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## **Christie Running Stronger than NJEA**

Gov. Chris Christie continues to garner the approval of New Jersey voters despite strong feelings to the contrary. According to the most recent statewide poll by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind™, 49% of New Jersey voters approve of the job Christie is doing, while 39% disapprove. Just back from the Republican Governors Conference, his margin of 10 percentage points is a four-point decline from a month ago, though within the poll's margin of error.

"To the extent that Christie's national reputation is tied up with national Republican politics, it can hurt him with voters back home," said Peter Woolley, a political scientist and director of the poll. "He has thus far made his reputation on honest and decisive management, not solid partisanship."

His 10-point advantage in his approval rating is better than his four-point advantage in favorable over unfavorable opinion: 45% say they have a favorable view of the governor and 41% have an unfavorable view. Moreover, three of four of those who say their opinion of him is unfavorable say their opinion is "very" unfavorable. Similarly, among those who disapprove of his job performance, two of three "strongly" disapprove.

Voters split on the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA): 39% have a favorable opinion, while 38% have an unfavorable opinion. But the poll also finds that a majority of voters in public-employee households (60%) have a favorable view of the NJEA and just a quarter have an unfavorable view (26%). Among all other voters, the NJEA runs behind, 32% favorable and 43% unfavorable.

Similarly, the governor's approval in public employee households lags by seven points with 40% approving and 47% disapproving. Among all other voters, the governor runs ahead with 53% approving and 36% disapproving.

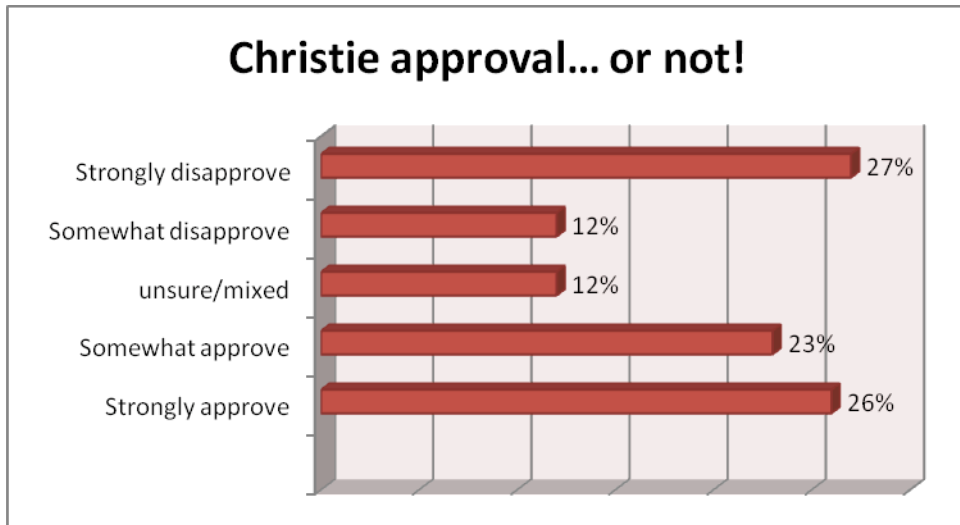
More than nine of ten voters say they have not heard of (88%) or have no opinion of (5%) the NJEA leader, Barbara Keshishian, who is outspokenly critical of the governor. "The governor has a megaphone. The NJEA has money," said Woolley. "The fight is far from over."

Three of five voters (60%) continue to say the state should hold the line on spending even if many programs are reduced, while 22% say the state should raise taxes if necessary to support state programs, a nearly three-to-one advantage. Among those who say cut the budget, Christie's approval rate is 69%-20%. Among those who say the state needs to raise taxes and continue to support its programs, Christie's approval runs well-behind, 13%-78%. Among all voters, 45% say he is doing a "good" or "excellent" job.

"Deep cuts in public budgets and a popular governor don't usually go together," added Woolley. "New Jersey voters are living in interesting times."

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 804 registered voters statewide was conducted by telephone from Nov. 15, 2010, through Nov. 21, 2010, and has a margin of error of +/-3.5 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, Questions, and Tables**

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from Nov. 15, 2010, through Nov 21, 2010, using a randomly selected sample of 804 registered voters statewide. The margin of error for a sample of 804 randomly selected respondents is +/- 3.5 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 land-line phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected. The sample is mathematically weighted to approximate known demographics of age, race and gender.

**Question:** Now, turning to New Jersey... In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or do you think the state has gotten off on the wrong track?

	All	Party			Gender		Public employee household	
		D	I	R	men	wom	No	Yes
Right direction	<b>40%</b>	19	49	66	46	33	42	32
Wrong track	<b>51%</b>	71	43	25	44	57	47	61
Unsure/mixed	<b>10%</b>	10	7	8	10	10	11	7

**Right /Wrong direction past year**

	Oct	Aug	May 25	Mar. 30	Mar. 3	Jan. 12
Right direction	44%	42%	35%	33%	32%	27%
Wrong track	48%	48%	55%	55%	49%	55%
Unsure/mixed	9%	11%	10%	13%	20%	18%

**Right/Wrong direction Corzine term ...**

	Oct 09	Se 09	Jul 09	Apr 09	Mar 09	Jan 09	Nov 08	Oct 08	Sept 08	Jun 08	Apr 08	Fe 08	Jan 08	Oc 07	Se 07	Jn 07	My 07	Mr 06	Jan 06
Right track	21%	22	21	23	25	25	24	23	23	25	26	25	28	30	38	36	42	39	34
Wrong track	68%	68	66	64	59	65	65	67	67	64	66	65	61	59	49	50	44	47	48
DK	11%	10	14	13	16	10	10	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	12	14	14	15	18

**Question:** 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 ...? Would that be very or somewhat?

	Haven't heard of	Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Unsure/no opinion	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable
<b>Chris Christie (all)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>30</b>
<i>Republicans only</i>	--	<b>51</b>	<b>25</b>	7	8	8
<i>Independents only</i>	2	28	22	11	11	26
<i>Democrats only</i>	1	8	14	15	13	50
Previous Surveys...						
<i>Christie 10/10</i>	2%	30%	18%	11%	15%	24%
<i>Christie 8/10</i>	1%	21%	20%	21%	13%	23%
<i>Christie 5/10</i>	3%	21%	19%	14%	12%	31%
<i>Christie 3/30/10</i>	3%	18%	20%	20%	17%	22%
<i>Christie 3/3/10</i>	2%	19%	28%	25%	10%	15%
<i>Christie 1/10</i>	3%	16%	29%	28%	14%	9%
<i>Christie 10/09</i>	1%	17%	24%	14%	20%	24%
<i>Christie 09/09</i>	3%	15%	23%	25%	17%	18%
<i>Christie 07/09</i>	13%	10%	24%	28%	14%	11%
<i>Christie 04/09</i>	38%	14%	17%	20%	8%	4%
<i>Christie 03/09</i>	43%	12%	18%	22%	4%	2%
<i>Christie 01/09</i>	56%	11%	12%	15%	4%	2%
<i>Christie 09/08</i>	60%	2%	3%	14%	11%	9%

**Job rating, current**

**Question:** How would you rate the job Chris Christie is doing as governor... [READ]?

	All	Party			Public Employee Household		Budget remedy?	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	No	Yes	Cut	Tax
Excellent	<b>17%</b>	4	13	35	20	8	26	3
Good	<b>28%</b>	18	32	40	28	27	38	7
Only fair	<b>25%</b>	29	33	17	26	22	20	30
Poor	<b>27%</b>	44	20	8	23	38	14	56
Unsure	<b>4%</b>	4	2	1	3	4	2	3

**Job rating, trend**

	Oct	Aug	May	Mar. 30	Mar. 3
	19%	13%	13%	10%	8%
	26%	26%	24%	24%	31%
	26%	32%	23%	31%	26%
	25%	24%	33%	21%	13%
	3%	6%	7%	14%	21%

**Approve/disapprove, Current**

**Question:** Do you approve or disapprove of way Chris Christie is handling his job as governor? Would that be somewhat... or strongly....?

	All	Party			Public Employee Household		Budget remedy?			
		men	wom	Dem	Ind	Rep	No	Yes	cut	tax
Approve	<b>49%</b>	55	44	28	53	79	53	40	<b>69</b>	13
Disapprove	<b>39%</b>	33	44	61	31	13	36	47	20	<b>78</b>
Mixed/d.k.	<b>12%</b>	12	12	11	16	9	12	13	11	9

**Approve/disapprove, trend** [\* Question was "...handling his transition to governor."]

	Oct	Aug.	May	Mar. 30	Mar. 3	Jan. 10*
	2010	2010	2010	2010	2010	2010
	51%	47%	44%	43%	52%	48%
	37%	36%	42%	32%	21%	13%
	13%	17%	15%	25%	28%	38%

**Question:** How much have you heard or read recently about the state's budget problems ...READ?

	All	Public Pension Household		Oct	Aug <sup>#</sup>	May*	Mar.*
		no	yes				
A great deal	50%	46	63	20%	25%	29%	23%
Some	32%	34	28	40%	37%	41%	41%
Just a little	14%	16	8	27%	26%	21%	23%
Nothing	4%	5	1	14%	11%	9%	13%

\*Question wording was: How much have you heard or read about the Governor's proposed state budget for the coming year?"

# Question wording was: How much have you heard or read about the state's budget for the coming year...?

**Question:** In order to balance the budget, some people say.... Others say to balance the budget.... Which position comes closest to your view?

[Rotate statements]	All	Party			Ideology			Public union household	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	no	yes
... the state should hold the line on spending even if many programs are reduced	60%	40	59	87	36	64	79	63	51
... the state should raise taxes if necessary and continue to support state programs	22%	38	16	5	42	19	11	20	32
Unsure/mixed	18%	22	24	8	22	16	10	17	18

**Cut or tax, trend**

	Oct 2010	Aug 2010	May 2010	Mar. 30 2010	Mar. 3 2010	Jan. 10 2010	2009	2006	2005
	Cut	60%	60%	60%	62%	66%	70%	72%	67%
Tax	22%	22%	23%	21%	21%	17%	19%	21%	26%
Unsure	18%	19%	16%	17%	13%	13%	9%	11%	12%

**Question:** Have you heard of...? If you haven't just tell me. [If yes, ask:] Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of...? Would that be very or somewhat?

	Haven't heard of	Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Unsure/ no opinion	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable
		Barbara Keshishian	88%	2%	2%	5%
June 1, 2010 (n=385)	85%	2%	3%	5%	2%	2%

**Question:** And have you heard of the NJEA?

	Current	June	March
Yes	74%	74%	70%
No	26%	26%	30%

The NJEA is the public teachers' union. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the NJEA? Would that be very or somewhat?

	Very Favorable	Somewhat favorable	Unsure/ Mixed	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable
All	21%	18%	23%	15%	23%
men	19	17	20	17	27
Women	22	20	27	12	19
Democrats	30	24	27	10	9
independents	17	16	23	15	29
Republicans	9	12	16	21	42
Non-public union household	15	17	26	18	25
Public union household	38	22	13	6	20
June 1 All	15%	18%	23%	18%	26%
March 30 All	17%	18%	30%	16%	19%

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## Question Wording and Order

US1-US2 [For release 11.29.10]

NJ1. Now, thinking about [New Jersey...](#) In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or have they gotten off on the wrong track?

Right direction  
Wrong track  
DK/Unsure [DON'T READ]

NJ2. 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?

[ROTATE NAMES]

Chris Christie  
Robert Menendez  
Barbara Keshishian  
Frank Lautenberg

Haven't heard of ... [SKIP TO NEXT NAME]  
Very Favorable  
Somewhat favorable (and favorable DK)  
DK/Unsure [VOL]  
Somewhat unfavorable (and unfavorable DK)  
Very unfavorable

[PROGRAMMER: ASK NJ 2B AT RANDOM ½ BEFORE NJ3 AND ½ AFTER NJ6]

NJ2b. And have you heard of the NJEA?

Yes  
No  
DK

The NJEA is the public teachers' union. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the NJEA? Would that be very or somewhat?

Haven't heard of ... [SKIP TO NEXT NAME]  
Very Favorable  
Somewhat favorable (and favorable DK)  
DK/Unsure [VOL]  
Somewhat unfavorable (and unfavorable DK)  
Very unfavorable

NJ3. How would you rate the job Chris Christie is doing as governor—excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

Excellent  
Good  
Only fair  
Or poor

DK/Unsure [DON'T READ

NJ4. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor? [If answer, ASK "would that be somewhat (answer) or strongly (answer)?"

Strongly Approve  
Somewhat approve  
Somewhat disapprove  
Strongly Disapprove  
Neither [vol] or Neutral [vol]  
DK [vol] or both [vol]

NJ5. How much have you heard or read recently about the state's budget problems...READ?

A great deal  
Some  
Just a little  
Nothing

NJ6. In order to balance the state budget, some people say.... Others say to balance the budget.... Which position comes closest to your view?

ROTATE

...the state should cut spending even if many programs are reduced  
...the state should raise taxes if necessary and continue to support state programs  
Neither/both/DK (VOL)