

# **The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll**

## **NEW JERSEYANS SUPPORTIVE OF YANKEES MOVING ACROSS THE BRIDGE AS LONG AS THEY PAY THEIR OWN TOLL**

**SEE LIMITED ROLE FOR GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT**

**RELEASE: SL/EP 70-2 (EP120-2)**

**SEPTEMBER 27, 1998**

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A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo is in the Sunday, September 27th Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to the "*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll*."

New Jersey would be happy to have the Yankees if they want to come, but state residents are far from wildly enthusiastic about the Bronx Bombers making the Garden State their new home. New Jersey citizens don't see the acquisition of the Yankees as a high priority agenda item for state government, and would be adamantly opposed if public tax dollars were needed to build a new stadium in order to lure the Yanks across the Hudson.

By a margin of 63 in favor to 24 percent in opposition, New Jerseyans like the idea of the Yankees moving in if there was no cost. And, by a narrower margin of 55 percent to 35 percent, a majority would still like to see the Yankees move to New Jersey even if a new stadium had to be built on public land, so long as there were no construction costs. But public opinion reverses sharply if actual taxpayer money is involved. Only 15 percent say they would continue to favor the Yankees moving to NJ if tax dollars were needed to build a new stadium. Even just one-in-five self-described Yankee fans would like to see the team move to New Jersey if public tax dollars were needed.

These are some of the main findings of the most recent *Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll* conducted with 804 New Jersey residents by telephone between September 14 and 20. The poll has a sampling error margin of plus or minus four percentage points.

While New Jerseyans see benefits in the Yankees' possible move to the state, the public stops well short of giving its government a mandate to lead the charge to make this happen. Just 18 percent feels state government should be "very active in helping build a stadium and attract the Yankees," with another 28 percent feeling government should be "somewhat" involved. About half (48 percent) say government should not get involved at all, with the remaining 6 percent voicing no opinion.

Statewide, 43 percent think a move of the Yankees to New Jersey would have a positive impact on the state's image, while 6 percent think it would have a negative impact. The greatest number, 47 percent, think it would not make much difference one way or the other.

And should the Yankees cross the Hudson, the issue of what to call the team could be divisive within the state. With the former New York Giants and Jets now playing in the state but refusing to adopt "New Jersey" as part of their team names, it is an issue of sensitivity to some New Jersey residents. Statewide, the public is deeply divided: 42 percent feel the team should be called the New Jersey Yankees, 46 percent feel the name should remain the New York Yankees, with the remaining 12 percent not really caring. Among Yankee fans in the Garden State, 62 percent want the "New York" name kept and 31 percent want it changed. However, among all other state residents support for changing the name outnumbers keeping it by a margin of 47 to 39 percent.

Cliff Zukin, director of the Rutgers-based poll commented, "Perhaps one reason why New Jerseyans aren't terribly excited about having the Yankees and are against using state money to lure them here is that for many it would be just another 'New York' team renting space while keeping their NY identity. It probably touches a nerve of state pride."

The survey finds the Yankees to be far and away the most popular of the three major league baseball teams close to New Jersey. With their storied history, buoyed by a record-breaking winning season, 32 percent of state residents describe themselves as a fan of the Yankees. Just 14 percent describe themselves as Mets fans and 12 percent say they are Phillies fans.

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#### **BACKGROUND MEMO — RELEASE SL/EP70-2 (EP120-2), SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1998**

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton* Poll was conducted between September 14 and 20, 1998, when a scientifically selected random sample of 800 New Jersey adult residents was interviewed by telephone. 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 the total sample size of 800 is just over  $\pm 3.5$  percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jerseyans were found to have a favorable opinion of the Governor, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.5 and 53.5 percent ( $50 \pm 3.5$ ) had all New Jerseyans been interviewed, rather than just a sample. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported for men and women, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. Click here for a [chart](#) that shows the relationship between sample size and sampling error. 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. The verbatim wording of all questions asked are reproduced in this background memo. The sample has been stratified based on county and the data have been weighted on age and education to insure an accurate

proportional representation of the state. Two versions of the questionnaire were used in this study. Not all questions were on both versions.

"Would you call yourself a fan of any of the major league teams in the area – the Phillies, Mets or Yankees?" [BB2]

	Total	Region of State		
		North	Central	South
<b>September, 1998</b>				
<b>Phillies</b>	<b>12%</b>	2%	8%	31%
<b>Mets</b>	<b>14%</b>	17%	16%	8%
<b>Yankees</b>	<b>32%</b>	41%	32%	17%
<b>(n)</b>	<b>(804)</b>	(346)	(206)	(233)

	Both	Yankees Only	Mets Only	Neither One	Total	(n)
<b>Yankees/Mets Combined</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(804)</b>

"There has been some talk recently about the possibility of the Yankees coming to New Jersey. How active should state government be in helping build a stadium and attract the Yankees – should it be very involved, somewhat involved, or should it not get involved at all?" [BB3]

	Very	Somewhat	Not involved	Don't know	Total	(n)
<b>September, 1998</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(804)</b>
<i>Yankee Fan</i>	26%	22%	48%	3%	99%	(262)
<i>Not Yankee Fan</i>	14%	30%	48%	8%	100%	(542)

***Similar question asked in SL/EP15-3 (EP65-3). Released June 28, 1987.***

***NOTE: The wording of this question is slightly different than question [BB3] in the current poll. Specifically, the 1987 question did not mention the Yankees.***

"How active should state government be in helping to build a stadium and attract a team – should it be very involved, somewhat involved, or should it not get involved at all?"

	Very	Somewhat	Not involved	Don't know	Total	(n)
<b>June, 1987</b>	21%	42%	31%	5%	99%	(800)

"Would you favor or oppose the Yankees coming to New Jersey if no tax money was used to build the stadium?" [BB4]

	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>Don't know/care</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>September, 1998</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>(804)</b>
<i>Yankee Fan</i>	64%	32%	5%	101%	(262)
<i>Not Yankee Fan</i>	63%	20%	18%	101%	(542)

"And would you favor or oppose this if a new stadium was built on public land, but taxpayers did not pay any of the cost to build the stadium?" [BB5]

	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>Don't know/care</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>September, 1998</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>(804)</b>
<i>Yankee Fan</i>	57%	38%	5%	100%	(262)
<i>Not Yankee Fan</i>	54%	33%	14%	101%	(542)

"And would you favor or oppose this if public tax dollars were needed to build the new stadium?" [BB6]

	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>Don't know/care</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>September, 1998</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>(804)</b>
<i>Yankee Fan</i>	20%	76%	4%	100%	(262)
<i>Not Yankee Fan</i>	12%	81%	6%	99%	(542)

"If the Yankees were to move to New Jersey do you think it would have a positive or negative impact on the state's image, or would it make no difference?" [BB7]

	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>No difference</b>	<b>Don't know/care</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>September, 1998</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(804)</b>
<i>Yankee Fan</i>	48%	6%	44%	2%	100%	(262)
<i>Not Yankee Fan</i>	41%	6%	48%	5%	100%	(542)

"If the New York Yankees moved to New Jersey do you think they should change their name to the New Jersey Yankees, or should they keep their name the same?" [BB8]

	<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>New York</b>	<b>Don't know/care</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>September, 1998</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(804)</b>
<i>Yankee Fan</i>	31%	62%	7%	100%	(262)
<i>Not Yankee Fan</i>	47%	39%	14%	100%	(542)