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6 pp.

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## **Christie Approvals Bounce Back**

According to the most recent poll by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind, Gov. Chris Christie's approval numbers have bounced back to a robust margin among New Jersey's registered voters, with 54% approving and 36% disapproving. "The spring budget battles at every level - municipal, county, and state - hurt the governor," said Peter Woolley, director of the poll. "But he got a big win on pension and benefits reform in June, and weathered Hurricane Irene in August."

Men as well as non-public-employee households approve of the job the governor is doing by margins of two to one (61-31 and 59-30, respectively). Women split slightly in favor (46-42), while public-employee households pan the governor (37-55).

Voters split on the question of whether the state is moving in the right direction: 45% say it is, while 47% say it's "off on the wrong track." But that is a big improvement from May, when in the midst of local and state budget haggling, 55% said the state was on the wrong track and just 36% said it was headed in the right direction. Regardless, public-employee households, by a margin of two to one (61-33) say the state is on the wrong track.

Half of voters, 49%, have a favorable opinion of the governor while 41% have an unfavorable opinion, a reversal from 40% favorable and 45% unfavorable in May. About equal numbers have strong opinions: with 28% saying their view is "very favorable" and 27% saying their view is "very unfavorable." And 46% say the governor is doing a "good" or "excellent" job, up 10 points from May. One in four, 24%, says he's doing a "poor" job, compared to 32% in May.

"But all those good numbers for the governor do not make converts to his party in the legislative election," said Woolley. Asked about the upcoming elections, 46% of voters say they prefer the Democratic Party control the State Assembly and the Senate, while 34% say they prefer the Republican Party control the two chambers. Unaffiliated voters split 31% for Republicans and 35% for Democrats.

Christie's favorable ratings are better than those of the NJEA, an organization which he roundly criticizes and which has bought a great deal of advertising to criticize Christie: 39% say they have a favorable view of the teachers' union, 37% say their view of the NJEA is unfavorable. One in four (24%) have mixed views or are unsure. But, 50% of Democrats have a favorable view of the union, while 63% of Republicans have an unfavorable view of it.

Democrats and unaffiliated voters thinking about who they might like to have run against Christie in 2013 hardly have their minds made up. Offered a choice of six prominent Democrats, nearly half have no preference (46%), but about one in five prefer (18%) former Gov. Richard Codey and a similar proportion (19%) prefer Newark Mayor Cory Booker. Rep. Frank Pallone, Senate President Steve Sweeney, and Senator Barbara Buono each pull 5%. Assemblyman Lou Greenwald polls 1%.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 800 registered voters statewide was conducted by telephone with both landline and cell phones from Sept. 19 through Sept. 25, 2011, and has a margin of error of +/-3.5 percentage points.

## Methodology, Questions, and Tables

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from Sept. 19, 2011, through Sept. 25, 2011, using a randomly selected sample of 800 registered voters statewide. The margin of error for a sample of 800 randomly selected respondents is +/- 3.5 percentage points. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. 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 Opinion America of Cedar Knolls, NJ, with professionally trained interviewers using 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. Landline households are supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone-only-households, interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender.

**Question:** Now, thinking about 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			Gender		Public employee household	
		D	I	R	men	wom	No	Yes
Right direction	<b>45%</b>	27	42	69	50	39	48	33
Wrong track	<b>47%</b>	61	54	26	45	49	42	61
Unsure/mixed	<b>9%</b>	11	4	5	6	12	10	6

### Right /Wrong direction past year

May	Apr	Feb	Jan 2011	Nov	Oct	Aug	May	Mar. 30	Mar. 3	Jan. 2010
36%	44%	44%	44%	40%	44%	42%	35%	33%	32%	27%
55%	47%	47%	48%	51%	48%	48%	55%	55%	49%	55%
9%	9%	10%	8%	10%	9%	11%	10%	13%	20%	18%

### Right/Wrong direction Corzine term ...

	Oct 09	Se 09	Jul 09	Apr 09	Mar 09	Jan 09	Nov 08	Oct 08	Sept 08	Jun 08	Apr 08	Fe 08	Jan 08	Oct 07	Se 07	Jn 07	My 07	Mr 06	Jan 06
Right track	21%	22	21	23	25	25	24	23	23	25	26	25	28	30	38	36	42	39	34
Wrong track	68%	68	66	64	59	65	65	67	67	64	66	65	61	59	49	50	44	47	48
DK	11%	10	14	13	16	10	10	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	12	14	14	15	18

**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/mixed	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable
<b>Chris Christie (all)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>27</b>
<i>Republicans only</i>	--	54	24	4	7	10
<i>Independents only</i>	1	27	24	17	10	21
<i>Democrats only</i>	2	9	18	9	20	42
Previous Surveys...						
Christie 05/11	3%	22%	18%	11%	12%	33%
Christie 04/11	2%	26%	21%	9%	13%	28%
Christie 02/11	1%	27%	19%	11%	16%	26%
Christie 01/11	2%	28%	19%	11%	12%	27%
Christie 11/10	1%	26%	19%	13%	11%	30%
Christie 10/10	2%	30%	18%	11%	15%	24%
Christie 8/10	1%	21%	20%	21%	13%	23%
Christie 5/10	3%	21%	19%	14%	12%	31%
Christie 3/30/10	3%	18%	20%	20%	17%	22%
Christie 3/3/10	2%	19%	28%	25%	10%	15%
Christie 1/10	3%	16%	29%	28%	14%	9%

Christie 10/09	1%	17%	24%	14%	20%	24%
Christie 09/09	3%	15%	23%	25%	17%	18%
Christie 07/09	13%	10%	24%	28%	14%	11%
Christie 04/09	38%	14%	17%	20%	8%	4%
Christie 03/09	43%	12%	18%	22%	4%	2%
Christie 01/09	56%	11%	12%	15%	4%	2%
Christie 09/08	60%	2%	3%	14%	11%	9%

**Job rating, current****Question:** How would you rate the job Chris Christie is doing as governor... [READ]?

	All	Party			Public Employee Household		Gender	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	No	Yes	men	Wom
Excellent	<b>18%</b>	4	19	36	20	11	19	16
Good	<b>28%</b>	18	29	42	30	19	32	24
Only fair	<b>29%</b>	39	35	13	29	31	26	33
Poor	<b>24%</b>	37	17	9	19	38	22	25
Unsure	<b>1%</b>	2	1	--	1	1	1	2

Job rating, trend	May	Apr	Feb	Jan. 2011	Nov	Oct	Aug	May	Mar. 30	Mar. 3
Excellent	14%	17%	15%	17%	17%	19%	13%	13%	10%	8%
Good	22%	26%	30%	27%	28%	26%	26%	24%	24%	31%
Only fair	28%	28%	26%	31%	25%	26%	32%	23%	31%	26%
Poor	32%	27%	26%	23%	27%	25%	24%	33%	21%	13%
Unsure	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	6%	7%	14%	21%

**Approve/disapprove, Current****Question:** Do you approve or disapprove of way Chris Christie is handling his job as governor? Would that be somewhat... or strongly....?

	All	gender		Party			Public Employee Household	
		men	wom	Dem	Ind	Rep	No	Yes
Approve	<b>54%</b>	61	46	31	64	81	59	37
Disapprove	<b>36%</b>	31	42	54	26	16	30	55
Mixed/unsure	<b>10%</b>	8	12	14	10	4	11	7

**Approve/disapprove, trend** [\* Question was "...handling his transition to governor."]

	May	Apr	Feb	Jan 2011	Nov	Oct	Aug.	May	Mar. 30	Mar. 3	Jan. 10*
Approve	44%	51%	51%	53%	49%	51%	47%	44%	43%	52%	48%
Disapprove	44%	41%	39%	36%	39%	37%	36%	42%	32%	21%	13%
Mixed/d.k.	12%	8%	10%	11%	12%	13%	17%	15%	25%	28%	38%

**Question:** And have you heard of the NJEA?

	current	April '11	Nov '10	June '10	March '10
Yes	69%	71%	74%	74%	70%
No	29%	29%	26%	26%	30%

The NJEA is the public teachers' union. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the NJEA? Would that be very or somewhat?

	Very Favorable	Somewhat favorable	Unsure/ Mixed	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable
<b>All</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>21%</b>
<i>men</i>	17	20	19	16	27
<i>Women</i>	21	19	30	16	15
<i>Democrats</i>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	31	10	8
<i>independents</i>	24	17	16	20	24
<i>Republicans</i>	9	13	16	<b>24</b>	<b>39</b>
<i>Non-public union household</i>	12	19	29	17	23
<i>Public union household</i>	<b>38</b>	<b>20</b>	9	16	16
April 2011	18%	21%	23%	17%	21%
Nov 2010	21%	18%	23%	15%	23%
June 2010	15%	18%	23%	18%	26%
March 2010	17%	18%	30%	16%	19%

**Question:** In November, everyone in the state assembly and senate are up for election. Would you prefer that the... or the... control the state assembly and senate after the election?

READ, ROTATE Democrats, Republicans

	<b>All</b>	Party			Gender		Public Employee household		May	April
		D	I	R	men	wom	No	Yes		
Republicans	34%	3	<b>31</b>	85	40	28	35	31	32%	36%
Democrats	46%	88	<b>35</b>	3	42	49	45	48	42%	41%
Split (vol)	4%	2	<b>7</b>	2	4	4	3	4	6%	7%
Unsure (vol)	13%	6	<b>21</b>	9	10	16	13	12	16%	13%
Don't care	3%	2	<b>6</b>	1	4	3	3	4	4%	3%

[ASK "Democrats" and "independents"] If you could pick a Democrat to run against Chris Christie for governor, who would you prefer...READ: ROTATE?

<i>N=571</i>	<b>All</b>	Dems	ind.
	Dems + inds		
Richard Codey	18%	18	19
Cory Booker	19%	21	16
Lou Greenwald	1%	3	--
Stephen Sweeney	5%	4	6
Barbara Buono	5%	3	6
Frank Pallone	5%	6	5
Don't know (vol)	46%	45	48

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## Question Wording and Order

US1-2 held for later release.

US3a. Now I'm going ask about some people. If you haven't heard of one of them, just say so. Have you heard of Chris Christie? Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Chris Christie? Would that be very or somewhat?

US3-5 held for later release.

NJ1. Now, thinking about New Jersey... In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or have they gotten off on the wrong track?

DK/Unsure [DON'T READ]

NJ2a. And have you heard of the NJEA?

Yes

No/DK

NJ2b. The NJEA is the public teachers' union. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the NJEA? Would that be very or somewhat?

Very favorable

Somewhat favorable

No opinion/DK

Somewhat unfavorable

Very unfavorable

NJ3. How would you rate the job Chris Christie is doing as governor—excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

DK/Unsure [DON'T READ]

NJ4. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor?

Neither [vol] or Neutral [vol]

DK [vol] or both [vol]

NJ5. In November, everyone in the state assembly and senate are up for election. Would you prefer that the... or the... control the assembly and senate after the election?

ROTATE

Republicans

Democrats

Split/one of each (vol)

Vote against incumbent (vol)

DK (vol)

Don't care (vol)

NJ6A-8B, NJCC 1-6 held for later release

D1. Regardless of who you might vote for, do you consider yourself a....ROTATE... a Democrat, a Republican, or an independent?

Other [DON'T READ]

Don't Know/Ref [DON'T READ]

D1a. [ASK “Democrats” and “independents”] If you could pick a Democrat to run against Chris Christie for governor, who would you prefer:

#### ROTATE LIST

Richard Codey  
 Cory Booker  
 Lou Greenwald  
 Stephen Sweeney  
 Barbara Buono  
 Frank Pallone  
 Don't know/unsure [DO NOT READ]

#### Sample Characteristics (%)

##### Gender

Male	50
Female	50

##### Age

18-29	12
30-44	26
45-59	32
60+	27
Ref.	3

##### In addition to being American, would you say you are...?

White	70
Black	14
Hispanic or Latino	9
Asian	3
Other/ref.	4

##### Public Employee Household?

yes	25
No	73
not sure/ref.	2

##### Party ID

Dem. + lean Dem.	49
ind. + unsure + ref.	15
Rep. + lean Rep.	36