



For immediate release Friday, October 12, 2018

6 PAGES

**Contact:**  
**Krista Jenkins, Ph.D.**  
**kjenkins@fdi.edu**  
**973.443.8390**

## **MURPHY AND THE PUBLIC AGREE ON WAGE HIKE BUT DIFFER ON THE MAGNITUDE**

**Fairleigh Dickinson University, October 12, 2018**— Garden State residents want more money for minimum wage workers, but not as much as what Governor Murphy would like. The most recent statewide survey from the Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll finds three-quarters (74%) of adults supportive of an increase, something that is likely to be good news to Governor Murphy as he looks to make good on one of his marquee campaign promises. Even Republicans, who are not usually known for their support of government mandated wage increases, are divided, with about the same supporting (49%) as wanting the status quo (44%) for minimum wage earners. However, what the public wants as an increase differs from what is being called for by public officials in Trenton.

Public support for raising the minimum wage, which is currently \$8.60, is unchanged from 2016, the last time the question was asked. Back then, the average minimum wage suggested by residents was \$11.86. Today, that wage has climbed to \$12.47 among adults across the state who favor a bump, an increase of about five percent from the 2016 poll and an increase of about 45 percent over the current minimum.

The governor and some in the legislature have pushed for a \$15 minimum wage in New Jersey. The only group that comes close to endorsing this as the new normal are Democrats, who suggest around \$13 as the wage for minimum earners.

“Although the governor and public are in agreement that \$8.60 is too little as an hourly wage, there’s about \$2.50 worth of daylight between them when it comes to how much that increase should be. Policymakers will need to do a better job explaining why \$15 is the magic number when it exceeds what many across the state believe is a more reasonable wage for those making the least allowed by law,” said Krista Jenkins, professor of politics and director of the poll.

When asked if adults would favor an increase even if it resulted in higher prices or fewer jobs for workers, a sizable number said the pay raise should go through. Two-thirds (67%) said yes to the increase even in the face of higher prices, with more expressing caution (43%) if the specter of layoffs and fewer hires accompanied an increase in the minimum wage.

Apart from partisan differences, women are the most supportive of the increase despite the possibility of higher prices (73%). There are not many notable differences among a host of demographic categories once the possibility of job losses enter the equation. Democrats and Republicans evaluate this possible effect differently, but other groups offer more mixed appraisals when weighing the risks of higher wages against a smaller labor market.

“While an increase in the minimum wage is appealing to many New Jersey residents, small business owners in the state are much less sanguine, as increased minimum wages mean increased costs to them in an already challenging economic environment,” said Patrick Cozza, former Senior Executive Vice President for Wealth Management at HSBC, and now an Executive in Residence and Lecturer at FDU’s Silberman College of Business. “To compensate, many may need to cut employees from their payrolls to survive. Large employers may not face the same challenges, as they have scale in operations to compensate for the increased costs. The greater flexibility of larger companies could make some small businesses less competitive,” continued Cozza. “A gradual phase in of the proposed \$15 wage would allow small businesses time to absorb the increase.”

In other news, Governor Murphy is knocking on the door of majority approval ratings among his constituents. Among all adults, 49 percent say he’s doing a good job as governor, with 31 percent who don’t like his performance so far. He’s especially popular among women (54%), those from racial and ethnic minorities (59%), and young adults (55%). A majority of college grads (53%) also think Governor Murphy deserves some applause.

“He’s about where [Governor Christie](#) was eight years ago, and Governor Murphy has yet to be tested with the inevitable crisis that can upend anyone’s legislative agenda or carefully crafted persona. But the eight-point increase in his approval rating from May is certainly a welcome sign,” said Jenkins.

Unchanged are right direction/wrong track numbers. Today, as it was in May, 46 percent say the state is headed in the right direction with slightly fewer (41%) who express concern. Opinion is clearly divided over the state’s health as Governor Murphy heads into the second year of his term.

---

---

**Methodology** - The Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone September 26-30, 2018 using a random sample of adults in New Jersey aged 18 and older (N = 805). Results have a margin of sampling error of +/- 3.8 percentage points, including the design effect. Interviews were conducted in English.

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.

Interviews were conducted by Clear Insights Group of Lehi, Utah, 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 to match known demographics of age, sex, and race. 273 interviews were conducted on landlines and 532 were conducted on cellular telephones.

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

*The Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll 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. The Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll’s “A” rating puts it in the top 14 of the more than 380 polling institutes reviewed and graded from A+ through F. The Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll 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**

And turning to New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove [rotate] of the job Phil Murphy is doing as governor?		<b>1/18</b>	<b>5/18</b>	<b>10/18</b>
	Approve	31%	41%	49%
	Disapprove	60%	28%	31%

		Party ID			Gender		Race/ethnicity		Age			Education	
		Dem	Repub	Ind	Male	Female	White	Non-white	18-34	35-54	55+	HS or Less / Some College	College +
And turning to New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove [rotate] of the job Phil Murphy is doing as governor?	1 Approve	73%	19%	32%	43%	54%	44%	59%	55%	48%	44%	41%	53%
	2 Disapprove	10%	66%	31%	39%	24%	39%	17%	22%	31%	39%	33%	30%
	8 (DO NOT READ) Don't Know	15%	14%	33%	16%	20%	17%	20%	21%	17%	16%	23%	16%
	9 (DO NOT READ) Refused	1%	2%	4%	3%	2%	1%	4%	1%	3%	2%	3%	1%

In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track [rotate]?		<b>1/18</b>	<b>5/18</b>	<b>10/18</b>
	Right direction	31%	46%	46%
	Wrong track	60%	40%	41%

		Party ID			Gender		Race/ethnicity		Age			Education	
		Dem	Repub	Ind	Male	Female	White	Non-white	18-34	35-54	55+	HS or Less / Some College	College +
In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track [rotate]?	1 Right direction	68%	16%	34%	39%	52%	41%	56%	55%	43%	41%	39%	49%
	2 Wrong track	19%	74%	48%	49%	34%	47%	29%	29%	46%	47%	46%	38%
	8 (DO NOT READ) Don't Know	12%	9%	16%	11%	12%	11%	13%	14%	10%	12%	12%	11%
	9 (DO NOT READ) Refused	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%

Right now, the state's minimum wage is \$8.60. Do you believe the minimum wage should be increased, decreased [rotate], or remain the same?		<b>2/16</b>	<b>10/18</b>
	Increased	73%	74%
	Decreased	1%	2%
	Remain the same	25%	22%
	Don't know (vol)	1%	1%
Refused (vol)	0	0	

		Party ID			Race/ethnicity		Age			Education		Employment status			
		Dem	Repub	ind	White	Non-white	18-34	35-54	55+	HS or Less / Some College	College +	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not employed outside the home
Right now the state's minimum wage is \$8.60. Do you believe the minimum wage should be increased, decreased [rotate], or remain the same?	1 Increased	90%	49%	73%	71%	80%	76%	73%	75%	74%	74%	72%	82%	75%	76%
	2 Decreased	1%	3%	0%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%	3%	0%	0%	0%
	3 Remain the same	9%	44%	23%	25%	17%	20%	24%	22%	24%	21%	23%	18%	22%	23%
	8 (DO NOT READ) Don't Know	0%	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	0%	1%	1%
	9 (DO NOT READ) Refused	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%

What should it be raised to?		<b>2/16</b>	<b>10/18</b>
	Average	\$11.86	\$12.47

What should it be raised to?									
	Party ID			Gender		Race/ethnicity		Education	
	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	HS/ Some college	Coll+
Avg	\$13.01	\$12.25	\$11.09	\$12.56	\$12.40	\$12.31	\$12.80	\$12.36	\$12.54

What should it be raised to?							
	Age			Employment status			
	18-34	35-55	55+	Full time	Part time	Retired	Not employed outside the home
Avg	\$12.50	\$12.21	\$12.79	\$12.41	\$12.42	\$12.74	\$12.63

If raising the minimum wage in New Jersey causes some employers to raise prices, would you favor or oppose [rotate] raising the minimum wage?	Favor	67%
	Oppose	27%
	Don't know (vol)	5%
	Refused (vol)	1%

		Party ID			Gender		Race/ethnicity		Age			Education		Employment status			
		Dem	Repub	Ind	Male	Female	White	Non-white	18-34	35-54	55+	HS or Less / Some College	College +	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not employed outside the home
If raising the minimum wage in New Jersey causes some employers to raise prices, would you favor or oppose [rotate] raising the minimum wage?	1 Favor	36%	40%	61%	59%	73%	65%	71%	67%	66%	67%	63%	69%	65%	72%	66%	73%
	2 Oppose	11%	53%	25%	35%	20%	29%	23%	28%	28%	25%	31%	25%	29%	22%	26%	23%
	3 (DO NOT READ) Don't Know	1%	7%	14%	6%	5%	5%	5%	4%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	6%	7%	4%
	9 (DO NOT READ) Refused	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%

If raising the minimum wage in New Jersey causes some employers to lay off workers or hire fewer workers, would you favor or oppose [rotate] raising the minimum wage?	Favor	43%
	Oppose	50%
	Don't know (vol)	7%
	Refused (vol)	1%

		Party ID			Gender		Race/ethnicity		Age			Education		Employment status			
		Dem	Repub	Ind	Male	Female	White	Non-white	18-34	35-54	55+	HS or Less / Some College	College +	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not employed outside the home Column N %
If raising the minimum wage caused some employers to lay off workers or hire fewer workers, would you favor or oppose [rotate] raising the minimum wage?	1 Favor	56%	25%	35%	42%	44%	43%	45%	39%	44%	44%	40%	44%	44%	42%	42%	38%
	2 Oppose	35%	72%	57%	52%	47%	50%	48%	53%	51%	46%	53%	48%	51%	49%	47%	50%
	8 (DO NOT READ) Don't Know	8%	2%	8%	5%	8%	6%	7%	7%	5%	8%	6%	7%	5%	9%	10%	11%
	9 (DO NOT READ) Refused	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%

**Exact question wording and order**

US1 through US2 released October 3, 2018

NJ1. And turning to New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove [ROTATE] of the job Phil Murphy is doing as governor?

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 DK
- 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 [ROTATE]?

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

NJ3 through NJ4D and E released October 3, 2018

NJA through NJC released October 4, 2018

US3 through US4 released October 3, 2018

MW1 Right now the state's minimum wage is \$8.60. Do you believe the minimum wage should be increased, decreased, or remain the same? [Rotate increased/decreased]

- 1 Increased Ask MW2
- 2 Decreased
- 3 Remain the same
- 8 DK (vol)
- f9 Refused (vol)

MW2 What should it be raised to?

Record response - round to nearest dollar – If .50 or above, round up; if .49 or below, round down

MW3 If raising the minimum wage in New Jersey causes some employers to raise prices, would you favor or oppose [rotate] raising the minimum wage?

- 1 Favor
- 2 Oppose
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

MW4 If raising the minimum wage caused some employers to lay off workers or hire fewer workers, would you favor or oppose [rotate] raising the minimum wage?

- 1 Favor
- 2 Oppose
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

**Weighed sample characteristics**

**All respondents**

Male	49%
Female	51%
Democrat (with leaners)	52%
Republican (with leaners)	33%
Independent	11%
18-34	28%
35-59	35%
60+	35%
White	64%
African-American	11%
Latino	15%
Asian	7%
Other/refused	3%