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## Primary Election Elite

New Jersey voters are barely aware that they have chance to vote the bums out—or in again, as they wish—on a balmy Tuesday in June, according to the most recent poll by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind™. In that survey, fourteen percent correctly noted that the next time the public would have an opportunity to vote would be the state's June primary election.

Most voters (48%) thought the next time would be in November. A few (4%) figured they'd have to wait until the 2012 presidential election. Many said they just didn't know (30%).

"Americans have more opportunities to vote than any other people in the world," said Peter Woolley, a political scientist and director of the poll. "But we're oblivious to it."

One in five voters (21%) over 60 years of age knew they'd have their next chance in June, compared to 13% of boomers age 45-59, and to 5% of voters under 30.

And one in five Republican voters (20%) identified June as the next opportunity, compared to 13% of Democrats and 6% of independents.

"If you want your vote to count," said Woolley, "a contested primary is where your vote has the most influence. If you're voting on primary day, you're part of an elite."

In the 2006 mid-term primary elections, eligible voter turnout ranged from a low of 5% in Camden County to a high of 16% in Hunterdon.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 555 registered voters statewide was conducted by telephone from May 20, 2010, through May 23, 2010, and has a margin of error of +/- 4 percentage points.

<b>Question:</b> As far as you are aware, when is the next time the public has an opportunity to vote for office holders?										
	All	Men	Wom	Dem	Ind	Rep.	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
June (accept anytime in June)	<b>14%</b>	12	16	13	6	20	5	8	13	21
November 2010 (including "next year")	<b>48%</b>	52	45	43	65	48	27	47	55	48
2012 presidential	<b>4%</b>	4	4	5	6	2	--	5	3	5
Other	<b>4%</b>	4	4	4	2	4	8	2	6	2
Don't know/ref.	<b>30%</b>	28	31	34	21	26	60	37	23	24

### **Methodology**

The survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from May 20, 2010, through May 23, 2010, using a randomly selected sample of 555 registered voters statewide. The margin of error for a sample of 555 randomly selected respondents is +/- 4 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 Group, (formerly TMR, Inc) 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. Results are mathematically weighted to match known demographics of gender, age, and race.

The two questions immediately preceding the one reported here concerned self-identified party and ideology. Questions preceding those were released May 25, May 27, and June 1, 2010.

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