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Contact: Krista Jenkins Office: 973.443.8390 Cell: 908.328.8967
kjenkins@fdu.edu

THE GOVERNOR, THE PRESIDENT, AND SANDY GOOD NUMBERS IN THE DAYS AFTER THE STORM

Governor Chris Christie's job approval rating surged after Hurricane Sandy, according to the most recent panel survey of registered voters in the Garden State from Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind. Before Sandy, 56 percent of panel respondents approved of the governor's job performance. When the same voters were re-contacted after the storm, the number rose to 77 percent. Similarly, the percent of those who now say Christie is doing either an "excellent" or "good" job as governor increased from 55 percent pre-Sandy to 70 percent post-Sandy.

"Governor Christie's presence before, during, and after the storm was clearly received well by Garden State voters," said Krista Jenkins, director of PublicMind and professor of political science. "A situation like this gives politicians an opportunity to put partisan politics aside. Governor Christie's post-Sandy bounce suggests he was successful in capitalizing on this moment."

The governor's largest increase came from an unlikely source – Democrats. Before Sandy, only one-in-four (26%) Democrats approved of the job Christie was doing, but that number rose to two-thirds (67%) in the days after the historic storm. Prior to Sandy, 25 percent of Democratic panelists said the governor is doing an "excellent" or "good" job, but those numbers increased to 58 percent after the governor took to the airwaves in the days following the hurricane.

"Much like Governor Christie's embrace of the support the state received from President Obama in the days after the storm, Democratic respondents approve of Christie for his leadership, at least for now" said Jenkins.

Panelists are also more positive on the direction the state is heading, according to their responses both before and after the storm. Prior to Sandy, about six-in-ten (58%) believed the state was heading in the right direction. Following Sandy, seven-in-ten (69%) said the same.

“Whether the more positive outlook on things is related to the greater support for the governor remains unclear,” said Jenkins. “But, taken as a whole, these are good numbers for the governor in the days after a storm that wreaked tremendous destruction on the Garden State.”

President Obama and the nation’s ratings also received a small upturn. Obama’s approval rating among panelists increased slightly from 48 percent pre-election to 53 percent post-election, while the percent of panelists who said the nation was heading in the right direction increased from 46 percent before Sandy to 50 percent post-Sandy.

“To the extent that these numbers tell a story, they point to the recognition among voters that leadership was present at a time of crisis,” said Jenkins.

The most recent panel survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University’s PublicMind was conducted by telephone from October 26 – October 29, 2012 and then again from November 13 – November 18, 2012 using a randomly selected sample of 241 registered voters statewide, and has a margin of error of +/-6.3 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 201.692.7032*

Methodology

The most recent panel survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from October 26 – October 29, 2012 and then again from November 13 – November 18, 2012 using a randomly selected sample of registered voters statewide. Respondents were initially contacted in the days before the presidential election and Hurricane Sandy, yielding an original sample size of 394. The desired sample size was larger, however the effects of Hurricane Sandy brought the data collection to an early conclusion in the first wave.

The same 394 respondents were re-contacted after the election and Hurricane Sandy. Due to the inevitable attrition that comes with any panel design, the final number of respondents who completed both pre- and post-election interviews was 241, or 61% of the original sample. This release compares the 241 respondents pre and post-election responses. With a sample of this size one can be 95% confident that the sample estimates reported in this release are within plus or minus 6.3 percentage points from the entire population of registered voters who live in the Garden State.

The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. Furthermore, 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 were 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 were supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone respondents interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample was mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender.

President Obama Approval/Disapproval

In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?
[Asked before the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+	White	Non-white
Approve	48%	88	33	8	43	51	57	44	47	39	75
Disapprove	47%	9	42	90	53	42	34	51	49	55	20
Don't know	3%	4	7	2	3	4	3	3	3	4	3
Refused	2%	-	18	-	1	3	5	2	1	2	3

In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?
[Asked after the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+	White	Non-white
Approve	53%	89	47	12	48	56	65	52	48	43	79
Disapprove	39%	3	34	84	47	32	27	39	44	48	12
Don't know	7%	7	12	3	4	8	4	7	8	7	6
Refused	2%	-	6	1	-	3	4	3	1	1	3

Nation, Right direction v. Wrong track

In your opinion, do you believe the country is moving in the right direction or is it on the wrong track?
[Asked before the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+	White	Non-white
Right direction	46%	83	43	6	38	52	52	44	44	36	74
Wrong track	49%	14	39	91	59	42	43	50	52	58	23
Unsure	4%	3	11	3	4	5	-	7	4	5	3
Refused	1%	-	7	-	-	1	5	-	-	1	-

In your opinion, do you believe the country is moving in the right direction or is it on the wrong track?
[Asked after the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+	White	Non-white
Right direction	50%	84	41	14	44	56	59	51	47	42	73
Wrong track	42%	8	46	83	52	33	32	43	44	50	17
Unsure	7%	7	13	3	4	10	9	5	9	7	10
Refused	1%	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	-

Governor Christie Approval/Disapproval

Now thinking about New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor? [Asked before the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+
Approve	56%	26	60	86	64	49	32	56	62
Disapprove	33%	59	20	9	28	37	42	35	30
Neither	6%	11	4	2	5	7	12	4	6
Unsure	5%	4	16	3	3	7	14	5	2

	Race		State's preparation for Sandy	
	White	Non-white	Efficient	Not efficient
Approve	64	29	54	59
Disapprove	27	56	36	25
Neither	6	8	6	7
Unsure	4	7	4	9

Now thinking about New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor? [Asked after the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+
Approve	77%	67	92	87	76	77	63	83	77
Disapprove	17%	26	5	9	19	15	29	10	17
Neither	3%	6	-	1	2	4	3	4	4
Unsure	3%	1	3	4	2	3	6	3	2

	Race		State's preparation for Sandy	
	White	Non-white	Efficient	Not efficient
Approve	77	75	79	57
Disapprove	16	18	15	29
Neither	4	4	4	6
Unsure	3	3	3	8

Governor Christie, rating

How would you rate the job Chris Christie is doing as governor? [Asked before the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+
Excellent	22%	3	19	43	23	21	5	19	29
Good	33%	22	37	43	35	31	23	32	35
Only fair	25%	41	16	11	26	25	37	27	21
Poor	17%	32	13	3	15	19	30	19	13
Unsure	2%	1	16	-	1	4	5	3	1

	Race		State's preparation for Sandy	
	White	Non-white	Efficient	Not efficient
Excellent	29	5	23	22
Good	36	18	31	43
Only fair	18	47	24	28
Poor	14	28	20	7
Unsure	2	3	2	-

How would you rate the job Chris Christie is doing as governor? [Asked after the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+
Excellent	28%	14	27	46	24	30	15	29	32
Good	42%	44	47	40	48	38	43	43	41
Only fair	21%	31	23	9	19	23	28	18	21
Poor	7%	10	3	3	9	5	12	6	5
Unsure	2%	1	-	2	1	4	2	4	1

	Race		State's preparation for Sandy	
	White	Non-white	Efficient	Not efficient
Excellent	33	18	31	-
Good	41	40	41	57
Only fair	18	30	19	29
Poor	6	9	7	6
Unsure	2	3	2	8

New Jersey, Right direction v. Wrong track

In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track? [Asked before the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+
Right direction	58%	39	58	79	65	52	47	60	59
Wrong track	30%	48	24	12	26	33	39	29	29
Unsure	12%	12	18	9	9	15	14	11	12345

	Race		State's preparation for Sandy	
	White	Non-white	Efficient	Not efficient
Right direction	63	38	57	50
Wrong track	22	59	31	43
Unsure	15	3	12	7

In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track? [Asked after the election]

	All	Party			Gender		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	55+
Right direction	69%	65	75	74	70	67	66	66	71
Wrong track	19%	25	8	15	22	17	25	18	18
Unsure	12%	10	16	10	7	16	9	16	11

	Race		State's preparation for Sandy	
	White	Non-white	Efficient	Not efficient
Right direction	68	67	71	48
Wrong track	17	23	17	44
Unsure	14	9	11	8

Exact Question Wording and Order

US1. *In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?*

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 DK/Unsure/mixed [DON'T READ]
- 9 Refused [DON'T READ]

US2. *In your opinion, do you believe the country is moving in the right direction or is it on the wrong track?*

- 1 Right direction
- 2 Wrong track
- 8 DK/Unsure [DON'T READ]
- 9 Refused. [DON'T READ]

NJ1. *Now thinking about New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor?*

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 3 Neither [vol] or Neutral [vol]
- 8 DK [vol] or both [vol]

NJ2. *How would you rate the job Chris Christie is doing as governor—READ excellent, good, only fair, or poor?*

- 4 Excellent
- 3 Good
- 2 Only fair
- 1 Poor
- 8 DK/Unsure [DON'T READ]

NJ3. *In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track?*

- 1 Right direction
- 2 Wrong track
- 8 DK/Unsure [DON'T READ]

Sample characteristics – Registered voters**Gender**

Male	48
Female	52

Age

18-29	10
30-44	23
45-59	31
60+	33
Refused	2

Race/Ethnicity

White	70
Black/African-American	12
Latino or Hispanic	9
Asian	3
Other/refused	6

Region

North	55
South	45

Party identification

Democrat/Lean Democrat	49
Independent/DK/refused	17
Republican/Lean Republican	34