

# The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll

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## RELEASE: (EP125-2)

A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in the Sunday, March 15 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to “*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll*.”

## THE 2000 SENATE RACE:

### STILL NOTHING HAPPENING

Last September five of the six major party candidates running for the U.S. Senate held by retiring Frank Lautenberg were virtually unknown. Former Gov. Jim Florio, the only widely known candidate but a contentious figure, ran just slightly ahead of the Republicans he was matched up against. Florio’s opponent Jon Corzine was a blip on the radar screen—known to only about 1 in 7 Democrats. And just one-quarter of the Republicans interviewed expressed an opinion about any of their candidates.

Not a thing has changed in six months. As far as the public is concerned, the party campaigns for the U.S. Senate have yet to begin.

The only well known candidate is Jim Florio. Four-fifths of Democrats have an opinion about Florio, and he remains well regarded among members of his own party-- 58 percent have a favorable view of Florio and 23 percent have an unfavorable view.

Former Wall-Street executive Jon Corzine remains little known, with 75 percent of Democrats not offering an opinion about him. However Corzine is expected to kick off a multi-million dollar television advertising campaign today to boost his name recognition and image. Currently Democrats are split—12 percent favorable, 11 percent unfavorable—on Corzine.

None of the four Republicans running for the Senate seat has broken through into general

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public awareness. Three quarters of those identifying with the Republican party offer no opinion about State Senator Bill Gormley (22 favorable, 5 unfavorable), Congressman Robert Franks (18 favorable, 9 unfavorable) and former Libertarian gubernatorial candidate Murray Sabrin (10 favorable, 14 unfavorable). Even fewer—84 percent have no view of Essex County executive James Treffinger (10 favorable, 6 unfavorable).

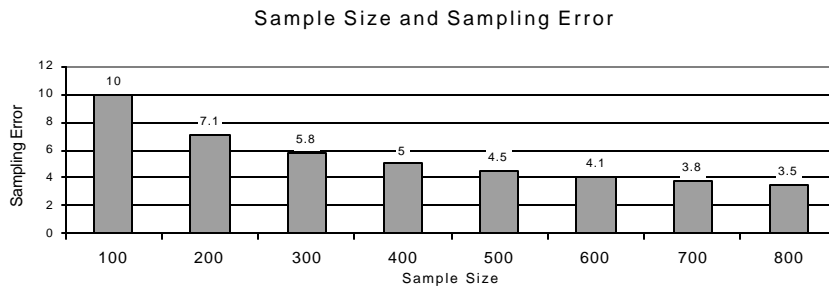
With knowledge so limited it is little wonder that Democratic—Republican match-ups produce little in the way of interesting results. Florio runs ahead of Gormley, Franks and Treffinger by 3 to 5 percentage points, with about one-third of all registered voters being undecided. Corzine trails Gormley by 4 and Franks by 1, and leads Treffinger by 3, with about half of all voters saying they are undecided.

Florio	37	Gormley	32
Florio	36	Franks	33
Florio	36	Treffinger	31
Corzine	23	Gormley	27
Corzine	24	Franks	25
Corzine	24	Treffinger	21

Cliff Zukin, director of the poll commented, “The Senate campaign has so far been invisible to the great majority of voters. We should see opinions start to form and vote preferences get more firm with increased prominence, such as television advertising. Right now it is probably safe to assume that the seat is wide open.”

**BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP125-2), WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2000**

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers* Poll was conducted between February 28 and March 9 with a scientifically selected random sample of 800 New Jersey adult residents interviewed by telephone. This sampling yielded a total of 626 respondents who reported being registered to vote. The figures in this release are based on this sample size. 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 registered voters is  $\pm 4$  percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey registered voters were found to have a favorable opinion of Senate candidate John Corzine, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46 and 54 percent ( $50 \pm 4$ ) had all New Jersey registered voters 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 Republicans, Independents or Democrats, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. The following chart 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 is reproduced in this background memo. The sample has been stratified based on county and the data have been weighted on age, gender and education to insure an accurate proportional representation of the state. The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

**ASKED ONLY OF DEMOCRATS, OR INDEPENDENTS WHO LEAN DEMOCRATIC.**

As you may know, there will also be an election for US Senate from New Jersey this year. I'd like to get your opinion of some people who may run for that office. Many people haven't heard of them. For each name I read just tell me if your general opinion is favorable or unfavorable. If you don't have an opinion about some just say so. First, (RANDOMIZE LIST)... Favorable, unfavorable or no opinion? (QS4)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Former Gov. Jim Florio</b> All Registered Voters	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(626)</b>
Democratic ID March 2000	58	23	18	100	(280)
Democratic ID September 1999	56	23	21	100	(255)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Former Wall Street Executive John Corzine</b> All Registered Voters	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(626)</b>
Democratic ID March 2000	13	12	75	100	(280)
Democratic ID September 1999	7	8	85	100	(255)

*ASKED ONLY OF REPUBLICANS OR INDEPENDENTS WHO LEAN REPUBLICAN.*

As you may know, there will also be an election for US Senate from New Jersey this year. I'd like to get your opinion of some people who may run for that office. Many people haven't heard of them. For each name I read just tell me if your general opinion is favorable or unfavorable. If you don't have an opinion about some just say so. First, (RANDOMIZE LIST)... Favorable, unfavorable or no opinion? (QS4)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Former Libertarian candidate for Governor Murray Sabrin</b> All Registered Voters	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(626)</b>
Republican ID March 2000	9	14	76	100	(234)
Republican ID September 1999	10	18	72	100	(208)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Congressman Robert Franks</b> All Registered Voters	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>(626)</b>
Republican ID March 2000	18	10	72	100	(234)
Republican ID September 1999	20	6	74	100	(208)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Essex County Executive James Treffinger</b> All Registered Voters	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(626)</b>
Republican ID March 2000	12	6	82	100	(234)
Republican ID September 1999	11	4	85	100	(208)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>State Senator Bill Gormley</b> All Registered Voters	<b>22</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(626)</b>
Republican ID March 2000	26	4	70	100	(234)
Republican ID September 1999	23	4	73	100	(208)

<b>SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENTS</b>	<b>OPINIONATION</b>	<b>IMAGERY</b>
Among Partisans Only	Total minus No Opins	Fav minus Unfav Opins
Jim Florio—Dems	81	+25
John Corzine—Dems	23	+1
Bill Gormley—Reps	27	+17
Bob Franks—Reps	27	+9
Jim Treffinger—Reps	16	+4
Murray Sabrin—Reps	24	-4

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE: THE QUESTIONS WERE RANDOMIZED, WITH NAMES-WITH PARTY IDENTIFICATIONS ROTATED WITHIN QUESTIONS.

If the election for U.S. Senator from New Jersey was held today, would you vote for Bob Franks, the Republican, or Jim Florio the Democrat? (QS4)

<b>REP V. DEM MATCHUP</b>	<u>Republican Candidate</u>	<u>Democratic Candidate</u>	<u>Other/Neither/ Won't Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Franks v. Florio</b> March 2000	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>(626)</b>
<u>By Party</u>						
- Democrat	11	65	6	19	100	(190)
- Independent	31	33	11	24	100	(239)
- Republican	63	12	7	18	100	(159)
September 1999	34	41	5	21	101	(560)

If the election for U.S. Senator from New Jersey was held today, would you vote for Bob Franks, the Republican, or John Corzine (*pronounced: Core- zign*) the Democrat? (QS5)

<b>REP V. DEM MATCHUP</b>	<u>Republican Candidate</u>	<u>Democratic Candidate</u>	<u>Other/Neither/ Won't Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Franks v. Corzine</b> March 2000	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>(626)</b>
<u>By Party</u>						
- Democrat	9	50	11	29	99	(190)
- Independent	20	16	20	44	100	(239)
- Republican	55	10	8	28	101	(159)
September 1999	30	24	8	39	101	(560)

If the election for U.S. Senator from New Jersey was held today, would you vote for Bill Gormley, the Republican, or Jim Florio the Democrat? (QS6)

<b>REP V. DEM MATCHUP</b>	<u>Republican Candidate</u>	<u>Democratic Candidate</u>	<u>Other/Neither/ Won't Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Gormley v. Florio</b> March 2000	<b>32</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(626)</b>
<u>By Party</u>						
- Democrat	13	62	6	18	99	(190)
- Independent	29	34	12	25	100	(239)
- Republican	61	16	6	17	100	(159)
September 1999	33	41	4	21	99	(560)

If the election for U.S. Senator from New Jersey was held today, would you vote for Bill Gormley, the Republican, or John Corzine (*pronounced: Core- zign*) the Democrat? (QS7)

<b>REP V. DEM MATCHUP</b>	<u>Republican Candidate</u>	<u>Democratic Candidate</u>	<u>Other/Neither/ Won't Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Gormley v. Corzine</b> March 2000	<b>27</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(626)</b>
<u>By Party</u>						
- Democrat	8	50	14	28	100	(190)
- Independent	23	15	18	44	100	(239)
- Republican	58	7	9	26	100	(159)
September 1999	31	24	7	38	100	(560)

If the election for U.S. Senator from New Jersey was held today, would you vote for Jim Treffinger, the Republican, or Jim Florio the Democrat? (QS8)

<b>REP V. DEM MATCHUP</b>	<u>Republican Candidate</u>	<u>Democratic Candidate</u>	<u>Other/Neither/ Won't Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Treffinger v. Florio</b> March 2000	<b>31</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(626)</b>
<u>By Party</u>						
- Democrat	12	61	5	21	99	(190)
- Independent	28	32	13	27	100	(239)
- Republican	56	16	6	21	99	(159)
September 1999	33	41	5	22	101	(560)

If the election for U.S. Senator from New Jersey was held today, would you vote for Jim Treffinger, the Republican, or John Corzine (*pronounced: Core- zign*) the Democrat? (QS9)

<b>REP V. DEM MATCHUP</b>	<u>Republican Candidate</u>	<u>Democratic Candidate</u>	<u>Other/Neither/ Won't Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>Treffinger v. Corzine</b> March 2000	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(626)</b>
<u>By Party</u>						
- Democrat	5	48	14	34	101	(190)
- Independent	17	16	16	51	100	(239)
- Republican	49	11	11	29	100	(159)

### **MARCH 2000:**

<b>PARTY MATCHUPS</b>	<u>Republican Candidate</u>	<u>Democratic Candidate</u>	<u>Other/ Neither Won't Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Florio vs. Franks	33	36	8	22	99	(626)
Florio vs. Gormley	32	37	9	22	100	(626)
Florio vs. Treffinger	31	36	8	25	100	(626)
Corzine vs. Franks	25	24	13	37	99	(626)
Corzine vs. Gormley	27	23	15	36	101	(626)
Corzine vs. Treffinger	21	24	14	41	100	(626)

**SEPTEMBER 1999:**

<b>PARTY MATCHUPS</b>	<u>Republican Candidate</u>	<u>Democratic Candidate</u>	<u>Other/ Neither Won't Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Franks vs. Florio	34	41	5	21	101	(560)
Franks vs. Corzine	30	24	8	39	101	(560)
Gormley vs. Corzine	31	24	7	38	100	(560)
Gormley vs. Florio	33	41	4	21	99	(560)
Treffinger vs. Florio	33	41	5	22	101	(560)