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Contact: Krista Jenkins 908.328.8967 kjenkins@fdu.edu

STATE GIVES THUMBS UP TO GOVERNOR – CHALLENGERS FACE AN UPHILL BATTLE IN 2013

As Governor Christie prepares to deliver his annual State of the State address tomorrow, a new poll from Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind finds that almost three quarters (73%) of registered voters in the state approve of the job he's doing as governor, and more than two-thirds (68%) rate his job performance as "excellent" or "good." This is the second highest approval rating the poll has measured for Governor Christie. His best rating came only recently, in the days after Hurricane Sandy, when PublicMind registered a 77 percent approval rating for the governor.

Governor Christie's strong public support extends across virtually all demographic groups, including Democrats (62%), non-whites (69%), women (70%), and those who reside in public employee households (62%). These are groups who have historically proven a tough sell for Republican governors.

Garden Staters are also largely pleased with the direction the state is headed. Sixty-one percent say it's headed in the right direction, while only a quarter (26%) say the state is on the wrong track. As with questions specific to Christie, a majority of voters across a variety of demographic groups give the state's trajectory a positive rating.

"The state is facing significant challenges in the post-Sandy era. Yet voters appear largely pleased with not only where the state is headed, but are even happier with the governor's leadership," said Krista Jenkins, director of PublicMind and professor of political science at Fairleigh Dickinson University. "It's hard to find such a well-liked political figure in this politically rancorous day and age," said Jenkins.

Challengers – both declared and undeclared – to the governor's job face an uphill battle with the public, at least for now. By sizable margins, Governor Christie beats state senators Richard Codey (59 to 26%, respectively), Barbara Buono (64 to 21%, respectively), and Steve Sweeney (65 to 19%, respectively). Even among their base, senators Codey, Buono, and Sweeney appear to be struggling against Governor Christie. Forty-five percent

of Democrats would support Senator Codey in a head-to-head with Governor Christie, 35 percent would support Senator Buono, and a third (33%) would support Senator Sweeney.

Senator Codey has the best name recognition among the group (55%) and the highest favorable rating among those who have heard of the senator (56%). “Clearly his time as governor is paying off for Senator Codey,” said Jenkins. “The trick for Senator Buono, the only as-yet declared candidate for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, will be to use the opportunity she has to introduce herself to voters in a positive way.”

As for balancing the state budget, voters are clearly on the side of cutting spending rather than raising taxes. Fifty-six percent say the state should cut spending even if many programs are reduced, while a quarter (26%) would prefer to see taxes increase if needed in order to continue funding state programs. A clear partisan divide can be seen here, with 80 percent of Republicans favoring spending cuts, compared with just 43 percent of Democrats. Republican decisiveness is unmatched among Democrats who appear about evenly divided between the two options (43 versus 41 percent, respectively).

Turning to predictions for 2013, it should come as no surprise to anyone that few Garden State voters see little reason for hope that our leaders in Washington will come together to reduce the nation's debt. Almost three-in-five (59%) say it's not at all likely that Republicans and Democrats will work together toward debt relief in 2013. What's more likely, according to Garden Staters, is a storm of equal or greater magnitude than Sandy in 2013. More than half (53%) say an event like this is very or somewhat likely. The one event that virtually all New Jersey voters (94%) agree is **not** at all likely to happen in 2013 is the end of the world.

“As we embark on a new year, it seems about the only thing that we're united behind is the belief that we can't rely upon the end of the world to solve our political problems,” said Jenkins.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 700 registered voters was conducted statewide by telephone with both landline and cell phones from January 2 through January 6, 2013 and has a margin of error of +/-3.7 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 survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from January 2 through January 6, 2013, using a randomly selected sample of 700 registered voters in New Jersey. One can be 95 percent confident that the error attributable to sampling has a range of +/- 3.7 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 landline 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 respondents interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender.

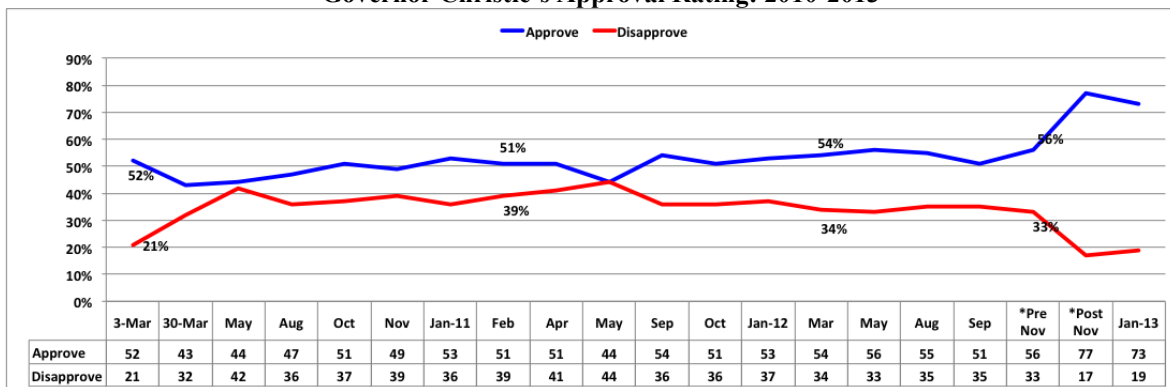
Approve/disapprove Chris Christie, current

And turning to New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor?

	All	Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Approve	73%	62	80	90	77	70	57	79	77
Disapprove	19%	29	13	7	17	22	35	15	15
Neither	5%	7	5	2	4	6	6	5	5
DK/both	2%	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	3

	Race		Public employee household	
	White	Non-white	Yes	No
Approve	76	69	62	77
Disapprove	16	26	31	16
Neither	6	3	5	5
DK/both	3	2	2	2

Governor Christie's Approval Rating: 2010-2013



Governor Christie, rating

How would you rate the job Chris Christie is doing as governor?

		Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age		
All		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Excellent	24%	15	17	42	26	23	13	29	26
Good	44%	42	60	45	48	41	35	46	48
Only fair	23%	34	19	10	20	26	44	19	16
Poor	6%	7	4	2	5	7	7	4	7
Unsure	2%	2	1	1	2	3	1	2	3

	Race		Public employee household	
	White	Non-white	Yes	No
Excellent	30	11	19	26
Good	45	44	41	45
Only fair	18	37	25	23
Poor	5	5	13	3
Unsure	2	3	1	3

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?

		Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age		
All		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Right direction	61%	55	56	76	65	57	51	64	63
Wrong track	26%	32	27	15	24	27	32	24	23
Unsure	13%	13	17	9	10	16	16	12	14

	Race		Public employee household	
	White	Non-white	Yes	No
Right direction	63	56	53	63
Wrong track	24	29	31	24
Unsure	13	14	16	13

Name IDs

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 ...?			
	Have heard of	Favorable (% who have heard)	Unfavorable (% who have heard)
Steven Sweeney	44%	25	39
Richard Codey	55%	56	18
Barbara Buono	28%	30	17

NJ Governor – Head to head

If the election for governor was held today, and the choice was Republican Chris Christie or Democrat Steven Sweeney, for whom would you vote?

All		Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Non-white
Christie	65%	48	68	93	71	60	49	71	69	71	52
Sweeney	19%	33	8	3	15	22	34	13	17	15	27
DK	16%	19	24	4	14	18	17	16	14	14	21

If the election for governor was held today, and the choice was Republican Chris Christie or Democrat Barbara Buono, for whom would you vote?

All		Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Non-white
Christie	64%	45	73	92	72	57	48	69	69	72	47
Buono	21%	35	10	3	15	26	30	17	18	16	29
DK	15%	21	17	5	13	17	22	14	13	12	24

If the election for governor was held today, and the choice was Republican Chris Christie or Democrat Richard Codey, for whom would you vote?

All		Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Non-white
Christie	59%	39	63	89	66	53	44	65	61	68	40
Codey	26%	45	17	6	22	30	33	22	27	22	35
DK	15%	16	20	6	12	17	23	13	12	11	25

Cut or tax

Which of the following comes closest to your views about what should be done to balance the state budget? Should the state...or...[Randomize]

All		Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Non-white
Cut spending	56%	43	48	80	60	52	45	61	57	60	46
Raise taxes	26%	41	22	6	24	28	42	20	23	23	33
Both about equally	11%	10	18	9	10	11	9	13	9	9	13
DK	7%	7	12	4	6	9	4	6	10	7	8

Predictions**How likely or unlikely do you think it is that the world will end in 2013?**

	All	Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Non-white
Very likely	1%	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
Somewhat...	2%	1	3	3	1	2	0	2	2	2	0
Not at all...	94%	96	91	93	96	92	99	94	91	94	95
DK/Refused	3%	3	4	4	2	5	1	3	5	3	4

How likely or unlikely do you think it is that Republicans and Democrats will work together to reduce our nation's debt in 2013?

	All	Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Non-white
Very likely	6%	11	2	2	5	8	8	8	4	4	13
Somewhat...	33%	40	24	25	26	39	43	26	33	29	43
Not at all...	59%	48	74	72	68	51	48	63	61	66	40
DK/Refused	2%	1	0	1	1	3	1	3	2	1	4

How likely or unlikely do you think it is that New Jersey will experience a storm of equal or greater magnitude than Hurricane Sandy in 2013?

	All	Party (with leaners)			Gender		Age			Race	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Non-white
Very likely	9%	11	11	4	6	1	4	10	9	8	10
Somewhat...	44%	49	43	36	41	46	58	44	36	41	51
Not at all...	39%	32	36	52	48	30	32	38	44	42	29
DK/Refused	9%	8	10	8	5	12	6	7	11	9	10

Question Wording and Order

NJ1. And turning to 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]

NJ4. Now I'm going ask about some people. If you haven't heard of one of them, just say so. Have you heard of ... [ROTATE LIST]? Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of... [MATCH ROTATION]? Would that be very or somewhat?

- NJ4a Steve Sweeney
- NJ4b Cory Booker
- NJ4c Dick Codey
- NJ4d Barbara Buono
- NJ4e Frank Lautenberg

NJ4A1 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Steve Sweeney?

- 1 Favorable
- 2 Unfavorable
- 8 Don't Know (vol) (skip to next name)

NJ4C1 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Dick Codey?

- 1 Favorable
- 2 Unfavorable
- 8 Don't Know (vol) (skip to next name)

NJ4D1 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Barbara Buono?

- 1 Favorable
- 2 Unfavorable
- 8 Don't Know (vol) (skip to next name)

NOTE TO PROGRAMMER: RANDOMIZE NJ5A THROUGH NJ5C

NJ5a If the election for governor was held today, and the choice was Republican Chris Christie or Democrat Steve Sweeney, for whom would you vote? [Randomize names]

- 1 Republican Chris Christie
- 2 Democrat Steve Sweeney
- 8 Don't Know (vol) (skip to next name)

NJ5b If the election for governor was held today, and the choice was Republican Chris Christie or Democrat Barbara Buono, for whom would you vote? [Randomize names]

- 1 Republican Chris Christie
- 2 Democrat Barbara Buono
- 8 Don't Know (vol) (skip to next name)

NJ5c If the election for governor was held today, and the choice was Republican Chris Christie or Democrat Dick Codey, for whom would you vote? [Randomize names]

- 1 Republican Chris Christie
- 2 Democrat Dick Codey
- 8 Don't Know (vol) (skip to next name)

NJ6 Which of the following come closest to your views about what should be done to balance the state budget? Should the state...or...[Randomize]

- 1 Cut spending, even if many state programs are reduced
- 2 Raise taxes if necessary in order to continue funding state programs
- 3 Both about equally
- 8 Don't know (vol) (skip to next name)

NJ7 through NJ10 withheld for later release

Note to programmer: Randomize order of NJ11 through NJ13

NJ11 How likely or unlikely do you think it is that the world will end in 2013?

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Not at all likely
- 8 DK/Refused (vol)

NJ12 How likely or unlikely do you think it is that Republicans and Democrats will work together to reduce our nation's debt in 2013?

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Not at all likely
- 8 DK/Refused (vol)

NJ13 How likely or unlikely do you think it is that New Jersey will experience a storm of equal or greater magnitude than Hurricane Sandy in 2013?

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Not at all likely
- 8 DK/Refused (vol)

Sample characteristics**Gender**

Male	47
Female	53

Age

18-34	22
35-54	41
55+	36
Refused	1

Race/Ethnicity

White	69
Black/African-American	11
Latino or Hispanic	10
Asian	6
Other/refused	3

Public employee household

Yes	23
No	76
Unsure/refused	1

Party identification

Democrat/Lean Democrat	48
Independent/DK/refused	19
Republican/Lean Republican	33