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Visit <http://eagletonpoll.blogspot.com> for a link to specific questions and full tables.

**CHRISTIE SUPPORT DECLINES SLIGHTLY FOLLOWING BUDGET SPEECH;
OBAMA VIEWED MORE FAVORABLY**

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J – Following his Feb. 22 budget speech, New Jersey's registered voters are nearly evenly split on their feelings about Gov. Chris Christie: 46 percent have a favorable impression, another 44 do not, according to a Rutgers-Eagleton Poll released today.

Voters were 10 points more positive than negative about Christie in a poll last December. They have also become slightly less positive about the governor's job performance since then.

"While some polls showed Gov. Christie's support increasing before the budget speech, reaction to the budget itself is mixed, which appears to be reflected in a decline in his post-speech favorability and job performance ratings," said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University.

At the same time, the poll finds President Barack Obama's favorability rating among voters has remained consistently better than the governor's since December, at 57 percent favorable and 36 percent unfavorable.

The poll of 912 New Jersey adults was conducted among both landline and cell phone households Feb. 24-26, with a margin of error of +/- 3.3 percentage points. A weighted subsample of 811 registered voters is reported here, with a margin of error of +/- 3.4 percentage points.

New Jerseyans remain polarized over Christie

By a slim margin (48 percent to 45 percent), more registered voters say they are displeased than pleased with Christie's proposed budget. One result may be a decline in Christie's overall favorability and job performance ratings to a nearly even split, 46 percent favorable and 44 percent unfavorable, down significantly from December 2010, Redlawsk said.

Republicans are three time more likely than Democrats to have positive impressions of Christie (76 percent to 24 percent). Independents also feel more favorable than unfavorable, 50 percent to 37 percent.

The trend for Christie's job performance rating is similar. Half the respondents were asked to rate the governor on an "excellent to poor scale"; half graded him from A to F. The margin of error on these subsamples is +/-4.8 percentage points.

Forty-two percent rate the governor at least good, down only two points from December, but far fewer rate his performance excellent now, 14 percent compared to 21 percent. More rate his performance as fair (30 percent now versus 23 percent), while 29 percent say he is doing a poor job, mostly unchanged from December.

Republicans are somewhat less positive about the governor's job performance following his budget speech: Christie's 39 percent excellent rating among GOP voters after last November's election falls to 27 percent. Another 38 percent rate his performance as fair or poor compared to 26 percent in December.

Independents also are less likely to rate Christie excellent: 14 percent now compared to 21 percent in December. At the same time, they also are less likely to rate the governor poor: 19 percent now compared to 23 percent in December. Since the budget address, independents are less polarized about the governor's job performance, and registered Democrats also are somewhat less extreme. More than half of Democratic voters in November rated Christie's performance as poor. Forty-two percent rate him poor now.

Among registered voters asked to grade Christie's job performance with a letter, 14 percent give him an "A" while 24 percent give him a "B," very similar to his "excellent" and "good" ratings. Another 26 percent rate him "C," while 15 percent give a "D" and 19 percent give an "F".

"Looking at job performance with letter grades lets us examine negative feelings more closely," said Redlawsk. "While 59 percent say the governor has done a fair or poor job, the letter grades show that many would probably give a 'C' if they had that option, while only about a third give truly negative ratings. This more nuanced evaluation helps us understand why Christie's overall favorable rating is more positive than negative."

Obama favorable rating higher than Christie's; job performance similar

While New Jerseyans are split on Christie, a strong majority (57 percent) holds a favorable view of President Obama, while only 36 percent view him unfavorably. The president's favorable rating remains largely unchanged from December.

Concurrently and in a trend similar to Christie, registered voters are less happy with the president's job performance than they are with him personally. Only 11 percent say Obama is doing an excellent job as president, while 38 percent think he is doing a good job. Another 30 percent call his performance fair, and 20 percent perceive it as poor.

As with Christie, half of respondents were asked to use letter grades for Obama's job performance. Among these registered voters, 11 percent give him an "A" and another 32 percent, a "B." Both of these reflect the same responses as the excellent and good ratings. In the letter grading, 30 percent assigned a "C," again similar to the 30 percent rating Obama as "fair". Finally, 14 percent give Obama a "D" and 12 percent an "F."

"The president is doing a little better overall than the governor, according to voters," said Redlawsk. "The biggest difference is that more give Christie very negative – D or F – ratings than do for Obama. We also learn that interpreting 'excellent' and 'good' ratings is pretty straightforward, but 'fair' might not be as negative as we usually say it is, since it seems to correspond with a 'C' rating."

Menendez becoming better known; evaluation more positive than negative

U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez is viewed favorably by 34 percent of registered voters, and unfavorably by 28 percent. At the same time, 38 percent have no opinion on Menendez. In a December poll, 29 percent of voters had a favorable view of Menendez, while 27 percent viewed him negatively. Forty-four percent were neutral. In the span two months, Garden Staters have become more aware of Menendez, and are slightly more likely to view him favorably than unfavorably as they learn more about him.

While Democrats were more likely than Republicans to have a favorable view of Menendez (55 percent to 17 percent), even a third of Democrats still have no opinion, while 39 percent of Republicans and 42 percent of independents offer no impression of the senator.

QUESTIONS AND TABLES FOLLOW ON THE NEXT PAGE

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll February 24-26, 2011

Questions and Tables

The questions covered in the release of March 8, 2010 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are Registered Voters unless otherwise stated.

**[SPLIT BALLOT. RANDOM HALF OF RESPONDENTS GIVEN
 “EXCELLENT...POOR” VERSION 1 OF JOB QUESTION. REMAINING GIVEN
 LETTER GRADE (A-F) VERSION 2. NO RESPONDENT GOT BOTH VERSIONS]]**

Q. Please rate how Barack Obama is handling his job as president. Is it excellent, good, fair, or poor? [VERSION 1]

	Feb 2011 RV	Trend			
		Dec 2010 Adults	Dec 2010 Voters	Oct 2010 Likely Voters	Sept 2010 RV
Excellent	11%	9%	9%	14%	22%
Good	38%	29%	28%	25%	32%
Fair	31%	34%	32%	30%	23%
Poor	20%	27%	30%	29%	22%
DK	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%
N=	395	904	664	552	909

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Excellent	25%	7%	0%	24%	10%	5%
Good	57%	35%	14%	50%	43%	12%
Fair	17%	38%	37%	24%	31%	38%
Poor	0%	20%	48%	2%	17%	44%
DK	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
N=	134	159	97	78	221	90

	Employment				Race				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	White	Black	Asian	Hisp	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Excellent	11%	6%	18%	10%	8%	21%	30%	10%	13%	8%	10%	16%
Good	41%	37%	36%	29%	34%	57%	40%	48%	34%	40%	41%	36%
Fair	31%	29%	20%	47%	34%	19%	30%	31%	33%	30%	35%	26%
Poor	17%	28%	26%	15%	24%	3%	0%	11%	20%	23%	15%	22%
DK	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
N=	196	47	82	66	292	34	21	34	94	86	126	86

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Excellent	16%	5%	15%	16%	23%	7%	5%	10%	12%	11%
Good	36%	42%	30%	39%	33%	49%	36%	29%	34%	41%
Fair	37%	33%	33%	17%	28%	31%	40%	34%	31%	31%
Poor	10%	20%	21%	28%	16%	13%	18%	27%	23%	17%
DK	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N=	64	161	99	70	94	119	59	71	190	205

[VERSION 2 – LETTER GRADE VERSION]

Q. Please rate how Barack Obama is handling his job as President, using a grading scale from A to F, You can give him any full letter grade, A, B, C, D, or F. [VERSION 2]

A	11%
B	32%
C	30%
D	14%
F	12%
DK	1%
N=	416

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
A	22%	5%	2%	12%	11%	6%
B	45%	32%	11%	51%	32%	16%
C	23%	35%	35%	26%	34%	25%
D	4%	20%	22%	9%	14%	22%
F	5%	8%	28%	2%	8%	31%
DK	0%	1%	3%	0%	1%	0%
N=	150	168	89	92	241	76

	Employment				Race				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	White	Black	Asian	Hisp	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
A	12%	9%	8%	12%	7%	40%	16%	6%	9%	11%	9%	13%
B	36%	35%	24%	26%	27%	50%	51%	39%	24%	27%	31%	46%
C	32%	30%	30%	28%	35%	4%	23%	29%	27%	34%	36%	23%
D	13%	12%	17%	16%	16%	6%	6%	15%	13%	12%	18%	13%
F	7%	13%	19%	18%	14%	0%	0%	12%	23%	15%	6%	5%
DK	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	4%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%
N=	220	60	66	70	293	36	30	48	74	121	109	109

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
A	12%	10%	13%	7%	14%	10%	5%	13%	7%	14%
B	35%	38%	28%	23%	31%	35%	35%	31%	30%	35%
C	27%	35%	27%	28%	25%	29%	35%	40%	31%	30%
D	16%	11%	13%	21%	14%	12%	18%	10%	17%	11%
F	10%	6%	18%	19%	14%	14%	6%	6%	14%	9%
DK	0%	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
N=	70	175	101	67	106	130	67	65	208	208

Christie/Obama Job Performance Feb. 2011
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

Q. Now let's talk about New Jersey. Please rate how Chris Christie is handling his job as governor. Is it excellent, good, fair, or poor? [VERSION 1]

	Feb 2011 RV	Trend				
		Dec 2010 Adults	Dec 2010 Voters	Oct 2010 RV	Sept 2010 RV	Aug 2010 RV
Excellent	14%	17%	21%	16%	12%	22%
Good	28%	22%	23%	29%	27%	23%
Fair	30%	26%	23%	24%	33%	27%
Poor	26%	28%	29%	28%	25%	25%
DK	2%	6%	6%	3%	3%	3%
N=	395	900	660	876	750	911

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Excellent	3%	14%	27%	5%	12%	25%
Good	19%	32%	34%	19%	28%	37%
Fair	32%	33%	21%	27%	35%	22%
Poor	42%	20%	15%	48%	24%	12%
DK	3%	1%	2%	0%	1%	4%
N=	134	159	97	78	221	90

	Employment				Race				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	White	Black	Asian	Hisp	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Excellent	15%	15%	15%	6%	16%	4%	0%	9%	12%	11%	16%	15%
Good	28%	14%	28%	34%	32%	4%	24%	18%	27%	32%	28%	23%
Fair	31%	41%	23%	27%	25%	46%	38%	53%	38%	32%	28%	22%
Poor	24%	29%	30%	29%	25%	45%	26%	19%	20%	23%	25%	39%
DK	1%	0%	4%	4%	2%	0%	12%	0%	3%	2%	3%	0%
N=	196	47	82	66	292	34	21	34	94	86	126	86

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Excellent	1%	12%	19%	21%	16%	7%	20%	17%	16%	11%
Good	23%	29%	30%	28%	15%	27%	34%	38%	30%	26%
Fair	37%	32%	27%	22%	31%	39%	25%	19%	32%	28%
Poor	33%	26%	23%	25%	35%	23%	21%	24%	18%	34%
DK	5%	1%	1%	4%	3%	4%	0%	1%	4%	1%
N=	64	161	99	70	94	119	59	71	190	205

Christie Job Performance from Dec 2010 by Party ID (Voters)

	Dem	Ind	Rep
Excellent	6%	21%	39%
Good	13%	24%	35%
Fair	26%	24%	18%
Poor	51%	23%	8%
DK	4%	8%	0%
N=	210	265	169

[LETTER GRADE VERSION]

Q. Now let's talk about New Jersey. Please rate how Chris Christie is handling his job as governor, using a grading scale from A to F, You can give him any full letter grade, A, B, C, D, or F.
[VERSION 2]

A	14%
B	24%
C	26%
D	15%
F	19%
DK	2%
N=	416

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
A	4%	15%	31%	5%	13%	29%
B	13%	25%	44%	17%	21%	42%
C	30%	27%	16%	36%	25%	16%
D	20%	15%	6%	24%	14%	7%
F	32%	16%	2%	18%	24%	4%
DK	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%	2%
N=	150	168	89	92	241	76

	Employment				Race				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	White	Black	Asian	Hisp	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
A	16%	9%	15%	14%	17%	0%	10%	13%	19%	10%	20%	11%
B	27%	21%	27%	14%	29%	11%	4%	17%	14%	27%	31%	21%
C	23%	33%	21%	33%	21%	34%	66%	25%	19%	31%	19%	30%
D	13%	19%	17%	15%	14%	19%	16%	10%	22%	11%	13%	17%
F	20%	18%	16%	19%	16%	32%	4%	34%	22%	21%	13%	20%
DK	1%	0%	4%	5%	3%	4%	0%	0%	5%	1%	4%	0%
N=	220	60	66	70	293	36	30	48	74	121	109	109

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
A	16%	10%	20%	15%	10%	16%	13%	20%	17%	11%
B	19%	24%	22%	32%	19%	31%	17%	26%	31%	17%
C	32%	28%	23%	16%	21%	27%	25%	31%	19%	33%
D	13%	19%	10%	15%	14%	15%	20%	11%	16%	14%
F	17%	18%	22%	19%	31%	10%	24%	11%	14%	23%
DK	3%	0%	4%	3%	5%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%
N=	70	175	101	67	106	130	67	65	208	208

Christie/Obama Job Performance Feb. 2011
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

[ALL RESPONDENTS RECEIVED REMAINING QUESTIONS]

Q. Would you say the state of New Jersey is currently going in the right direction or has it gone off on the wrong track?

	Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Adults	Oct 2010 Likely Voters	Sept 2010 RV	Sept 2010 Likely Voters	Aug 2010 RV
Right Direction	45%	38%	30%	41%	41%	37%
Wrong Track	48%	52%	65%	50%	50%	50%
DK	7%	9%	4%	9%	8%	12%
N=	808	902	546	830	656	750

Q. I'd like to ask about some people and organizations. Please tell me if your general impression of each one is favorable or unfavorable, or if you do not have an opinion. First, [next]: [ROTATE]

President Barack Obama

	Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Adults	Oct 2010 RV	Sep 2010 RV
Favorable	57%	52%	44%	57%
Unfavorable	36%	34%	45%	34%
DK/No opinion	7%	13%	11%	9%
N=	810	904	548	909

	Employment				Race				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	White	Black	Asian	Hisp	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Favorable	60%	54%	52%	56%	50%	90%	72%	65%	52%	55%	57%	64%
Unfavorable	33%	37%	40%	37%	43%	4%	12%	29%	38%	40%	35%	30%
DK	7%	8%	8%	7%	7%	7%	16%	6%	10%	5%	8%	7%
N=	415	107	148	136	584	71	51	82	168	208	234	195

	Age				Income				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Favorable	62%	60%	52%	50%	63%	60%	54%	51%	51%	63%
Unfavorable	29%	32%	40%	43%	30%	34%	34%	43%	41%	30%
DK	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%	6%	12%	7%	8%	7%
N=	135	336	200	137	201	249	126	135	396	413

	Party ID				Ideology	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Favorable	89%	50%	20%	80%	61%	23%
Unfavorable	8%	40%	71%	14%	32%	67%
DK	3%	10%	9%	7%	7%	10%
N=	284	327	186	170	461	166

Christie/Obama Job Performance Feb. 2011
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

Governor Chris Christie

	Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Voters	Oct 2010 RV	Sept 2010 RV	Aug 2010 RV	Feb 2010 RV
Favorable	46%	49%	45%	46%	46%	45%
Unfavorable	44%	39%	38%	42%	39%	26%
No Opinion/DK	10%	13%	17%	12%	15%	29%
N=	810	665	879	911	751	881

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Favorable	24%	50%	76%	28%	42%	78%
Unfavorable	67%	37%	19%	61%	46%	18%
DK	9%	13%	6%	11%	12%	4%
N=	283	327	186	169	462	166

	Employment				Race				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	White	Black	Asian	Hisp	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Favorable	48%	46%	49%	38%	52%	18%	45%	37%	44%	47%	53%	39%
Unfavorable	43%	44%	40%	51%	40%	62%	43%	54%	42%	44%	38%	51%
DK	9%	10%	11%	11%	9%	20%	12%	10%	13%	9%	8%	10%
N=	415	107	148	136	584	71	51	82	168	208	234	195

	Age				Income				Gender		
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female	
Favorable	38%	45%	48%	56%	39%	46%	46%	56%	53%	40%	
Unfavorable	49%	47%	39%	36%	49%	41%	46%	39%	37%	50%	
DK	13%	8%	13%	8%	12%	12%	9%	4%	10%	11%	
N=	134	336	200	138	201	248	127	135	397	413	

Senator Robert Menendez

	Feb 2011 RV	Dec 2010 Voters
Favorable	34%	29%
Unfavorable	28%	27%
DK/No opinion	38%	44%
N=	810	664

	Party ID			Ideology		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Middle	Conserv
Favorable	55%	26%	17%	47%	36%	19%
Unfavorable	13%	31%	45%	18%	23%	50%
DK	32%	42%	38%	35%	41%	31%
N=	283	327	186	169	462	166

Christie/Obama Job Performance Feb. 2011
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

	Employment				Race				Education			
	Full Time	Part Time	Retire	Not Empl	White	Black	Asian	Hisp	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work
Favorable	36%	27%	42%	28%	32%	58%	23%	41%	29%	33%	31%	46%
Unfavorable	30%	17%	31%	25%	30%	17%	11%	29%	31%	30%	28%	20%
DK	34%	56%	27%	47%	38%	25%	66%	29%	40%	37%	41%	34%
N=	415	107	148	136	584	71	51	82	168	208	234	195

	Age				Income			Gender		
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	< 50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	Male	Female
Favorable	19%	36%	37%	41%	37%	35%	37%	33%	33%	36%
Unfavorable	20%	27%	31%	32%	28%	30%	27%	30%	37%	19%
DK	61%	37%	31%	27%	36%	35%	36%	37%	31%	45%
N=	134	336	200	138	201	248	127	135	397	413

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll February 24-26, 2011

New Jersey Statewide Poll

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone from February 24-26, 2011 with a scientifically selected random sample of 912 New Jersey adults. Data are weighted to represent known parameters in the New Jersey population, using gender, age, race, and Hispanic ethnicity matching to US Census Bureau data. All results are reported with these weighted data. This telephone poll included 775 landline respondents and 137 cell phone respondents, acquired through random digit dialing. Data reported in this release are from a weighted sample of 811 registered voters drawn from the full sample of adults.

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. The sampling error for 811 registered voters is +/-3.4 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey voters favored a particular position, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.6 and 53.4 percent (50 +/-3.4) had all New Jersey voters been interviewed, rather than just a sample. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups are subject to more error than are statements based on the total 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 Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by Braun Research, Inc., of Princeton, New Jersey. The questionnaire was developed and all data analysis was completed in house at the Eagleton Institute of Politics Center for Public Interest Polling. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, a non-partisan academic center focused on the study and teaching of politics and the political process.

**Weighted Sample Characteristics
(811 New Jersey Registered Voters)**

35% Democrat
42% Independent
23% Republican

49% Male
51% Female

17% 18-29
41% 30-49
24% 50-64
17% 65+

74% White
9% Black
10% Hispanic
6% Asian
1% Other