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Open Space Catches On, But Not Vote-by-Mail

According to results from the most recent PublicMind™ poll, more than 1-in-5 (22%) likely New Jersey voters say they've received an application at home for a mail-in ballot. But only 4% of those (and less than one percent of all voters) have mailed in the application. Nine-in-ten (89%) who say they've received an application for a mail-in ballot say they'll pass on the application process and go right to the voting both on election day.

In all, just 8% of voters say they're somewhat or very likely to vote by mail: 10% say they're not very likely, and 81% say they're not at all likely to bother with voting by mail.

"Voting by mail has become more and more popular in other states," said Peter Woolley, a political scientist and director of the FDU poll, "but it seems its time has not yet come in the Garden State. Many people still see going to vote as a personal and communal ritual."

Whether voting in person or by mail, voters will also have to decide whether to participate in this year's referendum on borrowing money. About 1-in-4 voters (24%) say they usually just skip bond questions. Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say they always vote on bond questions (69-59), and voters over 60 are far more likely than voters under 30 to say they always vote on the ballot questions (72-33).

A majority of likely voters (56%) say they approve of this year's public question: issuing \$400 million in bonds to make land purchases to conserve open space. Just 31% say they disapprove of the bond issue and 13% say they are not sure. The bond issue gains approval by a similar margin (57-32) among just those who say they always vote on bond issues.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 667 likely voters statewide was conducted by telephone from September 28, 2009, through October 4, 2009, and has a margin of error of +/- 4 percentage points.

Methodology, questions, and tables are available on the web at:

<http://publicmind.fdu.edu>

Radio actualities at 201.692.2846

For more information, please call 201.692.7032.

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Methodology, Questions, and Tables

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from Sept. 28, 2009, through Oct. 4, 2009, using a randomly selected sample of 667 likely voters statewide. The margin of error for a sample of 667 randomly selected respondents is +/- 4 percentage points. 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 professionally trained interviewers use 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.

In November, there will also be a question on the ballot about the state issuing bonds. Do you always vote on bond questions or do you usually just skip them?

		18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Vote	64%	33	57	66	72	59	75	69
Skip	24%	47	32	24	17	29	19	18
Unsure/mixed (vol)	11%	19	11	10	11	11	6	12

The question on the ballot will be whether to authorize the state to issue 400 million dollars in bonds in order to make land purchases to conserve open, green spaces, such as parks and farmlands. Do you approve or disapprove of this proposed bond issue?

	All	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.	Lib.	Mod.	Conser.	vote	skip
Approve	56%	63	65	45	67	58	49	57	50
Disapprove	31%	26	22	40	22	30	37	32	32
DK	13%	11	13	14	11	13	14	11	18

In the mail at your home, have you received an application for a mail-in election ballot?

	All	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Yes	22%	16	26	31
No	73%	80	69	64
Not sure	5%	5	5	5

(If received mail-in ballot application...) Have you mailed the application or do you plan to or will you skip that and vote in person? (n=146)

Mailed the application	4%
Do you plan to mail the application	5%
Skip that and will vote in person	89%
Don't know	2%

So how likely is it that this year you'll vote by mail...not at all likely, not very likely, somewhat likely, or very likely...or have you already?

		Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Already Voted by Mail	--	--	--	--
Very Likely	5%	7	3	3
Somewhat Likely	3%	3	2	3
Not Very Likely	10%	12	7	8
Not at all Likely	81%	77	86	84
Don't Know	1%	--	1	1

Results are also available on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>
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