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Sports Betting, Sure Thing; Internet Betting, Nyet!

A majority of New Jersey voters are willing to allow betting on sports—including football and basketball games—in all states: According to the most recent statewide poll by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind™, 53% say they support changing the law, up from 45% a year ago, and distinctly ahead of 39% who favored it in a 2010 national survey.

Moreover, a majority of New Jersey voters support betting on sports in Atlantic City casinos: 62% say they favor it whether at casinos or horse tracks, while 32% oppose it. Men favor it by a wide margin of 70%-27% and women by 55%-36%. Democrats, Republicans and independents favor it by equal margins.

A majority (55%) agree that people bet on sports games anyway, "so government should allow it and tax it," an increase of 9 points from a year ago. That's compared to little more than a third (37%) who agree that sports betting is "a bad idea because it promotes too much gambling and can corrupt sports," a decrease of 10 points from a year ago.

Folks who already bet on sports in office pools are more likely than other voters to favor legal sports betting, whether in other states or in New Jersey: By 70%-26% they say people will do it anyway, so tax it. That compares to folks who are not in the office pool but who agree by the slimmer margin of 50%-42%.

However, New Jersey voters are not ready to embrace betting by Internet, even for fellow residents: 67% say they oppose allowing New Jersey casinos to run betting games over the Internet for people in New Jersey, while just 26% say they favor it. Men oppose it by a margin of 62%-34%, and women by a margin of 71%-18%. Democrats, Republicans and independents alike oppose it by margins of 2-to-1.

"With increasing competition for profits and tax revenue, it seems the expansion of legal gambling is inevitable," said Peter Woolley, a political scientist and director of the poll, "but public opinion has historically lagged behind what casino operators and tax collectors want to do."

Moreover, even those who have been to a casino in the past year oppose the Internet betting idea by more than 2-to-1 (65%-29%), essentially the same margin by which people who haven't been to casino recently oppose it (67%-25%). Likewise, people who participate in office betting pools oppose the notion (56%-38%).

"People suspect that the Internet makes the barrier for participation in gambling too low," said Woolley, "maybe a little like having a liquor store right at everyone's door."

Pollsters also tested the idea that calling the activity "gaming" rather than "gambling" would make a significant difference in people's opinions. But the industry-friendly term "online gaming" compared to "online gambling" turned out to be the same bet for voters.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 801 registered voters statewide was conducted by telephone with both landline and cell phones from Feb. 7, 2011, through Feb. 13, 2011, and has a margin of error of +/-3.5 percentage points.

*Methodology, questions, and tables on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>
Radio actualities at 201.692.2846 For more information, please call 973.443.8661*

Methodology, Questions, and Tables

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from Feb. 7, 2011, through Feb. 13, 2011, using a randomly selected sample of 801 registered voters statewide. The margin of error for a sample of 801 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.

Questions US1-2; NJ1-6; AC1-2 released 02.16.11

Currently, betting on sports—like football games and basketball games—is legal only in Las Vegas and on a limited basis in Delaware. Do you support or oppose changing the law to allow people to place bets on sports in all states?

	All	Gender		Ideology			Play in Office pool?		Been to casino?		NJ	Nation
		Men	Wom	Lib	Mod	Cons	Yes	No	Yes	no	2010	2010
Support	53%	61	45	62	55	46	73	47	64	47	45%	39%
Oppose	34%	30	38	28	33	39	17	39	26	39	46%	53%
DK	13%	9	16	11	11	14	10	14	10	14	9%	8%

Some people say...[ROTATE]...lots of people bet on sports anyway, so government should allow it and tax it. Others say...legal betting on sports is a bad idea because it promotes too much gambling and can corrupt sports. Which comes closer to your view?

	All	Gender		Ideology			Play in Office pool?		Been to casino?		NJ
		Men	Wom	Lib	Mod	Cons	Yes	no	Yes	no	2010
Allow it	55%	60	50	65	57	48	70	50	62	53	46%
Bad Idea	37%	35	39	28	37	45	26	42	32	38	47%
DK	8%	6	10	7	6	7	4	8	7	8	7%

Now just thinking about New Jersey... Do you favor or oppose making sports-betting legal in New Jersey at Atlantic City casinos and racetracks?

	All	Gender		Party ID			Play in office pool?		Been to casino?		2010*	2009*
		Men	Wom	Dem	ind	Rep	yes	no	yes	no		
Favor	62%	70	55	63	62	61	78	58	72	60	60%	63%
Oppose	32%	27	36	32	32	34	20	36	25	34	33%	32%
Unsure	6%	2	9	5	6	5	2	7	4	6	7%	6%

*Question was "Would you favor or oppose making sports betting legal in New Jersey at Atlantic City casinos?"

gaming/gambling on-line [SELECT ONE AT RANDOM]... Combined

What about on-line...gaming/gambling ...do you favor or oppose allowing New Jersey casinos to run betting games online, over the internet, for people in New Jersey?

	All	Gender		Party ID			Play in office pool?		Been to casino?	
		Men	Wom	Dem	ind	Rep	yes	no	yes	no
Favor	26%	34	18	27	34	24	38	23	29	25
Oppose	67%	62	71	65	61	69	56	70	65	67
Unsure	7%	4	10	8	6	7	6	8	6	8

Online "Gaming" N=391

What about on-line... <u>gaming</u> ...do you favor or oppose allowing New Jersey casinos to run betting games online, over the internet, for people in New Jersey?										
	All	Men	Wom	Party ID			Play in Office pool?		Been to casino?	
				Dem	ind	Rep	yes	no	Yes	No
Favor	27%	35	22	29	26	30	42	24	35	27
Oppose	65%	61	67	61	67	65	54	68	60	66
Unsure	8%	4	11	10	8	5	4	9	5	8

Online "Gambling" N=410

What about on-line... <u>gambling</u> ... do you favor or oppose allowing New Jersey casinos to run betting games online, over the internet, for people in New Jersey?										
	All	Men	Wom	Party ID			Play in office pool?		Been to casino?	
				Dem	ind	Rep	Yes	No	Yes	No
Favor	25%	34	15	25	41	20	35	22	24	24
Oppose	68%	62	76	69	56	72	58	71	70	69
Unsure	7%	4	10	6	4	8	7	7	7	8

Question: In the past 12 months, have you, or anyone in your household, participated in an office betting pool such as for the World Series, the Super bowl or another game?

Yes, respondent	14%
Yes, household	10%
No	75%

Question: In the past 12 months have you, or anyone in your household, been to a casino or slots parlor?

Yes, respondent	20%
Yes, household	13%
No	66%

Sample Characteristics (%)

Gender	
Male	49
Female	51

Age	
18-29	12
30-44	24
45-59	32
60+	30
Ref.	2

In addition to being American, would you say you are...?	
White	67
Black	15
Hispanic or Latino	9
Asian	5
Other/ref.	4

Party ID	
Dem. + lean Dem.	47
ind. + unsure + ref.	16
Rep. + lean Rep.	38

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