



For immediate release

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TRUMP TANKS IN NEW JERSEY

Fairleigh Dickinson University, Madison, New Jersey, February 21, 2020 – Despite low unemployment in the Garden State (3.2%), and perceptions by many that the economy is strong, Donald Trump remains deeply unpopular in New Jersey, with a sizable number unable or unwilling to credit him with any significant accomplishments as president.

The most recent statewide survey of New Jersey adults from the Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll finds Trump’s approval at a slim 32 percent, with 60 percent who say they disapprove of how he is handling his job as president. The last time the same question was asked was in [October](#) of 2019. The impeachment has done little to change his approval in the Garden State, for better or worse, as he was underwater around the same degree that he is today (34/57).

“Trump is faring considerably worse than his predecessor, Barack Obama, did at this point in his presidency, and Obama was wrestling with unemployment that was almost triple what it is today in New Jersey. Back then, the unemployment rate was 9 percent, but half of Garden Staters approved of the job he was doing as president. Today, Trump is wrestling with low approval amidst strong economic numbers,” said Krista Jenkins, Director of the FDU Poll and a Professor of Politics and Government.

The president remains strongly supported by Republicans (79%), with 16 percent who disapprove, and independents decidedly unfavorable toward Trump (48%). With the exception of Republicans and independents, a majority of all demographic groups considered express displeasure with his leadership.



The president's unpopularity is accompanied by a divided citizenry over whether he has achieved any accomplishments, both major and minor. Around four-in-ten (38%) say he has little to show for his presidency, with Democrats (60%), women (42%), non-whites (45%), and young adults (45%), among the most likely to rate the president poorly. Forty-six percent believe the president has accomplishments to show for his time in office, with a quarter (25%) who believe they are major, and another 21 percent who believe they are minor. Unsurprisingly, two-thirds (63%) of Republicans credit the president with major achievements, while a quarter of Democrats (24%) believe the president has had minor accomplishments.

When asked to provide an example of a major achievement, the economy tops the list, with jobs, tax cuts and reform, and unemployment also offered by many respondents.

“What’s interesting, but not unexpected given years of political science research, is the importance of economic trends when evaluating leaders. As Garden Staters demonstrate so clearly, Trump’s strengths are the perception that the country’s economy is booming, tax reforms are working, and jobs are plentiful, all because of his leadership,” said Jenkins.

The same survey finds that among many, there is a perception that his political opponents, despite moving to impeach and remove him from office, have not done enough to check the behavior that they find objectionable. Half say the Democrats should have done more, with around a third (36%) who believe Democratic leaders have overreacted. Besides Democrats, non-whites are the most likely to want more, rather than less, done to address their perceptions of Trump’s problematic behavior (65%). Women (29%) are also significantly less likely than men (44%) to believe the Democratic party has overreacted to the Trump presidency.

“Far from admonishing the Democrats for pursuing a ‘hoax,’ most in the Garden State, including a fifth of Republicans, think they should be pursuing the president with even more vigor, despite surviving a failed impeachment trial,” said Jenkins.

Methodology

The survey was conducted by live callers on both landlines and cellular phones between February 12 through February 16, 2020 with a scientifically selected random sample of 805 New Jersey adults, 18 or older. Persons without a telephone could not be included in the random selection process. Respondents within a household are selected by asking randomly for the youngest adult currently available. The interview was conducted in English and included 321 adults reached on a landline phone and 484 adults reached on a cell phone, all acquired through random digit dialing.

The data were weighted to be representative of the non-institutionalized adult population of New Jersey. The weighting balanced sample demographics to target population parameters. The sample is balanced to match parameters for sex, age, education, race/ethnicity, region and phone use. The sex, age, education, race/ethnicity and region parameters were derived from 2017 American Community Survey PUMS data. The phone use parameter was derived from estimates provided by the National Health Interview Survey Early Release Program.¹²³

Weighting was done in two stages. The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent’s telephone usage patterns. This adjustment also

¹ NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2013-2017; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012-2016; and infoUSA.com consumer database, 2013-2017.

² Blumberg SJ, Luke JV. Wireless substitution: Early release of estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, July–December 2016. National Center for Health Statistics. May 2017.

³ Blumberg SJ, Luke JV. Wireless substitution: Early release of estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, July-December 2018. National Center for Health Statistics. July 2019.

accounts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample. This first stage weight was applied to the entire sample which included all adults.

The second stage of the weighting balanced sample demographics to match target population benchmarks. This weighting was accomplished using SPSSINC RAKE, an SPSS extension module that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using the GENLOG procedure. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target population.

Effects of Sample Design on Statistical Analysis

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or deff represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for this study is 1.36.⁴

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. In this poll, the simple sampling error for 801 New Jersey adults is +/-4 percentage points (including the design effect) at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus, if 50 percent of New Jersey adults in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95 percent sure that the true figure is between 46 and 54 percent (50 +/- 4) if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects.

This telephone survey was fielded by Braun Research, Inc. with sample from Dynata.

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

Weighted Telephone Sample Characteristics

805 New Jersey Adults

Male	48%	N = 382 (+/-5%)
Female	52%	N = 423 (+/-5%)
18-34	27%	N = 214 (+/-7%)
35-54	35%	N = 285 (+/-6%)
55+	26%	N = 305 (+/-6%)
Democrat (with leaners)	51%	N = 393 (+/-5%)
Independent	18%	N = 139 (+/-8%)
Republican (with leaners)	31%	N = 241 (+/-6%)
White	59%	N = 472 (+/-4%)
Black	12%	N = 99 (+/-10%)
Hispanic	19%	N = 151(+/-8%)
Other	10%	N = 79 (+/-11%)
HS or less	30%	N = 239 (+/-6%)
Some college	31%	N = 252 (+/-6%)
College	38%	N = 309 (+/-6%)

Question wording and order:

LV1 Are you currently registered to vote at this address?

⁴ The composite design effect for a sample of size n, with each case having a weight, w is computed as $deff = n \sum w^2 / (\sum w)^2$

- 1 Yes [Ask PID1]
- 2 No [Ask LV2]
- 8 DK (vol) [Ask LV2]
- 9 Refused (vol) [Ask LV2]

LV2 *Do you plan on registering in time to vote in the state's primary elections in June?*

- 1 Yes [Ask PID1]
- 2 No [Ask PID1]
- 8 DK (vol) [Ask PID1]
- 9 Refused (vol) [Ask PID1]

PID1 *In politics today, do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or something else?*

- 1 Democrat
- 2 Republican
- 3 Independent → **ASK PID2**
- 4 Something Else/Other
- 8 Don't know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

PID2 *Which way do you lean?*

- 1 Democrat
- 2 Republican
- 3 Independent
- 4 Something Else/Other
- 8 Don't know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

NOTE TO PROGRAMMER: ASK REMAINDER OF LV SERIES IF PID1 = 1 OR (PID1 = 3 & PID2 = 1); OTHERWISE ASK US1

LV3 *Please rate your chances of voting in June on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 meaning you'll definitely vote, and 1 meaning you definitely will not vote.*

- 1-10
- 88 DK (vol)
- 99 Refused (vol)

LV4 *Please tell me how enthusiastic you are to vote in June on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 meaning you're extremely enthused and 1 meaning you're not at all enthused to vote.*

- 1-10
- 88 DK (vol)
- 99 Refused (vol)

LV5 *I know it's early, but if the Democratic primary were held today, who would you vote for [RANDOMIZE ORDER]?*

- 1 Joseph Biden
- 2 Michael Bloomberg
- 3 Pete Buttigieg [BOOT-A-JEJ]
- 4 Tulsi Gabbard [GAB-ARD]
- 5 Amy Klobuchar [KLO-BA-SHAR]
- 6 Bernie Sanders
- 7 Tom Steyer [STI-ER]
- 8 Elizabeth Warren

US1. *Do you approve or disapprove [ROTATE] of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President?*

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

	1/17	3/17	10/17	1/18	5/18	9/18	10/19	2/20
Approve	37	28	31	31	33	33	34	32
Disapprove	50	61	62	60	57	58	57	60

US2 *Since President Trump took office in 2017, would you say he's had major accomplishments, minor accomplishments, or no real accomplishments as president?*

- 1 Major ASK US2a
- 2 Minor
- 3 No real accomplishments
- 4 Both major and minor (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

US2A *What has been his biggest accomplishment? [open ended]*

US3 *Which of the following statements best describes how you feel, even if neither statement is perfect: Democrats have overreacted to President Trump's behavior OR Democrats have not done enough to correct problems they see with President Trump's behavior [RANDOMIZE ORDER]*

- 1 Overreacted
- 2 Not done enough
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

Tables [percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding]

US1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President?																				
	All	Gender		Party w/ Lean			Age			Race/Eth		Income			Education			Region		
		Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Repub	18-34	35-54	55+	White Non/Hisp	Non-white	<75K	75K-<150K	150K+	HS or less	Some coll	Coll grad+	North	Central	South
Approve	32%	37%	28%	7%	28%	79%	19%	29%	45%	44%	16%	29%	40%	29%	32%	36%	29%	27%	36%	36%
Disapprove	60%	54%	65%	90%	48%	16%	67%	64%	50%	50%	73%	64%	53%	62%	58%	55%	65%	66%	54%	57%
Don't know (vol)	3%	3%	2%	2%	7%	2%	4%	4%	1%	2%	4%	2%	4%	3%	4%	3%	2%	2%	4%	3%
Refused (vol)	5%	5%	5%	1%	17%	3%	10%	4%	3%	5%	6%	6%	3%	7%	6%	6%	4%	5%	6%	4%
Unweighted N	805	382	423	379	142	253	225	286	294	576	224	396	240	112	156	291	351	318	262	225

US2. Since President Trump took office in 2017, would you say he's had major accomplishments, minor accomplishments, or no real accomplishments as president?																				
	All	Gender		Party w/ Lean			Age			Race/Eth		Income			Education			Region		
		Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Repub	18-34	35-54	55+	White Non/Hisp	Non-white	<75K	75K-<150K	150K+	HS or less	Some coll	Coll grad+	North	Central	South
Major	25%	31%	20%	6%	21%	63%	13%	21%	37%	33%	14%	23%	28%	24%	25%	28%	23%	23%	27%	27%
Minor	21%	24%	18%	24%	28%	13%	21%	24%	18%	21%	21%	18%	24%	26%	19%	16%	26%	23%	15%	24%
No real accomplish	38%	32%	42%	60%	24%	9%	45%	41%	29%	32%	45%	42%	34%	34%	34%	43%	36%	39%	37%	35%
Both (vol)	9%	9%	9%	5%	15%	13%	10%	9%	9%	10%	9%	8%	11%	12%	10%	7%	10%	6%	14%	9%
Don't know (vol)	5%	2%	7%	5%	6%	2%	5%	2%	7%	3%	6%	7%	2%	2%	8%	3%	3%	6%	4%	3%
Refused (vol)	3%	2%	4%	1%	5%	0%	6%	2%	1%	1%	5%	2%	1%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	1%
Unweight N	805	382	423	379	142	253	225	286	294	576	224	396	240	112	156	291	351	318	262	225

US3. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel, even if neither statement is perfect: Democrats have overreacted to President Trump's behavior OR Democrats have not done enough to correct problems they see with President Trump's behavior?																				
	All	Gender		Party w/ Lean			Age			Race/Eth		Income			Education			Region		
		Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Repub	18-34	35-54	55+	White Non/Hisp	Non-white	<75K	75K-<150K	150K+	HS or less	Some coll	Coll grad+	North	Central	South
Overreacted	36%	44%	29%	12%	45%	74%	22%	35%	47%	49%	18%	29%	46%	43%	34%	38%	36%	31%	37%	42%
Not done enough	51%	49%	53%	75%	40%	20%	56%	53%	46%	41%	65%	57%	45%	47%	56%	46%	52%	56%	48%	48%
Don't know (vol)	6%	4%	9%	8%	7%	2%	7%	7%	6%	6%	7%	7%	5%	3%	6%	8%	5%	7%	8%	5%
Refused (vol)	6%	4%	9%	5%	8%	3%	15%	5%	2%	4%	10%	7%	4%	8%	4%	7%	7%	6%	8%	5%
Unweighted N	805	382	423	379	142	253	225	286	294	576	224	396	240	112	156	291	351	318	262	225

