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MURPHY AHEAD AMIDST A SEA OF VOTER DISCONTENT

Fairleigh Dickinson University, October 17, 2017 – If the gubernatorial election were held today, Democrat Phil Murphy would beat Republican Kim Guadagno by 15 points, at least among those who have made up their minds in the race to replace Governor Chris Christie. The most recent statewide survey of likely voters from Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind finds Murphy with the support of 47 percent of the voters. The two-term lieutenant governor has some distance to cover if she is to become New Jersey's second female governor, as significantly fewer voters (32%) intend to vote for her. Five percent say they like someone else, and 13 percent remain undecided.

Democrats and Republicans break for their respective candidates as expected, but among independents who don't align with either party, both candidates get about a quarter of their support (25% Guadagno; 26% Murphy; 26% undecided).

"It's been an uphill climb for Guadagno in this race. She's facing an electorate that is not very fond of the governor, and a majority align themselves with the opposing party. Despite the difficult odds, you can never say never in politics. With another debate looming, there's still time to convince voters she's the right choice," said Krista Jenkins, professor of political science and director of the poll.

Neither candidate hit a home run in the debate last week. Only a third (33%) of likely voters said they watched or listened to the debate. Among all likely voters, there was no consensus as to who outperformed the other, with Guadagno (29%) and Murphy (27%) polling about even, and a third saying neither can claim a win (31%). However, it's notable that among the those who describe themselves as independents, Guadagno (25%) performed significantly better than Murphy (5%).

"If the tide is to turn in her favor, she's going to need to not only do well, but get more people to actually watch or listen to the debate this week," said Jenkins.

The long shadow of Chris Christie is visible in this race, and appears to be complicating Guadagno's chances. He is deeply unpopular among likely voters, with only 16 percent approving of his job performance. And 43 percent say he is a factor in the gubernatorial election, with a full third (34%) who indicate he is a major factor and another nine percent who rate his influence as minor. Fifty-six percent say Christie is not a factor in their choice to replace him.

A majority of those who consider Christie a major or minor factor say they're supporting Phil Murphy. Seventy-nine percent who say Christie figures prominently in their minds like Murphy, as do 60 percent who consider Christie a minor factor. Of those who do not report influence by Christie, a plurality (48%) are supporting Guadagno.

"He's a tough act to follow, and he leaves in his wake big concerns about the direction the state is headed and significant disappointment with his leadership," said Jenkins. Around three-quarters (73%) say the state is headed down the wrong track, with only 17 percent happy with the way things are going. She continued, "For better or worse, and whether it's fair or unfair, Guadagno seems paired with Christie in the minds of many voters. By an almost three to one margin, the wide swath of the electorate who disapprove of Governor Christie find Murphy more palatable than Guadagno."

Whoever ends up replacing Christie, he or she will have a lot of work to do in regard to the deep well of cynicism that voters feel toward the political process and the leaders who emerge. When asked whether voters believe the political

system in New Jersey is broken and doesn't give them much hope for finding capable leaders, or whether the system is responsive and always finds leaders who can solve New Jersey's problems, an overwhelming majority of voters say the system is broken (69%). Barely a fifth have faith in the system to find leaders who can address the state's myriad of problems (22%).

Concerns over a broken system and failed leadership can be seen everywhere. Majorities in both parties and among independents appear fed up and feeling hopeless as Election Day looms.

Among those who think the system is broken, barely a third (34%) are putting their faith in Guadagno and 42 percent favor Murphy. Among the relatively few who express optimism for the system's responsiveness, Murphy does better than Guadagno by about a two to one margin (57 versus 28 percent, respectively).

"The attitudes we're seeing today suggest that discontent runs far deeper than any one person or one administration. The people have lost faith in a system that seems to offer up leaders with few leadership skills," said Jenkins.

As for the other races before voters on Election Day, it looks like the Democrats have an edge over Republicans on a generic ballot question. A third of all likely voters intend to support Republican candidates for the state legislature, and 49 percent support Democratic candidates. Independents split about even, with an edge being given to Republicans (27%) versus Democrats (21%).

Methodology, questions, and tables on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>

Radio actualities at 201.692.2846

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Methodology - The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone October 11-15, 2017, using a listed sample of registered voters with a known history of voting in past elections. Results for the pool of 658 likely voters featured in this release have a margin of sampling error of +/- 4.5 percentage points, including the design effect.

Likely voters are determined based on their responses to questions concerning their voting intentions and attentiveness to the 2017 gubernatorial election.

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.

The total combined sample is mathematically weighted for age, sex, and race based on the state's voter registration list. 389 interviews were conducted on landlines and 269 were conducted on cellular telephones.

The sample was purchased from Marketing Systems Group and Artistotle and the research was funded by Fairleigh Dickinson University.

PublicMind recently received an "A" rating from statistician Nate Silver's FiveThirtyEight blog. The ratings measure both accuracy and bias for all major polling services in the United States, providing an update to similar research the poll watchers conducted in 2014. PublicMind's "A" rating puts it in the top 14 of the more than 380 polling institutes reviewed and graded from A+ through F. PublicMind was found to have a 94 percent accuracy rate for predicting election results, and is one of only two A-rated polling institutes with zero bias to their rankings.

Tables

<i>If the election were being held today, for whom would you vote?</i>												
	PID				Gender		Race		Attitudes toward NJ political system		Direction of state	
	All	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Broken	Responsive	Right track	Wrong direction
Guadagno	32%	5	25	79	38	26	39	7	34	28	58	26
Murphy	47%	81	26	4	43	51	42	65	42	57	19	54
Someone else	5%	3	12	4	4	6	4	8	7	1	7	5
DK (vol)	13%	10	26	11	12	14	12	16	15	13	13	12
Refused (vol)	3%	1	11	1	4	3	3	4	3	2	3	3

<i>If the election were being held today, for whom would you vote?</i>						
	Christie a factor?				Christie approval	
	All	No	Major	Minor	Approve	Disapprove
Guadagno	32%	48	6	25	75	21
Murphy	47%	26	79	60	2	59
Someone else	5%	5	5	4	7	5
DK (vol)	13%	16	9	11	15	12
Refused (vol)	3%	5	1	2	2	3

<i>Did you watch or listen to the debate between the candidates for governor?</i>												
	PID				Gender		Race		Attitudes toward NJ political system		Direction of state	
	All	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Broken	Responsive	Right direction	Wrong track
Yes	33%	33	35	32	33	34	32	35	33	31	27	36
No	66%	65	65	68	65	66	67	63	66	69	70	64
DK (vol)	1%	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	3	0
Refused (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

<i>Did you watch or listen to the debate between the candidates for governor?</i>						
	Christie a factor?				Christie approval	
	All	No	Major	Minor	Approve	Disapprove
Yes	33%	37	29	38	28	35
No	66%	62	70	62	72	64
DK (vol)	1%	1	1	0	0	1
Refused (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0

<i>In your opinion, who won the debate?</i>												
	PID				Gender		Race		Attitudes toward NJ political system		Direction of state	
	All	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Broken	Responsive	Right direction	Wrong track
Guadagno	29%	11	25	64	17	36	23	49	23	24	50	26
Murphy	27%	44	5	9	32	27	36	12	31	31	7	30
Neither	31%	32	52	19	36	27	32	31	31	38	37	31
DK (vol)	12%	12	15	8	14	10	10	16	14	4	7	12
Refused (vol)	1%	1	3	0	2	0	1	2	1	2	0	1

<i>In your opinion, who won the debate?</i>						
	Christie a factor?				Christie approval	
	All	No	Major	Minor	Approve	Disapprove
Guadagno	29%	19	18	14	57	31
Murphy	27%	38	45	23	3	23
Neither	31%	30	24	55	31	32
DK (vol)	12%	12	10	9	9	13
Refused (vol)	1%	0	3	0	0	1

<i>Thinking about your vote for governor again, is Chris Christie a factor in your vote choice for governor this year? [If yes, "Would you say that is a major or minor factor?"]</i>												
	PID				Gender		Race		Christie approval		Direction of state	
	All	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Approve	Disapprove	Right direction	Wrong track
Yes – major	34%	52	22	10	29	38	31	44	12	40	19	39
Yes – minor	9%	12	4	7	11	7	10	8	4	10	4	10
No	56%	35	75	81	58	54	59	46	81	49	73	50
DK (vol)	1%	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	4	0
Refused (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

<i>And turning to New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor? [Randomize approve/disapprove]</i>													
	PID				Gender		Race		Education		Age		
	All	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	HS/Some college	College+	18-34	35-59	60+
Approve	16%	5	7	37	19	13	16	15	14	17	11	14	18
Disapprove	77%	92	88	49	74	79	75	81	77	77	84	79	73
Neither/Neutral (vol)	4%	2	4	8	4	4	5	3	5	4	5	4	5
DK/Both (vol)	2%	1	1	5	2	2	3	0	3	1	0	2	3
Refused (vol)	1%	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1

<i>In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track? [Randomize right direction/wrong track]</i>													
	PID				Gender		Race		Education		Age		
	All	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	HS/Some college	College+	18-34	35-59	60+
Right direction	17%	10	13	32	20	15	16	23	18	17	18	18	17
Wrong track	73%	81	76	59	71	75	74	70	71	75	69	76	72
DK (vol)	8%	8	9	9	8	9	9	6	10	7	10	7	10
Refused (vol)	1%	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	4	1	1

Which of the following statements best describes how you feel, even if neither is perfect:
 The political system in New Jersey is broken and doesn't give voters much hope for finding capable leaders OR The political system in New Jersey is responsive to voters and always finds leaders who can solve New Jersey's problems

	All	PID			Gender		Race		Christie approval		Direction of state	
		Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Approve	Disapprove	Right direction	Wrong track
Broken	69%	64	76	72	71	67	69	68	58	71	54	75
Responsive	22%	24	18	21	21	22	21	26	31	20	38	17
Both (vol)	3%	4	0	2	3	2	3	1	4	2	4	2
DK (vol)	6%	7	4	3	5	7	5	5	6	5	3	5
Refused (vol)	1%	1	2	1	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	1

In addition to the election for governor, there will also be elections for all 120 members of the New Jersey state legislature. Thinking about the state legislature, if the election were held today, would you vote for [RANDOMIZE: "the Republican party candidates" or "the Democratic party candidates"] in your district?

	All	PID			Gender		Race		Attitudes toward NJ political system		Direction of state	
		Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Broken	Responsive	Right direction	Wrong track
Republican	33%	2	27	86	39	27	40	12	35	30	53	28
Democrat	49%	87	21	3	44	54	43	70	45	56	32	55
Both	7%	6	15	4	7	6	6	8	6	8	7	7
Other	2%	1	6	2	3	2	2	2	3	1	3	2
DK (vol)	8%	4	25	4	5	9	8	6	9	5	5	7
Refused (vol)	2%	0	6	0	2	2	1	2	0	0	0	2

In addition to the election for governor, there will also be elections for all 120 members of the New Jersey state legislature. Thinking about the state legislature, if the election were held today, would you vote for [RANDOMIZE: "the Republican party candidates" or "the Democratic party candidates"] in your district?

	All	Christie a factor?			Christie approval	
		No	Major	Minor	Approve	Disapprove
Republican	33%	48	9	25	73	22
Democrat	49%	29	78	68	17	59
Both	7%	7	9	2	5	7
Other	2%	3	1	2	0	2
DK (vol)	8%	11	4	2	4	8
Refused (vol)	2%	3	0	2	1	1

Question wording and order

ELEC1 If the election for governor were being held today, for whom would you vote? [Rotate names]

- 1 Phil Murphy, the Democrat
- 2 Kim Guadagno, the Republican
- 3 Someone else
- 8 DK(vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

ELEC2 In addition to the election for governor, there will also be elections for all 120 members of the New Jersey state legislature. Thinking about the state legislature, if the election were held today, would you vote for [RANDOMIZE: “the Republican party candidates” or “the Democratic party candidates”] in your district?

- 1 Republican
- 2 Democrat
- 3 Both
- 4 Other
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

US1 and US2 withheld

NJ1. And turning to New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor? [Randomize approve/disapprove]

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 3 Neither (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

NJ2 In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track? [Randomize right direction/wrong track]

- 1 Right direction
- 2 Wrong track
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

ELEC3 and ELEC4 withheld

ELEC5 Thinking about your vote for governor again, is Chris Christie a factor in your vote choice for governor this year? [IF Yes, “Would you say that is a major or minor factor?”]

- 1 Yes - major
- 2 Yes – minor
- 3 No
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

ELEC6 Did you watch or listen to the recent debate between the candidates for governor?

- 1 Yes [ASK ELEC7]
- 2 No [ASK ELEC8]
- 8 DK (vol) [ASK ELEC8]
- 9 Refused (vol) [ASK ELEC8]

ELEC7 In your opinion, who won the debate?

- 1 Phil Murphy

- 2 Kim Guadagno
- 3 Neither
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

*ELEC8 Which of the following statements best describes how you feel, even if neither is perfect:
 The political system in New Jersey is broken and doesn't give voters much hope for finding capable leaders OR The political system in New Jersey is responsive to voters and always finds leaders who can solve New Jersey's problems*

- 1 System is broken
- 2 System is responsive
- 3 Both (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

Sample characteristics (weighted)

PID (with leaners)		Race	
Democrat	51%	White	73%
Republican	32%	Black	13%
Independent	13%	Hispanic	10%
Other/DK/Ref	4%	Asian	2%
		Other	3%
Gender			
Male	48%		
Female	52%		
Age			
18-34	9%		
35-59	51%		
60+	40%		