

# The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll

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## RELEASE INFORMATION

A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in Sunday's *Star-Ledger*. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll*."

## ISSUES IN THE U.S. SENATE RACE

With three weeks remaining in the U.S. Senate campaign, no single issue dominates New Jersey voters' agenda. One-fifth feel crime is the most important issue in this Senate campaign, 14 percent say it is the problem of unemployment, 13 percent feel it is health care, and 9 percent say taxes.

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll*, conducted by telephone with 586 likely voters between October 16 and 20, also finds that majorities of voters have seen or heard both Lautenberg's (61%) and Haytaian's (59%) campaign advertisements.

The poll also finds that nearly three-quarters of New Jersey voters did not see or hear anything about last week's televised debate between the Senate candidates. Only 10 percent report actually viewing the debate.

## ***MOST IMPORTANT CAMPAIGN ISSUES***

No single problem dominates voter concerns in New Jersey's U.S. Senate race between Republican challenger Garabed "Chuck" Haytaian and Democratic incumbent Frank Lautenberg. The specific issue mentioned by the largest number of voters -- 20 percent -- is crime, with another 2 percent singling out the drug problem. In a survey conducted 4 months ago, 17 percent said crime was the most important issue the next Senator will have to face.

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In terms of economic issues, the problem of unemployment and jobs creation is cited by 14 percent of voters as most important in this election, down 5 points from June. Taxes are named as

most important by 9 percent of voters, and another 11 percent cite other economic problems such as inflation, the cost of living and the budget deficit.

The health care issue is most important to 13 percent of New Jersey voters, which represents a 6 point decline since June.

Associate Poll Director Ken Dautrich commented, "Unlike most recent elections in New Jersey, no one issue dominates voter concerns. From 1990 through 1993, economic concerns about jobs and taxes occupied voter attention and allowed Bill Clinton and Christie Whitman to wage successful campaigns. This year no issue or set of issues dominates the voters' agenda."

Overall, 39 percent of voters say that Lautenberg would do a better job of handling the most important issue identified by voters, compared to 26 percent who say that Haytaian would do better. These figures represent a 6 point gain for Haytaian and a 2 point gain for Lautenberg since June.

### ***POLITICAL COMMERCIALS***

Majorities of voters are paying attention to both candidates' advertising in this Senate campaign. Sixty-one percent say they have seen or heard a Lautenberg television or radio advertisement, and 59 percent have seen or heard a Haytaian ad.

Those exposed to the candidate's advertising are generally not reacting favorably toward it. For example, among those who have seen Haytaian's commercials, 39 percent say the ads made them less likely to support the Republican while 28 percent say it made them more likely to support him. Among those exposed to Lautenbergs ads, 38 percent say the ads made them less supportive of the incumbent while 34 percent became more supportive.

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***THE DEBATE***

Ten percent of voters report having had watched the October 15 debate between Haytaian and Lautenberg, and another 18 percent read or heard news stories about the debate. The remaining 72 percent did not read or hear anything about the first televised debate between the Senate candidates.

Among voters who at least read or heard about the debate, more than half (52%) do not feel there was a winner. About the same number of voters feel Haytaian (25%) got the better of the debates as those who feel Lautenberg (24%) won.

Among voters who at least read or heard about the debate, 29 percent say their impression of Haytaian became more favorable while 26 percent say their impression of the Republican became less favorable. Twenty-five percent say their impression of Lautenberg became more favorable from the debate while 29 percent say the incumbent's performance made their impression of him less favorable.

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**BACKGROUND MEMO — RELEASE SL/EP50-2 (EP100-2), MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1994**

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton* Poll was conducted between October 16 and October 20, 1994, when a random sample of 801 New Jerseyans, 18 years and older, was interviewed by telephone. Figures based on this sample size are subject to a sampling error of about  $\pm 3.5$  percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

Figures are also reported for those considered most likely to actually vote in the November election. This subset, identified as **LIKELY VOTERS** in this background memo, contains 586 respondents. The sampling error for this subset is about  $\pm 4.0$  percent. Unless otherwise indicated all figures refer to this group of voters. Likely voters are people who say that they are registered to vote and will "definitely" or "probably" vote on Election Day.

Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from that population. Sampling error does not take into account other possible sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The questions and figures referred to in this release are presented below. The location of each question on the actual questionnaire is in brackets.

"What do you think is the most important problem facing the country that whoever is elected Senator will have to face?" [Q.17A]

	<b>RECENT SURVEY</b> <b>OCTOBER, 1994</b> <b><u>Likely Voters</u></b>	<b>PAST SURVEYS</b> June, 1994 <b><u>Likely Voters</u></b>
Unemployment/jobs	<b>14%</b>	19%
Taxes	<b>9</b>	7
Other economic issue	<b>11</b>	11
Crime	<b>20</b>	17
Education	<b>2</b>	2
Health care	<b>13</b>	19
Drug problems	<b>2</b>	3
Environment	<b>1</b>	1
Social services	<b>5</b>	3
International conflicts/Foreign policy	<b>2</b>	3
Gov't performance	<b>3</b>	1
Moral issues	<b>2</b>	1
Other	<b>8</b>	6
Don't know	<b><u>6</u></b>	<u>5</u>
TOTAL	<b>98%</b>	98%
(n)	<b>(586)</b>	(620)

"Regardless of which candidate you plan to vote for, who would do a better job handling this problem — Lautenberg or Haytaian (HI-TIE-IN)?" [Q.17B]

	<u>Lautenberg</u>	<u>Haytaian</u>	<u>Neither/ Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>OCTOBER, 1994</b>					
<b>--Likely Voters</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(547)</b>
<i>Party Identification</i>					
--Democrat	77	3	20	100	(167)
--Independent	32	21	47	100	(212)
--Republican	12	58	30	100	(153)
<b>PAST SURVEYS</b>					
June, 1994 - Likely Voters	37	20	43	100	(586)
<i>Party Identification</i>					
--Democrat	57	6	36	99	(202)
--Independent	31	15	54	100	(188)
--Republican	20	45	36	101	(169)

"Did you watch any of Saturday's debate between Haytaian ("HI-TIE-IN") and Lautenberg on TV or listen to it on the radio?" [Q.20]

"Have you seen or read any news stories about their debate?" [Q.21]

	<u>Saw or Heard Debate</u>	<u>Only Saw or Read News About Debate</u>	<u>Not Exposed to Either Debate or News</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>OCTOBER, 1994</b>					
<b>--Likely Voters</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(586)</b>
<i>Party Identification</i>					
--Democrat	8	14	78	100	(183)
--Independent	10	19	71	100	(219)
--Republican	11	21	68	100	(168)
<i>Vote Choice - Traditional</i>					
--Haytaian	15	20	65	100	(200)
--Undecided	8	12	79	99	(97)
--Lautenberg	7	19	75	101	(279)
<i>New Vote Choice</i>					
--Firm Haytaian	18	22	60	100	(144)
--Not Firm	6	15	80	101	(255)
--Firm Lautenberg	9	20	71	100	(177)

"Who do you think actually got the best of the debate--Haytaian ("HI-TIE-IN") or Lautenberg? (IF CHOICE MADE, PROBE: By a lot or just a little?)"\* [Q.22]

	<u>Haytaian- A Lot</u>	<u>Haytaian- A Little</u>	<u>Lautenberg- A Lot</u>	<u>Lautenberg- A Little</u>	<u>Nobody Won/ No Opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>OCTOBER, 1994</b>							
<b>--Likely Voters</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>(163)</b>

"Based on what you saw or heard about the debate, did your overall impression of Frank Lautenberg become more favorable or less favorable?" \* [Q.23]

	<u>More Favorable</u>	<u>Less Favorable</u>	<u>Didn't Change (VOL)</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>OCTOBER, 1994</b>						
<b>--Likely Voters</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(163)</b>

"How about your impression of Chuck Haytaian ("HI-TIE-IN")--did this become more favorable or less favorable?" \* [Q.24]

	<u>More Favorable</u>	<u>Less Favorable</u>	<u>Didn't Change (VOL)</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>OCTOBER, 1994</b>						
<b>--Likely Voters</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>(163)</b>

"Have you seen any of (Chuck Haytaian's/Frank Lautenberg's) television or radio advertisements?" [Q.25, Q.27]

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>OCTOBER, 1994</b>					
<b>Likely Voters</b>					
<b>--Haytaian</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(586)</b>
<b>--Lautenberg</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(586)</b>

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\*Question was asked only of those having seen or heard the debate, or having seen or read any news stories about the debate.

"And has what you've seen or heard in (Haytaian's/Lautenberg's) advertisements made you more likely or less likely to support him?""\*\* [Q.26, Q.28]

	<u>More Likely</u>	<u>Less Likely</u>	<u>(VOL) No Difference</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>OCTOBER, 1994</b>						
<b>Likely Voters</b>						
--Haytaian	28%	39%	22%	11%	100%	(347)
--Lautenberg	34	38	20	8	100	(360)
<b>HAYTAIAN</b>						
<u>Gender</u>						
--Male	29	39	25	6	99	(173)
--Female	27	40	18	15	100	(174)
<u>Party Identification</u>						
--Democrat	5	63	16	16	100	(101)
--Independent	23	37	31	9	100	(131)
--Republican	57	19	18	6	100	(105)
<u>Vote Choice - Traditional</u>						
--Haytaian	59	9	26	6	100	(135)
--Undecided	17	25	27	31	100	(48)
--Lautenberg	6	69	17	9	101	(161)
<u>New Vote Choice</u>						
--Firm Haytaian	62	6	28	5	101	(105)
--Not Firm	25	34	20	21	100	(126)
--Firm Lautenberg	1	76	19	4	100	(113)
<b>LAUTENBERG</b>						
<u>Gender</u>						
--Male	30	43	22	5	100	(184)
--Female	39	32	18	11	100	(176)
<u>Party Identification</u>						
--Democrat	66	12	13	9	100	(112)
--Independent	22	39	31	7	99	(127)
--Republican	16	63	15	6	100	(110)
<u>Vote Choice - Traditional</u>						
--Haytaian	8	71	18	2	99	(136)
--Undecided	11	30	25	34	100	(53)
--Lautenberg	64	11	21	4	100	(164)
<u>New Vote Choice</u>						
--Firm Haytaian	4	72	21	3	100	(104)
--Not Firm	33	31	20	15	99	(144)
--Firm Lautenberg	67	10	20	3	100	(105)

\*\*Question was asked only of those having seen or heard the candidate's advertisements.