The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll

February 6, 2001

CONTACT: CLIFF ZUKIN or MONIKA McDERMOTT

RELEASE: (EP130-4)

A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in the Tuesday, February 6 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "*The* Star-Ledger/*Eagleton-Rutgers Poll*."

NEW JERSEY GUBERNATORIAL 2001:

McGreevey Begins With Lead
DiFrancesco Runs Closer Race Than Schundler

The extended presidential election only managed to briefly delay the start of real politics in New Jersey; Christie Whitman's abdication of the Statehouse for the EPA only managed to add spice to it. It's time for the gubernatorial election, and Democrat Jim McGreevey starts out in better shape than either of his two potential Republican opponents, acting Governor Donald DiFrancesco and Jersey City Mayor Bret Schundler.

A Star-Ledger/Eagleton Rutgers poll of 649 registered voters interviewed between January 24 and 30 finds McGreevey leading DiFrancesco by a margin of 39 to 26 percent, with 31 percent undecided and the remainder saying they would vote for someone else. McGreevey leads Schundler by a wider 43 to 19 percent, with 32 percent undecided and the remainder not voting or voting for some other candidate.

Cliff Zukin, director of the poll commented, "Early poll soundings are generally very soft as few voters know much about any of the candidates. But there are more Democratic than Republican identifiers in the state, and that gives McGreevey an edge at the beginning of the campaign."

McGreevey, who beat back a summer challenge from Senator Robert Torricelli and is now unopposed for his party's nomination, leads DiFrancesco by a wide margin of 73 to 6 percent among Democrats. DiFrancesco runs ahead of McGreevey by a lesser margin of 65 to 5

percent among Republicans. McGreevey holds a slight 29 to 21 percent lead among the critical group of the state's Independent voters, with just under half undecided.

McGreevey holds a similar partisan advantage over Schundler, leading by 76 to 4 percent among Democrats. But Schundler receives less Republican support than DiFrancesco, capturing the support of only 52 percent of GOP voters, while McGreevey gets 11 percent. Independents split 35 to 15 percent in support of McGreevey, while more than two out of every five are undecided in this match-up.

Zukin noted, "At this point DiFrancesco has more support than Schundler, and probably has an easier task ahead in making up ground on McGreevey given the visibility he will get as Acting Governor and Senate President."

In other breakdowns of the vote:

- Minority voters are solidly behind McGreevey – around three-in-five black and Hispanic voters support McGreevey against either Republican.
- White voters are more closely divided, giving McGreevey only a slight edge against DiFrancesco.
- Age has a distinct effect on candidate support in the match-up between McGreevey and DiFrancesco: voters over age 50 divide their support between the two, while those under 50 years old are heavily in favor of McGreevey.
- McGreevey has broad ideological appeal at this point: one quarter of conservatives support him against both DiFrancesco and Schundler, and he carries both moderates and liberals comfortably.

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP130-4), FEBRUARY 6, 2001

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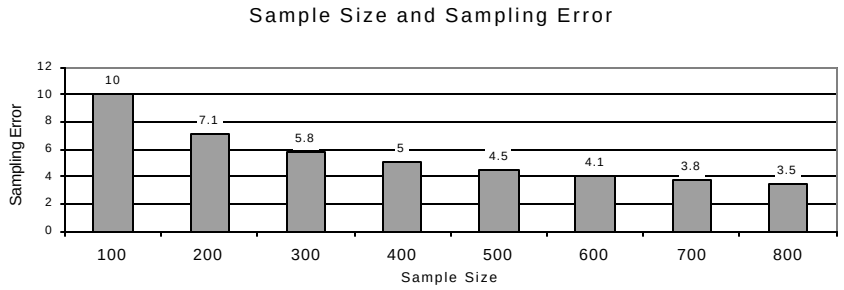

Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects. The verbatim wording of all questions asked is reproduced in this background memo. The sample has been stratified based on county and the data have been weighted on age and education to insure an accurate proportional representation of the state. The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

"If the election for governor were held today and the candidates were Donald DiFrancesco [Dee-Fran-*Sess*-Co], the Republican, and Jim McGreevey, the Democrat, for whom would you vote -- DiFrancesco or McGreevey?" (D1A)

	DiFrancesco	McGreevey	Neither/other	Wouldn't Vote	DK/Undecided	Total	(n)
January 2001	**26%**	**39%**	**3%**	**1%**	**31%**	**100%**	**(649)**
Party ID							
--Democrat	6	73	2	1	17	99	(225)
--Independent	21	29	5	1	44	100	(245)
--Republican	65	5	1	0	28	99	(155)
Gender							
--Male	29	40	3	1	27	100	(301)
--Female	23	39	3	1	33	99	(348)
Race							
--White	31	35	3	1	30	100	(493)
--Black & Hispanic	7	58	1	1	33	100	(114)
Age							
--18-29	21	47	2	1	30	101	(102)
--30-49	24	46	4	2	25	101	(268)
--50+	29	32	3	1	35	100	(250)
Ideology							
--Liberal	13	58	1	3	25	100	(131)
--Moderate	24	39	4	1	33	101	(369)
--Conservative	41	25	3	--	30	99	(128)
	DiFrancesco	**McGreevey**	**Neither/other**	**Wouldn't Vote**	**DK/Undecided**	**Total**	**(n)**
Region of State							

--North	26	39	4	1	30	100	(290)
--Central	24	39	3	0	34	100	(183)
--South	27	41	3	2	28	101	(171)
Presidential Vote							
--Gore	8	62	3	0	26	99	(295)
--Bush	54	10	3	0	33	100	(224)

"If the election for governor were held today and the candidates were Bret Schundler [Shund-ler], the Republican, and Jim McGreevey, the Democrat, for whom would you vote -- Schundler or McGreevey?" (D1B)

	Schundler	McGreevey	Neither/other	Wouldn't Vote	DK/Undecided	Total	(n)
January 2001	**19**	**43**	**4**	**1**	**32**	**99%**	**(649)**
Party ID							
--Democrat	4	76	2	1	16	99	(225)
--Independent	15	35	7	1	43	101	(245)
--Republican	52	11	2	0	36	101	(155)
Gender							
--Male	21	45	4	1	28	99	(301)
--Female	18	42	5	1	35	101	(348)
Race							
--White	22	39	5	1	33	100	(493)
--Black & Hispanic	8	62	3	1	26	100	(114)
Ideology							
--Liberal	11	61	2	--	27	101	(131)
--Moderate	16	45	5	1	33	100	(369)
--Conservative	38	26	5	--	31	100	(128)
Age							
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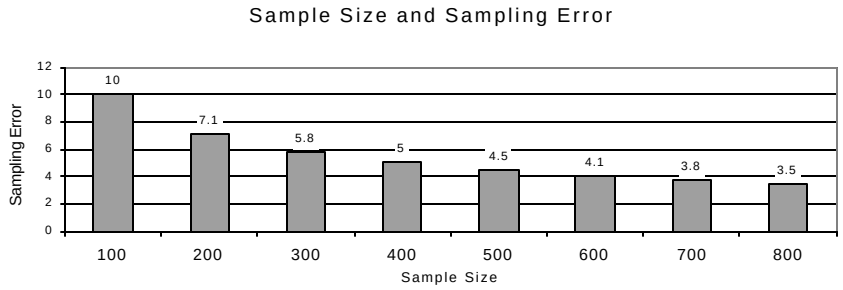

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