

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

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A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in the Sunday, September 17 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll.*"

CORZINE LEADS FRANKS IN NJ SENATE BID: MANY VOTERS HAVE YET TO TUNE IN TO NJ ELECTION

Labor Day has past, and with commendable back-to-school fervor, a majority of New Jerseyans—52 percent—are paying close attention to the U.S. Senate election.

Unfortunately, it's the Senate election in neighboring New York State between Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton and Republican Rick Lazio to which they are attuned. Just one-quarter of this number—a lowly 14 percent—say they have read or heard a similar amount about their own Senate contest between Democrat Jon Corzine and Republican Bob Franks.

And that's a problem. The low visibility of the campaign in the Garden State has New Jersey voters essentially frozen in time since the primary elections last June, when Corzine beat Jim Florio for the Democratic nomination and Franks bested Bill Gormley and others for the Republican nod. The latest Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll finds little change from its summer survey in terms of voter familiarity with the candidates and with whom voters plan to support.

The most recent survey, conducted by telephone between September 6 and 13 with 670 registered voters saying they intend to vote in the election, finds Corzine leading Franks by a margin of 47 to 32 percent, with the remaining 21 percent undecided. Among the 542 respondents deemed most likely to vote in the election (which projects to

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a turnout of about 76 percent of all registered voters), Corzine holds a narrower lead of 45 to 36 percent, with 19 percent undecided. Corzine's margins over Franks have changed little since from the earlier Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers survey in June.

Just 34 percent of registered voters say they have "a lot" of interest in the New Jersey Senate race, considerably below the 61 percent who say they have this much interest in the presidential contest between Democrat Al Gore and Republican George W. Bush. Moreover, interest in the Senate race has remained flat since June, when 37 percent said they had "a lot" of interest in the Senate contest.

"As far as New Jersey voters are concerned, it is as if their Senate race has gone into hibernation," said Cliff Zukin, director of the poll. "We see little evidence of increased attention to the race, familiarity with the candidates, or comfort in having made a decision between the two men. For most New Jerseyans, the campaign has been largely invisible."

Just 11 percent of registered voters say they think they know "a lot" about Corzine; 45 percent say they know either "a lot" or "some," leaving the majority of 55 percent acknowledging they know "just a little" or "nothing" about the former Goldman Sachs CEO.

Remarkably, New Jersey voters feel they know even less about Congressman Franks. Just 6 percent think they know "a lot" about him, with another 21 percent feeling they know "some" about him. This leaves almost three-quarters of registered voters saying they know "just a little" or "nothing" about Franks. These numbers are virtually identical to those recorded in the June Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers survey, meaning

that voters have learned very little about whichever man will represent them in the Senate for the next six years.

There has been some small growth in the percentage able to offer opinions about the candidates since June, and Corzine continues to hold an edge over Franks in the number offering opinions, and in the percentage offering favorable opinions of him.

The current survey finds half of New Jersey registered voters holding a positive impression of Corzine, with one-quarter having an unfavorable view and the remaining quarter offering no assessment. In June, positive views outnumbered negative ones by a margin of 36 to 20 percent, with 44 percent offering no opinion.

Franks is now regarded favorably by 36 percent of registered voters and unfavorably by 20 percent. A sizeable 43 percent are unable to offer a judgment. Positive evaluations ran ahead of negative ones in June by a margin of 26 to 6 percent, with two-thirds holding no opinion of the Union County Republican.

Given the lack of familiarity New Jerseyans have with their Senate candidates, it is no surprise that voting intentions are far from firm. At this point in the campaign, just 30 percent say they are firmly in Corzine's camp and are "very sure" about voting for him. Another 23 percent say they are "very sure" they will vote for Franks, leaving 47 percent of registered voters who say they are either undecided or might change their minds before the election.

Looking at the subset of registered voters most likely to actually vote in the election on November 7, the Rutgers-based survey added together three groups of voters: (1) those who firmly support one of the candidates; (2) those who chose one of the candidates but say they might change their mind before election day; and (3) those who

initially report they are undecided but say they “lean” toward one of the candidates. This compilation renders the following voter choice preference: Corzine—49 percent, Franks—39 percent, with the remaining dozen firmly undecided at this point in time.

While Corzine now appears to have a significant advantage, poll analysts caution that there is tremendous potential for change between now and Election Day, owing to the current low visibility of the New Jersey senate contest.

The New York senatorial contest between Clinton and Lazio stands in interesting contrast. While 52 percent of New Jersey residents say they have heard or read “a lot” about that election, just 14 percent have heard or read “a lot” about the Senate contest in their own state.

Zukin noted that in response to a question about how people have been getting their information about the presidential election, only one-third of registered voters told interviewers they consciously go looking for information. In stark contrast, two-thirds are accidental consumers, saying they “come across campaign news without looking for it.”

Zukin commented, “This is where the lack of in-state commercial television hurts New Jersey. People often learn a great deal from the simple availability of information—they literally bump into it without necessarily intending to do so. New Jersey’s local television comes from stations based in New York and Philadelphia, which pay scant attention to our government and politics. It is much harder to become an informed voter in New Jersey than in most other states.”

Perhaps because of this lack of attention, battle lines in the 2000 New Jersey Senate election are far from drawn at this point in time. Corzine gets the support of only 75

percent of Democrats; Franks the support of only 73 percent of Republicans.

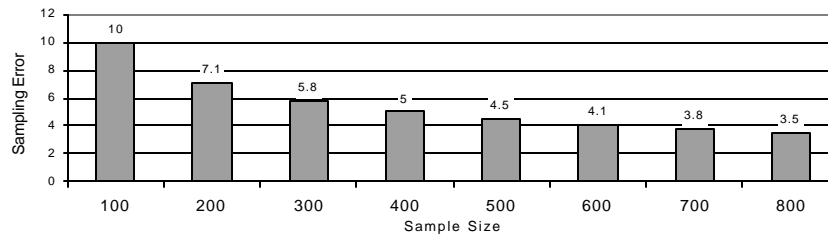
Independents currently prefer Corzine over Franks by a margin of 42 to 31 percent, with a large 27 percent undecided. In other breakdowns of the vote:

- *Race*: Corzine now holds a slight lead among whites: 44 percent Corzine, 35 percent Franks. Corzine holds a commanding 66 to 16 percent lead among Blacks and Hispanics. In June the two candidates split the white vote more evenly.
- *Gender*: The election is close among male voters: 44 percent for Corzine and 38 percent for Franks. But among women, who made up the majority of the 1996 presidential electorate in New Jersey, Corzine leads Franks by 49 to 27 percent. Corzine has a little more support among men than he did at the time of the June survey; women's preferences remain unchanged.
- *Region*: Corzine leads Franks by 48 to 33 percent in the northern area of the state, by 49 to 28 percent in central New Jersey, and by 43 to 34 percent in southern New Jersey. Compared to June, Corzine has picked up a little strength in the central and southern parts of the state.
- *Age*: Corzine continues to do best among those who vote least: Among 18- to 29-year-olds he leads Franks by a whopping margin of 65 to 16 percent. This gap narrows to 9 percentage points among those 30 to 49, and to 11 points among those between 50 and 64. Among seniors, Corzine polls 46 percent to 33 percent for Franks.
- *Ideology*: Most voters in New Jersey describe themselves as moderates. Corzine holds a 50 to 30 percent lead among this group. Self-identified conservatives are slightly larger than liberals. Franks holds a commanding lead of 55 to 24 percent among self-identified conservatives (an increase since June); Corzine holds a larger 68 to 8 percent among those calling themselves "liberals," also a bigger gap than was found in June.

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP127-1), SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2000

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers* Poll was conducted between September 6-13 with a scientifically selected random sample of 916 New Jersey adult residents interviewed by telephone. This sampling yielded a total of 670 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 ± 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 Democratic Senate Candidate Jon Corzine, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46 and 54 percent (50 ± 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.

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 to insure an accurate proportional representation of the state. In this release we also refer to 'likely voters.' These figures are based on the 58% of the eligible New Jersey electorate deemed most likely to vote based on a combination of reported voting intention, reported past voting behavior and interest in the election. Turnout in the 1996 Presidential election was approximately 51% of those eligible (or 72% of all those registered) and was 56% in 1992. Turnout in 2000 may, of course, be somewhat higher or lower. The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

“There will also be an election for the U.S. Senate in New Jersey. How much interest do you have in this election--a lot, some, a little, or none at all?” (Q13)

	<u>A Lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A Little</u>	<u>None at All</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total %</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters							
September 2000	34%	40%	17%	8%	1%	100%	(670)
--June 2000	37	36	15	11	1	100	(618)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	31	40	19	9	1	100	(256)
--Independent	35	44	13	7	1	100	(182)
--Republican	39	39	16	4	1	99	(163)
<u>Vote Intention</u>							
--Franks	44	41	12	2	1	100	(209)
--Undecided	25	38	23	13	2	101	(139)
--Corzine	33	42	16	8	1	100	(307)

Turning back to the Senate contest, how much have you heard or read about the New Jersey Senate election between Jon Corzine and Bob Franks—a lot, some, just a little, or nothing at all? (Q33)

	<u>A Lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A Little</u>	<u>Nothing</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters September 2000	14%	29%	42%	14%	--	99	(670)
By Party							
--Democrat	14	29	40	15	--	98	(256)
--Independent	13	32	42	14	--	101	(182)
--Republican	16	33	42	9	--	100	(163)

As you probably know there is also a US Senate election in New York between Rick Lazio and Hillary Clinton. How much have you heard or read about that election—a lot, some, just a little, or nothing at all? (Q40)

	<u>A Lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A Little</u>	<u>Nothing</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters September 2000	52%	24%	16%	7%	1%	100%	(670)
By Party							
--Democrat	49	24	19	7	1	100	(256)
--Independent	51	26	17	6	--	100	(182)
--Republican	61	24	9	7	--	101	(163)

“If the election for the Senate were held today, would you vote for (CATI RANDOMIZE NAMES IN ITALICS) *Bob Franks, the Republican*; or *Jon Corzine (KORE-ZIGN), the Democrat?*”(Q14)**

	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Franks</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters					
September 2000	47%	21%	32%	100%	(655)
--June 2000	43	23	33	99	(579)
Likely Voters					
September 2000	45	19	36	100	(542)
--June 2000	43	20	36	99	(442)
By Party					
--Democrat	75	17	9	101	(253)
--Independent	42	27	31	100	(175)
--Republican	11	15	73	99	(161)
By Education					
--High School or less	55	24	21	100	(172)
--Some College	45	21	34	100	(170)
--College Graduate	43	20	36	99	(310)
By Race					
--White	44	21	35	100	(505)
--Black and Hispanic	66	18	16	100	(105)
By Gender					
--Male	44	18	38	100	(304)
--Female	49	24	27	100	(351)
By Region					
--North	48	19	33	100	(273)
--Central	49	23	28	100	(174)
--South	43	24	34	101	(196)
By Age					
--18-29	65	19	16	100	(69)
--30-49	44	21	35	100	(247)
--50-64	44	23	33	100	(174)
--65+	46	21	33	100	(138)
By Ideology					
--Liberal	68	23	8	99	(115)
--Moderate	50	20	30	100	(370)
--Conservative	24	20	55	99	(155)

**Those respondents who volunteered that they would not vote or that they would vote for another candidate made up only 2 percent of the sample and were not included in this table.

THIS TABLE IS A COMPOSITE OF RESPONSES TO THREE QUESTIONS:

(1)“If the election for the Senate were held today, Would you vote for (CATI RANDOMIZE NAMES IN ITALICS) *Bob Franks, the Republican*; or *Jon Corzine (KORE-ZIGN), the Democrat?* (Q14). (IF RESPONDENT CHOSE A CANDIDATE, (2) “Are you very sure about voting for (Franks/Corzine), or might you change your mind before the election?”(Q16). (IF RESPONDENT WAS UNDECIDED, (3): “At this moment do you lean more towards Franks or more towards Corzine?”(Q15).**

	DEMOCRAT		<u>Initially Undecided</u>			REPUBLICAN		<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
	<u>Sure about Corzine</u>	<u>Picks Corzine, but may change</u>	<u>Leans Corzine</u>	<u>Does Not Lean</u>	<u>Leans Franks</u>	<u>Picks Franks, but may change</u>	<u>Sure About Franks</u>		
Registered Voters									
Sept. 2000	30%	17%	3%	15%	3%	9%	23%	100	(655)
--June 2000	23	20	5	16	2	14	19	99	(574)
<u>Party ID</u>									
--Democrat	54	20	2	14	1	5	4	100	(253)
--Independent	23	19	3	19	5	10	21	100	(175)
--Republican	6	6	4	7	4	15	59	101	(161)
Likely Voters									
Sept. 2000	30	16	3	13	3	9	27	101	(542)
--June 2000	25	18	4	15	2	13	23	100	(438)

**Those respondents who volunteered that they would not vote or that they would vote for another candidate made up only 2 percent of the sample and were not included in this table.

CATI ROTATE QUESTIONS Q34 and Q35:

“How much do you think you know about Bob Franks/John Corzine-- a lot, some, just a little, or nothing at all?” (Q34 and Q35)

	<u>A Lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A Little</u>	<u>Nothing</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total %</u>	<u>(n)</u>
CORZINE							
Registered Voters							
Sept. 2000	11%	34%	36%	19%	1%	101	(670)
--June 2000	10	39	29	21	--	99	(618)
Party ID							
--Democrat	9	35	34	21	1	100	(256)
--Independent	13	38	34	15	--	100	(182)
--Republican	11	33	38	17	1	100	(163)
Likely Voters							
Sept. 2000	13	38	34	14	1	100	(542)
--June 2000	13	43	28	16	1	101	(464)
FRANKS							
Registered Voters							
Sept. 2000	6	21	35	38	1	101	(670)
--June 2000	6	22	29	43	--	100	(618)
Party ID							
--Democrat	3	14	36	47	1	100	(256)
--Independent	6	23	39	32	--	100	(182)
--Republican	9	35	31	25	--	100	(163)
Likely Voters							
Sept. 2000	7	25	37	30	1	100	(542)
--June 2000	8	25	31	37	--	101	(464)

CATI RANDOMIZE QUESTION 17:

“Is your general impression of Bob Franks/John Corzine favorable or unfavorable, or don't you really have an opinion about him? **(IF FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE, PROBE: Is that very (favorable/unfavorable) or somewhat (favorable/ unfavorable)?**” (Q17)

	<u>Very Favorable</u>	<u>Somewhat Favorable</u>	<u>Somewhat Unfavorable</u>	<u>Very Unfavorable</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
CORZINE							
Registered Voters							
Sept. 2000	19%	31%	15%	10%	26%	101	(670)
--June 2000	8	28	11	9	44	100	(618)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	29	39	5	3	24	100	(256)
--Independent	17	34	16	11	22	100	(182)
--Republican	10	16	30	19	25	100	(163)
Likely Voters							
Sept. 2000	20	31	17	11	21	100	(542)
--June 2000	10	29	12	11	38	100	(464)
FRANKS							
Registered Voters							
Sept. 2000	12%	24%	13%	7%	43%	99	(670)
--June 2000	7	19	4	2	68	100	(618)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	5	11	20	15	49	100	(256)
--Independent	9	27	14	4	46	100	(182)
--Republican	30	42	4	--	24	100	(163)
Likely Voters							
Sept. 2000	15	27	14	8	37	101	(542)
--June 2000	8	22	5	3	63	101	(464)

“Ordinarily, do you find that you go looking for the latest news about the presidential campaign, OR do you typically happen to come across campaign news without looking for it?” (Q21)

	<u>Go Looking for News</u>	<u>Come Across News</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>	<u>Total %</u>	<u>(n)</u>
September 2000	32%	67%	1%	100%	(670)