

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 Thursday, September 21 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll.*"

THE SENATE ELECTION--IDEOLOGY & ISSUES

NJ Speaks: Whaddya mean, 'Corzine's A Liberal?' Issues Favor Democrat in Senate Race

While Democratic Senate candidate Jon Corzine may be running one of the most progressive and leftist Senate campaigns in the 2000 election, less than one-quarter of New Jersey's registered voters classify him as a liberal. In fact, the majority of registered voters--55 percent--report that they aren't sure *what* ideological stance Corzine takes.

And while many voters remain uninformed about Corzine's call for universal access to health care, long-term care and quality education, they are even less informed about his Republican opponent Bob Franks' ideological stance on the issues. An astounding two-thirds of registered voters are unable to classify where Franks stands on the issues; just 17 percent describe the Union County Republican as a moderate.

Corzine is generally regarded by political observers as a liberal Democrat, while Franks is most often described as a moderate Republican.

However, New Jerseyans *do* know which issues will be most influential in deciding their votes, and it looks like a Democratic-leaning agenda of concern for the November election. The two top issues are "education" and "health care." Three-quarters of New Jersey registered voters say that the candidates' positions on these issues

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will be “extremely important” in influencing their votes. They also know which issues are less important to them, namely capital punishment and how much money the government spends on social programs.

These are some of the main findings of the latest Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll, conducted by telephone between September 6 and 13 with 670 registered voters.

Cliff Zukin, director of the poll commented, "It is ironic that despite Corzine's record level of spending, his support of expanded government remains a well-kept secret. As for their own stance on the issues, most New Jerseyans consider themselves to be moderates. This could eventually work to Franks' advantage, if he finds a way to be able to communicate clearly with voters. But that's a big 'if.' Most people get their information from television. As of now he is receiving little free TV coverage and will probably be considerably outspent by Corzine in advertising before the election."

The poll suggests that Democratic-emphasized issues are currently shaping the campaign agenda, working to the favor of both Corzine and presidential candidate Al Gore. Health care and education lead the list of issues New Jersey voters view as "extremely" important in the Senate contest, followed by social security. Gun control, tax policy, and use of the federal budget surplus are a lower priority for voters. And the two issues where Franks might think Corzine is out of step with the majority--government spending and the death penalty--are at the bottom of the list of citizen concerns.

Percent saying each is "Extremely Important"

76	Education
75	Health Care
65	Social Security
56	Gun Control
56	Tax Policy
55	How federal surplus should be used
43	Govt. spending on social programs
33	The death penalty

Moreover, the poll finds that Corzine supporters have more passion behind their issues than do those supporting Franks. Among those intending to vote for Corzine, the number rating each issue as "extremely important" to them averaged 62 percent over the eight issues. It averaged a lower 53 percent among those intending to vote for Franks.

With only 14 percent of registered voters saying they had read or heard "a lot" about the campaign, it is not surprising that few voters are able to label the candidates ideologically. And while Corzine may be to the left of many New Jerseyans, there is general support for his goals, even if half believe it might require a tax increase to achieve them.

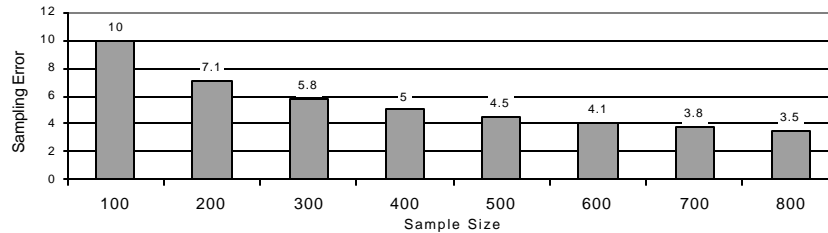
Survey respondents were told about Corzine's platform--which includes universal access to health care, long-term care, making prescription drugs available to the elderly, and quality education--and about Franks' reservations about these plans. While New Jersey's registered voters are somewhat ambivalent over the role of government, the majority--52%--think that government should try to provide these services, 38% think this would be "government trying to do too much," and 10% believe it depends, or say they aren't sure.

When asked whether they believe the government could feasibly afford these services by “using the surplus and being more efficient” or whether they think that “taxes would have to be raised to pay for them,” New Jersey’s registered voters are evenly divided—45% think it can be done without raising taxes and 46% begin eyeing their checkbooks.

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP127-3), THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 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:

“I am going to read a list of some of the issues that will probably be discussed in this year’s Senate election campaigns. As I read each one, please tell me how important the candidates' positions on that issue will be in influencing your vote—extremely important, pretty important, or less important?” [RANDOM ORDER A-H] (Q36)

PERCENT SAYING “EXTREMELY IMPORTANT” TO EACH ISSUE

	Registered Voters by PARTY ID				Likely Voters
	Registered Voters, Sept. 2000	Democrat	Independent	Republican	
Education	76%	79%	74%	72%	76%
Health care	75	81	74	67	74
Social security	65	74	59	58	65
Gun control	56	70	51	46	57
Tax policy	56	50	60	64	58
How the federal budget surplus should be used	55	56	58	53	59
How much government spends on social programs	43	44	46	38	45
The death penalty	33	35	29	35	35
(n)	(670)	(256)	(182)	(163)	(542)

PERCENT SAYING “EXTREMELY IMPORTANT” TO EACH ISSUE

	<u>Corzine Supporters</u>	<u>Franks Supporters</u>	<u>Percentage Difference*</u>	<u>Undecided Voters</u>
Education	83%	68%	15%	73%
Health care	83	64	19	74
Social security	72	55	17	62
Gun control	65	46	19	54
Tax policy	54	60	-6	55
How the federal budget surplus should be used	60	55	5	43
How much government spends on social programs	43	46	-3	37
The death penalty	34	29	5	38
Average of All Issues	62	53	9	55
(n)	(307)	(209)		(139)

* Under PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE positive numbers mean that Corzine supporters are more likely than Franks supporters to report that a particular issue is extremely important to them and negative numbers mean that Franks supporters are more likely than Corzine supporters to report that a particular issue is extremely important to them. Thus, a positive 15 under education means that Corzine supporters are more likely than Franks supporters by 15 points to report that education is an extremely important issue to them.

CATI RANDOMIZE 37A AND 37B

Those who reported that they knew “nothing at all” about Republican Bob Franks (Q 34) were not asked the following question. For the purposes of reporting these people are included in the Don’t Know/Not Sure category.

“How would you describe Bob Franks in terms of his issue positions—as liberal, moderate, conservative, or aren’t you sure?” (Q37A)

	<u>Liberal</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Conservative</u>	<u>Depends</u>	<u>DK/Not Sure</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
FRANKS							
Registered Voters, Sept 2000	3%	17%	11%	1%	68%	100%	(670)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	3	8	11	1	77	100	(256)
--Independent	4	20	10	1	65	100	(182)
--Republican	3	29	15	--	53	100	(163)
<u>Likely Voters</u>	4	20	13	1	63	101	(542)
<u>Vote Intention</u>							
--Franks	3	39	16	--	42	100	(209)
--Undecided	3	5	3	--	89	100	(139)
--Corzine	4	8	12	1	74	99	(307)
<u>Knowledge of Candidate*</u>							
--A lot/some	8	43	24	2	24	101	(179)
--A little/nothing	1	8	7	--	84	100	(491)

*Respondents were asked: “How much do you think you know about Republican Bob Franks—a lot, some, just a little or nothing at all?”

Those who reported that they knew “nothing at all” about Democrat Jon Corzine (Q 35) were not asked the following question. For the purposes of reporting these people are included in the Don’t Know/Not Sure category.

“How would you describe Jon Corzine in terms of his issue positions—as liberal, moderate, conservative, or aren’t you sure?” (Q37B)

	<u>Liberal</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Conservative</u>	<u>Depends</u>	<u>DK/Not Sure</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
CORZINE							
Registered Voters, Sept 2000	23%	17%	4%	1%	55%	100%	(670)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	16	22	4	1	56	99	(256)
--Independent	28	14	6	1	51	100	(182)
--Republican	31	14	2	1	51	99	(163)
<u>Likely Voters</u>	27	19	5	1	49	101	(542)
<u>Vote Intention</u>							
--Franks	38	11	3	1	48	101	(209)
--Undecided	11	5	2	--	82	100	(139)
--Corzine	20	26	6	1	46	99	(307)
<u>Knowledge of Candidate*</u>							
--A lot/some	38	25	5	2	29	99	(301)
--A little/nothing	11	10	4	--	75	100	(369)

*Respondents were asked: “How much do you think you know about Democrat Jon Corzine—a lot, some, just a little or nothing at all?”

“Regardless of the political party you might favor, do you consider yourself to be a liberal, conservative, or somewhere in between?” (D2)

	<u>Liberal</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Conservative</u>	<u>Other/DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters, Sept 2000	17%	58%	23%	2%	100%	(707)
<u>Party ID</u>						
--Democrat	27	60	12	2	101	(263)
--Independent	18	61	18	2	100	(194)
--Republican	4	48	48	--	100	(169)
<u>Likely Voters</u>	17	57	24	2	100	(542)
<u>Vote Intention</u>						
--Franks	4	54	40	2	100	(209)
--Undecided	19	55	22	4	100	(139)
--Corzine	25	62	12	1	100	(307)

“This next question is a little long, so please listen carefully. Democratic candidate Jon Corzine’s platform calls for universal access to health care, long-term care, making prescription drugs available to the elderly, universal pre-school and access to higher education for everyone. Republican candidate Bob Franks believes that government should be less active in providing all these services and that Corzine’s plans would cause an increase in taxes.”

“First, how do you feel about the *idea* of government providing these services—is this something you think government should do, or would it be government trying to do too much?” (Q38)

	<u>Gov’t should do</u>	<u>Gov’t doing too much</u>	<u>Depends</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters, Sept. 2000	52%	38%	6%	4%	100%	(670)
<u>Party ID</u>						
--Democrat	71	20	4	5	100	(256)
--Independent	46	45	6	2	100	(182)
--Republican	22	66	10	3	101	(163)
<u>Likely Voters</u>	48	41	6	5	100	(542)
<u>Vote Intention</u>						
--Franks	20	70	7	3	100	(209)
--Undecided	53	31	7	9	100	(139)
--Corzine	72	21	4	3	100	(307)
<u>Ideology</u>						
--Liberal	77	15	3	5	100	(120)
--Moderate	52	37	6	4	100	(380)
--Conservative	31	61	5	2	99	(155)
<u>Gender</u>						
--Men	49	45	5	2	101	(311)
--Women	55	33	6	6	100	(359)

Second, do you think government can afford these services by using the surplus and being more efficient, or do you think that taxes would have to be raised to pay for them? (Q39)

	<u>Gov’t can afford without a tax increase</u>	<u>Would mean a tax increase</u>	<u>Depends</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters, Sept 2000	45%	46%	4%	6%	101%	(670)
<u>Party ID</u>						
--Democrat	56	31	5	8	100	(256)
--Independent	41	50	4	5	100	(182)
--Republican	31	65	1	3	100	(163)
<u>Likely Voters</u>	44	47	4	6	101	(542)
<u>Vote Intention</u>						
--Franks	26	70	2	2	100	(209)
--Undecided	40	43	7	10	100	(139)
--Corzine	61	30	4	5	100	(307)
<u>Ideology</u>						
--Liberal	55	38	4	3	100	(120)
--Moderate	46	43	4	7	100	(380)
--Conservative	35	60	2	2	99	(155)
<u>Gender</u>						
--Men	43	49	4	4	100	(311)
--Women	47	43	3	7	100	(359)

THE FOLLOWING TABLE IS A COMPOSITE OF TWO QUESTIONS:

“Where have you been getting *most* of your news about the Presidential election campaign—from television, from newspapers, from radio, from magazines, or from the Internet?” (Q19). If respondent reported that they got most of their news from television they were asked a follow-up question: “Do you get most of your news about the presidential campaign from *network* tv news, from *local* tv news, or from *cable* news networks such as CNN and MSNBC?” (Q20)

Media Outlet	Percent
<u>Television</u>	
--local	11
--network	19
--cable	18
--other/combination (voluntary)	8

Total Television	56
Magazines	3
Newspapers	26
Radio	8
Internet	4
Other (voluntary)	2
Total %	99
(n)	(667)