		D	I	R	yes	no
Right direction	21%	33	12	6	15	22
Wrong track	66%	49	74	88	74	63
Unsure	14%	18	15	6	11	15

Right track/wrong track trend

	Apr 09	Mar 09	Jan 09	Nov 08	Oct '08	Sept '08	June '08	Apr '08	Feb '08	Jan '08	Oct '07	Sep '07	Jun '07	May '07	Mar '06
Right direction	23%	25	25	24	23	23	25	26	25	28	30	38	36	42	39
Wrong track	64%	59	65	65	67	67	64	66	65	61	59	49	50	44	47
Unsure	13%	16	10	10	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	12	14	14	15

Question: Have you heard of [rotate list]? If you haven't just tell me. [If yes, ask:] Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of ...? Would that be very or somewhat?

	Haven't heard of	Very Favorable	Somewhat Favorable	Unsure/no opinion	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable
Jon Corzine (all)	2%	8%	23%	13%	24%	30%
<i>Democrats only</i>	2	14	34	14	25	12
<i>Independents only</i>	2	2	15	19	30	34
<i>Republicans only</i>	3	3	10	8	22	55
Previous Surveys...						
<i>Corzine 05/09</i>	1%	10%	23%	9%	18%	38%
<i>Corzine 03/09</i>	1%	10%	28%	13%	22%	26%
<i>Corzine 01/09</i>	2%	14%	28%	12%	21%	23%
<i>Corzine 11/08</i>	3%	13%	27%	14%	17%	26%

Ask at random 1/2 of sample: N=385/+/- 5	Haven't heard of	Very Favorable	Somewhat Favorable	No opinion	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable
Chris Daggett	89%	--	1%	9%	--	--

	Haven't heard of	Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	No opinion	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable
Chris Christie (all)	13%	10	24	28	14	11
<i>Republicans only</i>	9	19	35	26	8	3
<i>Independents only</i>	12	10	28	33	8	9
<i>Democrats only</i>	15	4	16	29	19	17
Previous Surveys...						
<i>Christie 04/09</i>	38%	14%	17%	20%	8%	4%
<i>Christie 03/09</i>	43%	12%	18%	22%	4%	2%
<i>Christie 01/09</i>	56%	11%	12%	15%	4%	2%
<i>Christie 09/08</i>	60%	2%	3%	14%	11%	9%

Next November there will be an election for governor. I know it's early but who would you vote for in a race between... and...? [ROTATE NAMES] [If "don't know" ASK: "at this moment, which way do you lean?"]

	All	Dem	Ind	Rep	Approve Obama	Disapprove Obama
Jon Corzine, the Democrat	35					
Lean Corzine	4					
Total Corzine	39%	66	21	7	56	10
Chris Christie, the Republican	42					
Lean Christie	3					
Total Christie	45%	20	45	83	27	80
Don't know (vol.)	15%	13	30	10	15	10
Other (vol.)	1%	1	4	1	1	--

Corzine v. Christie trend

	April	March	Jan
Total Corzine	33%	32%	40%
Total Christie	42%	41%	33%
Don't know (vol.)	25%	27%	26%

Question: Which candidate for New Jersey governor... or ... is better described by...?						
<i>rotate names, rotate order</i>	All	Dem	Ind	Rep	men	women
Honest, trustworthy						
Jon Corzine	24%	40	10	5	26	22
Chris Christie	33%	16	38	57	36	31
neither (vol)	18%	17	24	18	18	19
both (vol)	5%	5	3	4	5	5
don't know (vol)	20%	21	26	15	16	24
Understands the concerns of the average person						
Jon Corzine	28%	47	10	8	30	26
Chris Christie	40%	24	47	64	43	38
neither (vol)	11%	10	18	11	12	10
both (vol)	2%	3	4	1	1	3
don't know (vol)	18%	16	21	16	13	22
Has the background and experience to be a good governor						
Jon Corzine	42%	65	27	16	46	39
Chris Christie	29%	13	27	54	29	29
neither (vol)	7%	5	11	9	8	6
both (vol)	4%	2	11	4	3	5
don't know (vol)	18%	15	24	17	14	21

Question: Now, regardless of which candidate you <u>want</u> to win, if you had to guess, who would you say is <u>going</u> to win the election for governor in November... or ...?				
<i>Rotate names</i>	All	Dem	Ind.	Rep.
Jon Corzine	46%	61	34	31
Chris Christie	38%	25	45	57
Don't Know (vol.)	15%	13	20	11

Job rating, current

Question: How would you rate the job Jon Corzine is doing as governor...
[READ]?

	All	Party		
		Dem	Ind	Rep
Excellent	2%	3	2	--
Good	24%	40	10	6
Only fair	39%	42	46	34
Poor	31%	13	37	57
unsure (vol)	3%	2	4	3

Job rating, previous measures

	2009			2008						2007					2006			
	Ap	Mar	Ja	No	Oc	Se	Jun	Ap	Fe	Ja	Oc	Sep	Jun	Mar	Ja	No	Oc	Se
Excellent	3%	2	4	6	4	3	4	3	5	6	5	7	5	6	4	10	11	9
Good	24%	28	28	28	27	28	27	29	28	29	37	37	37	39	34	40	40	33
Only fair	36%	40	41	39	41	41	41	36	38	39	38	39	36	39	38	30	32	33
Poor	35%	28	25	24	25	25	24	30	27	23	17	15	14	12	17	17	14	20
Unsure	2%	3	2	4	3	4	4	2	2	3	3	3	8	4	7	3	3	5

Approve/disapprove Current

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the job Jon Corzine is doing as governor?

	All	Dem	Ind	Rep	President's Job Approval	
					Approve	disapprove
Approve	36%	58	19	12	52	11
Disapprove	49%	26	58	80	31	82
Mixed/unsure	15%	16	23	8	17	7

Approve/disapprove, previous surveys

	2009			2008								2007					2006		
	Ap	Mar	Ja	No	Oc	Sep	Jun	Ap	Fe	Ja	Ja	Oc	Se	Jun	Mar	Ja	No	Oc	Se
Approve	40%	40	46	46	45	41	40	44	42	41	48	51	54	50	55	51	58	56	51
Disapprove	49%	46	40	37	39	43	41	45	43	39	32	29	25	27	25	29	27	28	31
mixed/DK	11%	13	14	17	17	16	19	11	16	20	20	20	21	23	20	19	15	16	18

Question: Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about the New Jersey State budget. How much have you heard or read about the Governor's proposed state budget for the coming year...?

	All	Governor approval			April
		Approve	Mixed/unsure	disapprove	
Nothing at all	18%	21	34	12	15%
Only a little	34%	35	40	32	28%
Some	33%	34	19	37	44%
A great deal	14%	10	7	19	13%

Question: In order either raise money or cut spending in next year's budget a number of actions were considered. For each of these actions, tell me whether you think it's a good idea or a bad idea?

<i>[Rotate list]</i>	All	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.	April 09
<i>Reduce state aid to cities and towns.</i>					
Good idea	24%	16	25	36	28%
Bad idea	66%	76	63	55	60%
Unsure/ref.	9%	8	12	9	12%
<i>Require state employees to take 9 unpaid days off</i>					
					(note 1)
Good idea	52%	52	50	55	55%
Bad idea	40%	42	38	38	37%
Unsure/ref.	7%	6	11	7	8%
<i>Eliminate 7000 state jobs. (note 2)</i>					
Good idea	38%	29	45	51	39%
Bad idea	50%	61	36	39	49%
Unsure/ref.	11%	10	18	10	13%
<i>Only give property tax rebates to seniors and people making less than 75 thousand dollars a year.</i>					
Good idea	56%	65	61	42	62%
Bad idea	39%	30	33	54	33%
Unsure/ref.	5%	5	5	4	6%
<i>Increase taxes on wine and liquor</i>					
Good idea	64%	76	54	52	N/A
Bad idea	31%	23	42	41	N/A
Unsure/ref.	4%	1	4	7	N/A
<i>Eliminate the property tax deduction on state income tax forms for households making \$250,000.</i>					
					(note 3)
Good idea	55%	61	58	47	24%
Bad idea	37%	32	34	46	66%
Unsure/ref.	7%	7	8	6	10%

Notes:

1. April 2009 question read "...12 unpaid days off."
2. This proposal was withdrawn and not included in the FY 2010 budget.
3. April 2009 question read "...households making \$150,000."

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