

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, October 29 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll.*"

The Garden State in the 2000 Election: Gore and Corzine--Perfect Together

Electorate Still Democratic, Becoming More Committed

A week and a half before the nation votes on November 7, New Jersey still looks like it is firmly in the Democratic Party's column. The state appears ready to give its 15 electoral votes to Vice President Al Gore, and to replace its retiring Democratic Senator Frank Lautenberg with political newcomer Jon Corzine.

Gore now holds a 47 to 35 percent lead over his Republican opponent, Texas Governor George W. Bush, among likely voters. With those who say they "lean" towards either of the candidates included, the Democrat's lead increases to 53 to 39 percent, with just five percent saying they do not lean towards either of the major party candidates. Independent candidates, including Ralph Nader, Pat Buchanan and others, garner about five percent of the statewide vote as well.

Jon Corzine, the former Wall Street CEO spending over 50 million dollars of his own money to finance his campaign, holds a similar lead of 46 to 37 percent over his Republican opponent, Congressman Bob Franks, with 17 percent still undecided. With the preferences of those who say they "lean" more towards one of the candidates taken into account, Corzine leads Franks by 49 to 39 percent, with the remainder expressing no preference.

These are among the main findings of the most recent Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers

The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll • Eagleton Institute of Politics

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Poll, conducted by telephone between October 23 and 26 with a representative sample of 600 registered voters, 432 of whom were identified as “likely” to vote in the election. The sampling error (plus or minus) for likely voters is just under five percentage points. The 432 likely voters make up 72 percent of the entire sample of registered voters interviewed. Actual turnout in the last presidential election in 1996 was an identical 72 percent of those registered, although turnout in New Jersey this year could, of course, be slightly higher or lower.

Cliff Zukin, director of the Rutgers-based survey, commented: “While some have suggested that the senate and presidential races are tightening in New Jersey, we see little evidence of this in our polling. The sample of likely voters we interviewed between October 23 and 26 looks very much like the earlier sample we interviewed between October 12 and 15. While a greater number of voters now tell us they are firm in their decisions about which candidate to support, the balance between Corzine and Franks, and between Gore and Bush, appears to have changed little. While we still have 10 days to go until the election, leaving a lot of time for circumstances to change, it is hard to envision Franks overtaking Corzine or Bush overtaking Gore.”

Indeed, Gore appears to have a commanding lead over Bush, reaching double digits. Well over half of likely voters—58 percent—say they have a favorable impression of the Vice-President, while 26 percent hold an unfavorable view of him. In comparison, New Jerseyans’ opinions of the Texas Governor are clearly mixed—51 percent favorable to 45 percent unfavorable.

Gore holds significant leads over Bush on a variety of issue and candidate characteristics:

- Far more of New Jersey’s likely voters believe that Gore “is prepared to run the country” than Bush by a margin of 53 to 34 percent.

- Gore holds about a 10-percentage-point advantage on three other traits—someone who would be “a strong and decisive leader” (48% to 37%); “generally agrees with you on the issues you care about” (51% to 40%); and “shares your values” (47% to 38%).
- Gore (37%) and Bush (39%) are viewed by similar amounts of likely voters as the most “honest and trustworthy” candidate.

Turning back to the Senate race, the new poll finds a firming up of voter sentiment, even while the margin between Corzine and Franks remains unchanged. Currently, 65 percent of voters now say they are firmly decided, up from 59 percent about 10 days earlier. Yet New Jersey voters are clearly less committed to the Senate candidates than they are to the presidential candidates. By way of comparison, about three-quarters of likely voters say they are firmly decided about who they will support in the presidential race.

Negative opinions about Republican Bob Franks have increased in the last ten days to two weeks, to where they equal the amount of the electorate expressing critical views of Democrat Jon Corzine. About one quarter of New Jersey’s likely voters hold unfavorable opinions of Corzine; a similar percentage hold unfavorable opinions of Franks. However, favorable opinions of Corzine run ahead of those held about Franks by 10 percentage points—52 percent have positive views of Corzine; 42 percent have positive impressions about Franks.

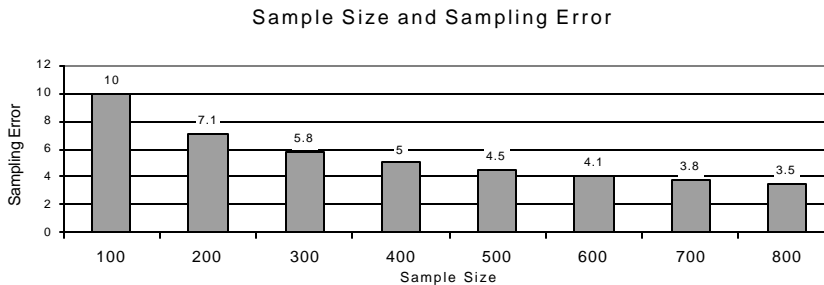
Television has clearly played the dominant media role in the Senate campaign. One-half of likely voters say they received most of their information about this election from television; one-third from newspapers, 7 percent from radio, and 5 percent from the Internet.

While 84 percent report having seen a Corzine commercial and 62 percent report having seen one for Franks, Corzine clearly leads in the TV ad saturation of the electorate. Only about a quarter (27%) of likely voters say they have seen fewer than four TV commercials for Corzine; the majority of the electorate (52%) reports having seen fewer than four commercials for Franks.

In assessing the results of the latest poll, Zukin commented, “The Bush campaign has not stirred much enthusiasm in New Jersey. With its late primary election date, New Jersey was not a focal point of the Republican campaign, and Bush has not made New Jersey a priority in the general election. This probably has spillover effects in the Senate contest. With national Republicans virtually ignoring the state, it makes Franks’ job all that much harder to capture the open Senate seat. Unless the dynamics of the campaign change dramatically in the last week or so, it’s highly likely that New Jersey will be casting a majority of its ballots for Democrats on November 7.”

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP129-1), SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2000

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers* Poll was conducted by telephone between October 23-26 with a scientifically selected random sample of 600 New Jersey adult residents who reported being registered to vote. This sample yielded 432 adult residents deemed likely to vote in the upcoming election. The figures in this release are based on this likely voter 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 ± 5 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey registered voters were found to have a favorable opinion of Presidential candidate George W. Bush, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 45 and 55 percent (50 ± 5) 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 and education to insure an accurate proportional representation of the state. 'Likely voters' are based on the 72% of New Jersey registered voters 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 72% of all those registered. Turnout in 2000 may, of course, be somewhat higher or lower. The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

The following tables are all based on likely voters —those deemed most likely to vote based on a combination of reported voting intention, reported past voting behavior and interest in the election.

“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?*”(Q8)*

	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Franks</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Likely Voters					
October 23-26, 2000	46%	17%	37%	100%	(419)
--October 12-15, 2000	45	18	37	100	(367)
--September 2000	45	19	36	100	(542)
--June 2000	43	20	36	99	(442)
By Party					
--Democrat	72	18	10	100	(160)
--Independent	41	24	35	100	(121)
--Republican	17	6	77	100	(111)
Gender					
--Male	47	12	41	100	(182)
--Female	45	21	35	101	(237)

* Those respondents who answered “neither,” “other,” or told us that they “won’t vote” 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*?(Q8). (IF RESPONDENT CHOSE A CANDIDATE, (2) "Are you very sure about voting for (Franks/Corzine), or might you change your mind before the election?"(Q10). (IF RESPONDENT WAS UNDECIDED, (3): "At this moment do you lean more towards Franks or more towards Corzine?"(Q9).*

	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>		
Likely Voters									
October 23-26, 2000	35%	10%	4%	11%	2%	7%	30%	99%	(419)
--October 12-15, 2000	31	15	4	12	2	9	28	101	(367)
--Sept. 2000	30	16	3	13	3	9	27	101	(542)
--June 2000	25	18	4	15	2	13	23	100	(438)
Party ID									
--Democrat	64	8	5	11	1	2	8	99	(160)
--Independent	29	11	6	16	3	10	26	101	(121)
--Republican	6	10	2	4	1	11	66	100	(111)

* Those respondents who answered "neither," "other," or told us that they "won't vote" were not included in this table.

"And when did you decide who you would vote for in the Senate election? In the last few days, in the last week, within the last 4 weeks, or earlier?" (Q10B)*

	<u>Last few days</u>	<u>Last week</u>	<u>Last 4 weeks/month</u>	<u>Earlier</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total %</u>	<u>(n)</u>
	Likely Voters						
October 23-26, 2000	8%	10%	33%	47%	2%	100%	(344)
<u>Vote Intention</u>							
--Corzine	10	12	31	47	1	101	(195)
--Franks	6	9	35	46	3	99	(149)

*Asked only of those respondents who have decided for whom they will vote in the Senate contest.

“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)?**” (RANDOMIZE Q11 C and D)

	<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							
Likely Voters							
October 23-26, 2000	18%	34%	13%	15%	20%	100%	(432)
--October 12-15, 2000	14	34	16	15	21	100	(372)
--Sept. 2000	20	31	17	11	21	100	(542)
--June 2000	10	29	12	11	38	100	(464)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	34	39	8	4	15	100	(164)
--Independent	16	36	14	18	17	101	(123)
--Republican	2	26	18	27	26	99	(115)
FRANKS							
Likely Voters							
October 23-26, 2000	13%	29%	15%	12%	30%	99%	(432)
--Oct. 12-15, 2000	10	29	15	8	38	100	(372)
--Sept. 2000	15	27	14	8	37	101	(542)
--June 2000	8	22	5	3	63	101	(464)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	3	17	25	20	35	100	(164)
--Independent	14	29	14	9	33	99	(123)
--Republican	26	45	6	4	18	99	(115)

“Have you seen any TV commercials for Democratic candidate Jon Corzine/Republican candidate Bob Franks ?” (Q14 A&B)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Don't Know</u>	<u>Total %</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Likely Voters				
October 23-26, 2000				
CORZINE	84%	16%	100%	(432)
FRANKS	62%	39%	101%	(432)

Have you seen any TV commercials for Democratic candidate Jon Corzine/Republican candidate Bob Franks? IF YES, PROBE: About how many do you think you have seen during the campaign? Your best guess will be fine. (Q14A&B)

	<u>None</u>	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-5</u>	<u>6+</u>	<u>Seen some, not sure how many</u>	<u>Don't know if seen any</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
CORZINE	12%	15%	12%	41%	15%	4%	99%	(432)
FRANKS	31%	21%	7%	22%	11%	8%	100%	(432)

"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?" (Q13A)

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Total	34%	36%	27%	4%	--	101%	(432)
<u>Vote Choice</u>							
Franks	34	40	25	1	--	100	(149)
Corzine	37	34	26	3	--	100	(195)

"Where have you been getting *most* of your news about the election: from television, from newspapers, from radio, from magazines, or from the Internet?" (Q13B)*

	<u>Television</u>	<u>Newspapers</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>Magazines</u>	<u>Internet</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Total	50%	34%	7%	--	5%	3%	99%	(415)
<u>Vote Choice</u>								
Franks	49	35	12	1	2	2	101	(148)
Corzine	49	35	6	1	7	3	101	(190)

*Those respondents who said that they had heard nothing or did not know how much they had heard about the Senate contest were not asked this question.

"As you know, there will be an election for President this fall. How much interest do you have in this election—a lot, some, a little or none at all?" (Q3)

	<u>A Lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A Little/None</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Likely Voters						
October 23-26, 2000	77%	19%	3%	--	99%	(432)
--October 12-15, 2000	76	22	2	--	100	(389)
--September 2000	75	19	4	1	99	(542)
--June 2000	66	23	9	1	99	(464)
<u>Vote Choice</u>						
--Gore	79	19	2	--	100	(235)
--Bush	77	18	3	1	100	(159)
<u>Party ID</u>						
--Democrat	76	21	3	--	100	(164)
--Independent	77	21	3	--	101	(123)
--Republican	79	17	4	1	101	(115)

"In your opinion, how much of a difference will the outcome of this election make in the way the government is run over the next few years—a great deal of difference, some, or not very much difference?" (Q4)

	<u>Great deal</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Not very much</u>	<u>Depends</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Likely Voters							
October 23-26, 2000	49%	33%	12%	3%	2%	99%	(432)
--October 12-15, 2000	43	43	11	3	1	101	(389)
-- September 2000	44	35	15	4	2	100	(542)
<u>Vote Choice</u>							
--Gore	52	30	12	3	3	100	(235)
--Bush	48	34	12	4	1	99	(159)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	53	32	11	3	2	101	(164)
--Independent	46	35	18	2	--	101	(123)
--Republican	46	37	9	5	3	100	(115)

"Now, suppose the 2000 presidential election were being held TODAY. If you had to choose between [ROTATE ITALICS] *Al Gore, the Democrat*; *George W. Bush, the Republican*; Pat Buchanan, of the Reform Party; and Ralph Nader, of the Green Party — who would you vote for?" (Q5)

	<u>Gore</u>	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Buchanan</u>	<u>Nader</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Undecided/ DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Likely Voters								
October 23-26, 2000	47%	35%	1%	5%	1%	11%	100%	(432)
--Oct. 12-15, 2000	46	38	1	4	1	10	100	(389)
--September, 2000	46	36	1	3	1	12	99	(542)
<u>Gender</u>								
--Men	44	40	1	4	1	10	100	(187)
--Women	49	32	--	6	1	12	100	(245)
<u>Party ID</u>								
--Democrat	81	4	--	5	--	10	100	(164)
--Independent	43	31	1	8	1	16	100	(123)
--Republican	10	83	1	--	1	5	100	(115)

THE FOLLOWING TABLE IS A COMPOSITE OF RESPONSES TO THREE QUESTIONS:

(1)“ Now, suppose the 2000 presidential election were being held TODAY. If you had to choose between [ROTATE ITALICS] *Al Gore, the Democrat; George W. Bush, the Republican; Pat Buchanan, of the Reform Party; and Ralph Nader, of the Green Party* — who would you vote for?” * (Q5) IF RESPONDENT CHOSE A CANDIDATE, (2) “Are you very sure about voting for (Bush/Gore), or might you change your mind before the election?”(Q7). IF RESPONDENT WAS UNDECIDED, (3): “At this moment do you lean more towards Bush or more towards Gore?”(Q6).

	<u>Initially Undecided</u>								<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
	<u>Sure About Gore</u>	<u>Picks Gore, but may change</u>	<u>Leans Gore</u>	<u>Does Not Lean</u>	<u>Leans Bush</u>	<u>Picks Bush, but may change</u>	<u>Sure about Bush</u>	<u>Third Party* Candidate</u>		
Likely Voters October 23-26, 2000	41%	6%	6%	5%	3%	3%	33%	4%	100%	(432)
<u>Party ID</u>										
--Democrat	73	8	7	6	--	1	3	2	100	(164)
--Independent	36	6	8	5	5	3	28	7	98	(123)
--Republican	7	3	2	1	3	6	77	1	100	(115)

* Those respondents who initially chose a third party candidate were then asked a follow-up question, “How likely is it you will actually vote for one of the major party candidates on November 7: Is there a good chance, some chance, or no chance at all?” (Q5A) Those who reported that there was a “good chance” of voting for a major party candidate are counted as voting for the major party candidate they reported leaning toward.

“I’d like to learn a little more about your opinions of the candidates. After I read each name, please tell me if your general impression of him is favorable or unfavorable, or if you don’t really have an opinion about him. First (RANDOMIZE...) Favorable or unfavorable? (IF FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE, PROBE: Is that very (favorable/unfavorable) or somewhat (favorable/ unfavorable)?)” (Q11A&B)

	<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>
BUSH							
Likely Voters October 23-26, 2000	29%	22%	17%	28%	5%	101%	(432)
--October 12-16, 2000	27	24	18	23	7	99	(389)
--September 2000	27	23	17	25	7	99	(542)
--June 2000	14	29	17	16	25	101	(464)
GORE							
Likely Voters October 23-26, 2000	30%	28%	13%	23%	5%	99%	(432)
--October 12-15, 2000	29	28	15	23	4	99	(389)
--September 2000	36	26	16	18	5	101	(542)
--June 2000	16	31	15	17	21	100	(464)

“Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think each one applies more to Al Gore or more to George W. Bush. How about... [RANDOMIZE] Gore or Bush?” (Q12)

	<u>Gore</u>	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Both/Same</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>DK/Refuse</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Likely Voters							
Is prepared to run the country							
October 23-26, 2000	53%	34%	8%	2%	3%	100%	(432)
Is a strong and decisive leader							
October 23-26, 2000	48%	37%	4%	6%	5%	100%	(432)
--October 12-15, 2000	43	44	6	3	4	100	(389)
--September 2000	43	42	3	7	5	100	(270)
Is honest and trustworthy							
October 23-26, 2000	37%	39%	9%	10%	5%	100%	(432)
--October 12-15, 2000	36	41	6	13	4	100	(389)
--September 2000	41	33	9	10	7	100	(272)
Generally agrees with you on issues you care about							
October 23-26, 2000	51%	40%	4%	3%	3%	101%	(432)
--September 2000	52	37	3	2	6	100	(670)
Shares your values							
October 23-26, 2000	47%	38%	6%	6%	4%	101%	(432)
--October 12-15, 2000	46	41	4	5	4	100	(389)
--September 2000	47	39	5	5	5	101	(542)