

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

May 22, 2005
(Release 153-1)

CONTACT: JEFFREY LEVINE
(732) 932-9384 ext. 240

A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo appears in the Sunday, May 22, 2005 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll."

RED HOPES IN A BLUE STATE: POTENTIAL OPENING FOR GOP IN NJ GUBERNATORIAL RACE

Corzine Favorability Below Key 50 Percent Marker

*Majority of GOP Voters Uncommitted,
Although Forrester Seen as Leading Contender*

According to a new *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll*, the 2005 New Jersey Gubernatorial race remains in flux, with front-runner Senator Jon Corzine's support broad but weakened. However, a strong GOP contender has yet to emerge, with only 19% percent of likely registered Republican voters saying they have decided which candidate to support in the Republican primary, now only three weeks off.

"While Corzine remains the frontrunner, his support is far wider than it is deep – clear proof that name recognition is not enough, and if the Senator continues to fail to make a persuasive case for why voters should support him in November, he may well succeed in creating red hopes in what should be among the bluest of blue states," said Jeffrey Levine, director of the *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll*.

Senator Corzine continues to boast a solid lead among registered voters over all other Republican candidates in test ballots, including a 42 percent to 29 percent match up against Mercer County businessman Doug Forrester, and 44 percent to 24 percent against former Jersey City mayor Bret Schundler, the two most likely GOP candidates. However, Corzine's 44 percent favorability rating puts him only points ahead of likely opposition candidate Forrester – who scores 38 percent favorability among all voters, and leads Corzine 44 to 41 among independents. Favorability ratings below 50 percent are often considered a sign of vulnerability for incumbent or widely-known candidates.

Furthermore, as in our February survey, the majority of voters (67 percent) again say that

The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll • Eagleton Institute of Politics
185 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901

Director: Jeffrey Levine x240

Phone: 732-932-9384 - Website: <http://slerp.rutgers.edu> - Fax: 732-932-1551

Corzine has either minor (46 percent) or no real accomplishments (21 percent) as a Senator. Corzine's job approval rating also dropped from 61 percent in February to 53 percent in the most recent poll, with the largest decreases among Democrats (80 to 71) and Independents (58 to 46).

"Nevertheless, despite Senator Corzine's present vulnerabilities, the true test is whether the GOP can find a compelling candidate to rally New Jersey voters around. With only three weeks until the primary, Republican voters' awareness of and committed support for candidates remains strikingly low," said Levine.

Among likely Republican voters, just 19 percent say they have committed to a candidate and a full 79 percent say it is too early to say for sure whom they support. In fact, almost half of all registered Republicans are unable to name any of the candidates (34 percent "no" and 8 percent "don't know" or "refused to answer"), and just 17 percent of registered Republicans say they have paid a lot of attention to the campaign.

"As we learned in a recent focus group, New Jersey Republicans believe they have their best shot when the Democrats falter, and these voters are naturally taking a wait-and-see approach – right up until the very last moment – to find the best candidate to compete against Corzine," added Levine.

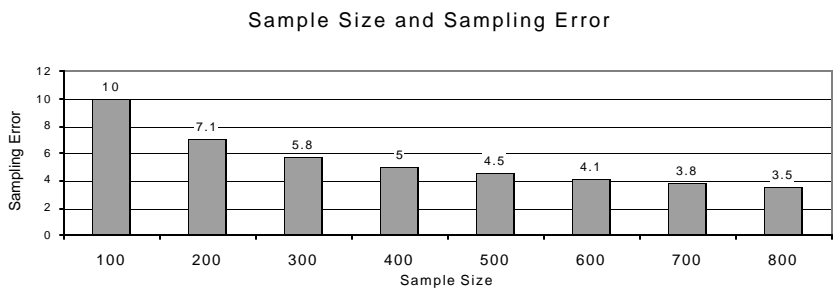
However, Levine clarified, Forrester and Schundler have significant advantages over all other Republican candidates in terms of name awareness, credibility as fiscal conservatives and ability to take on Corzine. And between these two leaders, Forrester has the edge.

Among registered Republican voters, Forrester leads in terms of favorability, 58 percent to 48 percent for Schundler. Among the five other candidates, Murphy is the next closest at 18 percent. Furthermore, among Republicans who believe Corzine can be beaten (55 percent), Forrester is considered best able to do so by 49 percent, with 21 percent citing Schundler and all other candidates receiving single digit support. Republican voters similarly rate Forrester (28 percent) as the candidate best suited to cut property taxes and reduce spending (compared to 15 percent for Schundler).

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP 153-1) May 22, 2005

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll* was conducted from May 16 to 20 with a scientifically selected random sample of 604 New Jersey adults and an oversample of 208 self-identified Republicans. The statewide random sample of 604 adults yielded 519 adult residents registered to vote in New Jersey. The 357 self-identified Republicans from the statewide sample and the Republican oversample yielded 325 Republicans registered to vote. Most of the figures in this release are based on the statewide and Republican registered voter samples.

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 the statewide sample of 519 registered voters is ± 4.3 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval, and the sampling error for the 325 registered Republican voters is ± 5.4 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey Republican registered voters were found to have a favorable opinion of a gubernatorial candidate, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 44.6 and 55.4 percent (50 ± 5.4) had all New Jersey registered Republican voters been interviewed, rather than just a sample. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups 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 referred to in this release are as follows:

“Now, thinking specifically about the Republican primary campaign for governor, how much attention would you say you have paid to the campaign so far – a lot, some, a little, or not at all?” (RP1)

POLL 153 / May 2005	<u>A lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A Little</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>DK</u>	(n)
Registered Voters	11%	33%	28%	27%	1%	(519)

[AMONG REPUBLICAN IDENTIFIERS ONLY (sub-sample of Republicans drawn from statewide sample of 604 and oversample of 208 Republican self-identifiers)]

POLL 153 / May 2005	<u>A lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A Little</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>DK</u>	(n)
Registered Republican Voters	17%	40%	27%	15%	*	(325)

Ideology

--Moderate	15	39	31	14	1	(137)
--Conservative	18	41	27	14	-	(160)

Gender

--Male	18	38	31	13	-	(149)
--Female	16	41	24	18	1	(176)

Age

--18-49	9	37	31	24	-	(147)
--50+	23	42	26	8	1	(170)

Region of State

--North	18	36	28	17	1	(141)
--Central	19	39	27	16	-	(83)
--South	14	45	29	13	-	(94)

Vote in Republican Primary

---Extremely Likely	21	45	22	12	*	(179)
---------------------	----	----	----	----	---	-------

“Do you happen to know who is running in the Republican primary election for Governor this year?” [IF YES: What are their names?] [IF ONLY ONE GIVEN: Can you think of anyone else?] (ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES) (RP4)

POLL 153/ May 2005 Registered Voters (519)	<u>Forrester</u>	<u>Schundler</u>	<u>Murphy</u>	<u>DiGaetano</u>	<u>Caliguire</u>	<u>Lonegan</u>	<u>Schroeder</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>No, can't name</u>	<u>DK/ RF</u>
	27%	24%	5%	2%	1%	6%	3%	2%	48%	13%

[AMONG REPUBLICAN IDENTIFIERS ONLY (sub-sample of Republicans drawn from statewide sample of 604 and oversample of 208 Republican self-identifiers)]

POLL 153/ May 2005 Registered Republican Voters (325)	<u>Forrester</u>	<u>Schundler</u>	<u>Murphy</u>	<u>DiGaetano</u>	<u>Caliguire</u>	<u>Lonegan</u>	<u>Schroeder</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>No, can't name</u>	<u>DK/ RF</u>
<u>Ideology</u>										
--Moderate (137)	42	28	10	3	2	5	7	2	43	4
--Conservative (160)	45	45	8	6	1	10	7	2	27	11
<u>Gender</u>										
--Male (149)	53	44	11	8	3	14	7	3	30	4
--Female (176)	35	31	7	2	-	4	6	1	38	11
<u>Region of State</u>										
--North (141)	40	38	13	7	3	13	9	1	35	9
--Central (83)	52	43	4	4	-	5	2	1	29	7
--South (94)	41	29	6	2	-	5	7	3	39	9
<u>Vote in Republican Primary</u>										
--Extremely Likely (179)	50	44	14	7	2	11	9	2	27	7

“Have you decided which candidate to support at this point, or is it still too early to say for sure?” (RP6)

[ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO SAID “*EXTREMELY/VERY/SOMEWHAT LIKELY TO VOTE IN THE UPCOMING REPUBLICAN PRIMARY ELECTION FOR GOVERNOR*”, (RP5)]

POLL 153 / May 2005		Decided on candidate	Too early to say for sure	DK/ RF	(n)
Registered	Republican Voters	19%	79%	2%	(289)
<u>Ideology</u>					
--Moderate		11	87	2	(118)
--Conservative		26	72	2	(143)
<u>Gender</u>					
--Male		21	77	2	(133)
--Female		18	80	2	(156)
<u>Age</u>					
--18-49		14	83	*	(126)
--50+		23	76	*	(155)
<u>Region of State</u>					
--North		20	80	-	(128)
--Central		23	75	3	(71)
--South		14	81	5	(83)
<u>Vote in Republican Primary</u>					
--Extremely Likely		23	74	3	(179)

“Now let me read you a list of traits people might look for in a Republican gubernatorial candidate. Please tell me which one you think is the most important quality for a Republican candidate for governor to have? (READ AND ROTATE) [IF “ALL”, ASK:] If you absolutely had to choose, which one would you say is the most important quality?” (RP7)

[AMONG REPUBLICAN IDENTIFIERS ONLY (sub-sample of Republicans drawn from statewide sample of 604 and oversample of 208 Republican self-identifiers) WHO SAID, “EXTREMELY/VERY/SOMEWHAT LIKELY TO VOTE IN THE UPCOMING REPUBLICAN PRIMARY ELECTION FOR GOVERNOR” (RP5), OR IF RESPONDENT IDENTIFIED WITH THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, INDEPENDENT OR SOMETHING ELSE (P1), OR INDICATED “TYPICALLY VOTES IN THE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY” (P2)]

POLL 153 / May 2005 Registered Republican Voters	Best chance of beating Corzine	Fiscal conservative committed to cutting property tax	Stands up for what is right no matter the political cost	Not beholden to political contributors	Fight to eliminate corruption	Guided by moral/religious conviction	All of the above	None	DK/ RF	(n)
	10%	26%	24%	2%	11%	14%	11%	1%	1%	(325)
<u>Ideology</u>										
--Moderate	5	31	28	1	13	7	12	1	1	(137)
--Conservative	14	21	21	3	9	21	10	1	1	(160)
<u>Gender</u>										
--Male	12	28	20	1	15	11	11	1	1	(149)
--Female	7	25	27	3	8	16	11	1	1	(176)
<u>Age</u>										
--18-49	*	30	28	*	10	16	*	*	-	(147)
--50+	12	22	21	*	12	13	15	*	-	(170)
<u>Region of State</u>										
--North	8	27	28	1	11	12	9	1	2	(141)
--Central	12	27	22	1	13	12	12	1	-	(83)
--South	11	23	20	4	9	20	12	-	1	(94)
<u>Vote in Republican Primary</u>										
--Extremely Likely	13	25	25	2	12	13	10	*	1	(179)

“Please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the following people. If you haven’t heard of them or don’t have an opinion of them, just tell me and we’ll move on.” (PF1 -PF9)

POLL 153 / May 2005	Favorable	Unfavorable	Not Heard of	No opinion	DK/RF	(n)
JON CORZINE						
Registered Voters	44%	25%	4%	24%	3%	(519)
Party ID						
--Democrat	63	7	7	21	3	(194)
--Independent	41	30	2	25	2	(122)
--Republican	24	45	2	27	1	(136)
Registered Republican Voters (Incl. Oversample)	22%	48%	4%	24%	3%	(325)
February 2005						
Registered Voters	53%	22%	9%	15%	2%	(678)
DOUGLAS FORRESTER						
Registered Voters	38%	14%	18%	27%	3%	(519)
Party ID						
--Democrat	21	21	26	28	4	(194)
--Independent	44	12	15	25	3	(122)
--Republican	56	8	9	24	3	(136)
Registered Republican Voters (Incl. Oversample)	58%	8%	9%	22%	4%	(325)
February 2005						
Registered Voters	25%	15%	29%	26%	26%	(678)
BRET SCHUNDLER						
Registered Voters	30%	16%	23%	26%	5%	(519)
Party ID						
--Democrat	12	22	34	28	5	(194)
--Independent	38	15	12	30	6	(122)
--Republican	54	8	14	21	3	(136)
Registered Republican Voters (Incl. Oversample)	48%	9%	14%	25%	4%	(325)
February 2005						
Registered Voters	28%	19%	26%	22%	5%	(678)

	Favorable	Unfavorable	Not Heard of	No opinion	DK/RF	(n)
JOHN MURPHY						
Registered Voters	10%	3%	55%	27%	5%	(519)
Registered Republican Voters	18%	3%	42%	32%	6%	(325)
ROBERT SCHROEDER						
Registered Voters	10%	3%	47%	35%	4%	(519)
Registered Republican Voters	16%	9%	34%	36%	5%	(325)
STEVE LONEGAN						
Registered Voters	10%	5%	51%	29%	5%	(519)
Registered Republican Voters	15%	7%	43%	31%	4%	(325)
PAUL DiGAETANO						
Registered Voters	8%	4%	52%	31%	5%	(519)
Registered Republican Voters	14%	5%	46%	29%	6%	(325)
TODD CALIGUIRE						
Registered Voters	4%	1%	66%	25%	5%	(519)
Registered Republican Voters	4%	2%	57%	30%	6%	(325)
PETE VINCELLI						
Registered Voters	2%	3%	63%	27%	5%	(519)
Registered Republican Voters	2%	3%	59%	29%	6%	(325)

“Now I’m going to read you a list of traits people might look for in a Republican gubernatorial candidate. Regardless of which Republican candidate for governor you support, which one of the candidates, (ROTATE AND READ OPTIONS #1-7), do you think would do the best job of...(READ AND ROTATE A-B) [IF SOMEONE OTHER THAN CANDIDATES, ASK:] If you had to choose between (READ OPTIONS #1-7)...?” (PF14)

A. Cutting property taxes and reducing state spending

[AMONG REPUBLICAN IDENTIFIERS ONLY (sub-sample of Republicans drawn from statewide sample of 604 and oversample of 208 Republican self-identifiers)]

POLL 153/ May 2005 Registered Republican Voters (325)	<u>Forrester</u>	<u>Schundler</u>	<u>Murphy</u>	<u>DiGaetano</u>	<u>Caliguire</u>	<u>Lonegan</u>	<u>Schroeder</u>	<u>None of the above</u>	<u>All the same</u>	<u>DK/ RF</u>
	28%	15%	4%	1%	*	3%	2%	6%	2%	39%

“Now I’m going to read you a list of traits people might look for in a Republican gubernatorial candidate. Regardless of which Republican candidate for governor you support, which one of the candidates, (ROTATE AND READ OPTIONS #1-7), do you think would do the best job of...(READ AND ROTATE A-B) [IF SOMEONE OTHER THAN CANDIDATES, ASK:] If you had to choose between (READ OPTIONS #1-7)...?” (PF14)

B. Eliminating corruption among state elected officials

[AMONG REPUBLICAN IDENTIFIERS ONLY (sub-sample of Republicans drawn from statewide sample of 604 and oversample of 208 Republican self-identifiers)]

POLL 153/ May 2005 Registered Republican Voters (325)	<u>Forrester</u>	<u>Schundler</u>	<u>Murphy</u>	<u>DiGaetano</u>	<u>Caliguire</u>	<u>Lonegan</u>	<u>Schroeder</u>	<u>None of the above</u>	<u>All the same</u>	<u>DK/ RF</u>
	25%	18%	6%	1%	-	2%	2%	6%	3%	37%

Corzine-Forrester

“If the election for governor were held today, for whom would you vote (ROTATE) Jon Corzine, the Democrat, Doug Forrester, the Republican or some other candidate for governor?” (G2)

	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Forrester</u>	<u>Some other</u>	<u>Wouldn't Vote</u>	<u>DK/Undecided</u>	<u>(n)</u>
POLL 153 / May 2005						
Registered Voters	42%	29%	9%	3%	17%	(519)
<u>Party ID</u>						
--Democrat	76	9	3	3	10	(194)
--Independent	31	32	16	4	17	(122)
--Republican	9	58	13	1	18	(136)
<u>Gender</u>						
--Male	44	30	10	4	12	(248)
--Female	39	28	9	2	21	(271)
<u>Region of State</u>						
--North	46	24	9	3	18	(236)
--Central	40	34	8	3	15	(131)
--South	35	36	9	4	16	(137)
Registered Republican Voters (Incl. Oversample)	8%	65%	12%	1%	13%	(325)
	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Forrester</u>	<u>Some other</u>	<u>Wouldn't Vote</u>	<u>DK/Undecided</u>	<u>(n)</u>
February 2005						
Registered Voters	46%	23%	12%	2%	17%	(678)

Corzine-Schundler

“If the election for governor were held today, for whom would you vote (ROTATE) Jon Corzine, the Democrat, Bret Schundler, the Republican or some other candidate for governor?” (G1)

POLL 153 / May 2005

	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Schundler</u>	<u>Some other</u>	<u>Wouldn't Vote</u>	<u>DK/Undecided</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters	44%	24%	11%	4%	17%	(519)
<u>Party ID</u>						
--Democrat	76	3	6	4	11	(194)
--Independent	34	25	13	5	22	(122)
--Republican	10	54	17	4	15	(136)
<u>Gender</u>						
--Male	46	23	13	6	12	(248)
--Female	41	25	9	3	22	(271)
<u>Region of State</u>						
--North	47	22	9	3	19	(236)
--Central	46	25	10	5	14	(131)
--South	35	28	14	6	18	(137)
Registered Republican Voters (Incl. Oversample)	10%	57%	17%	3%	13%	(325)
	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Schundler</u>	<u>Some other</u>	<u>Wouldn't Vote</u>	<u>DK/Undecided</u>	<u>(n)</u>
February 2005 Registered Voters	47%	22%	11%	2%	18%	(678)

Corzine-Murphy/Lonegan

“If the election for governor were held today, for whom would you vote (ROTATE)
Jon Corzine, the Democrat, John Murphy/Steve Lonegan [split sample], the Republican or some other
candidate for Governor?” (G3)

[SPLIT SAMPLE Q.G3]

POLL 153 / May 2005

	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Murphy</u>	<u>Some other</u>	<u>Wouldn't Vote</u>	<u>DK/Undecided</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters	48%	22%	13%	3%	15%	(245)

	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Lonegan</u>	<u>Some other</u>	<u>Wouldn't Vote</u>	<u>DK/Undecided</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters	49%	18%	11%	4%	19%	(274)

Corzine-Schroeder/DiGaetano/Caliguire

“If the election for governor were held today, for whom would you vote (ROTATE)
Jon Corzine, the Democrat, Robert Schroeder/Paul DiGaetano/Todd Caliguire [tri sample], the Republican
or some other candidate for Governor?” (G4)

[TRI SAMPLE Q.G4]

	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Schroeder</u>	<u>Some other</u>	<u>Wouldn't Vote</u>	<u>DK/Undecided</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters	42%	23%	14%	4%	17%	(182)

	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>DiGaetano</u>	<u>Some other</u>	<u>Wouldn't Vote</u>	<u>DK/Undecided</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters	49%	16%	12%	5%	18%	(164)

	<u>Corzine</u>	<u>Caliguire</u>	<u>Some other</u>	<u>Wouldn't Vote</u>	<u>DK/Undecided</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Registered Voters	53%	13%	17%	2%	14%	(173)

“Regardless of who you are planning to vote for in this election, do you think any of the Republican candidates can beat Jon Corzine in the general election and become the next governor of New Jersey?”
(G5)

POLL 153 / May 2005 Registered Voters	Yes, someone can beat Corzine 42%	No, none of them can beat Corzine 34%	DK/RF 24%	(n) (519)
<u>Party ID</u>				
--Democrat	26	46	28	(194)
--Independent	49	30	21	(122)
--Republican	56	28	16	(136)
<u>Gender</u>				
--Male	40	42	19	(248)
--Female	45	27	28	(271)
<u>Region of State</u>				
--North	42	34	24	(236)
--Central	42	36	22	(131)
--South	45	32	23	(137)

[AMONG REPUBLICAN IDENTIFIERS ONLY (sub-sample of Republicans drawn from statewide sample of 604 and oversample of 208 Republican self-identifiers)]

POLL 153 / May 2005 Registered Republican Voters	Yes, someone can beat Corzine 55%	No, none of them can beat Corzine 28%	DK/ RF 16%	(n) (325)
--	---	---	------------------	--------------

“Which candidate do you think has the best chance of beating Jon Corzine in the general election for governor?” (READ AND ROTATE) (G6)

[ASKED ONLY AMONG THOSE WHO SAID YES, SOMEONE CAN BEAT CORZINE (G5)]

POLL 153/ May 2005 Registered Voters (220)	<u>Forrester</u>	<u>Schundler</u>	<u>Murphy</u>	<u>DiGaetano</u>	<u>Caliguire</u>	<u>Lonegan</u>	<u>Schroeder</u>	<u>All the same</u>	<u>None of the above</u>	<u>DK/ RF</u>
	37%	25%	4%	2%	*	*	5%	3%	2%	22%

[AMONG REPUBLICAN IDENTIFIERS ONLY (sub-sample of Republicans drawn from statewide sample of 604 and oversample of 208 Republican self-identifiers)]

POLL 153/ May 2005 Registered Republican Voters (180)	<u>Forrester</u>	<u>Schundler</u>	<u>Murphy</u>	<u>DiGaetano</u>	<u>Caliguire</u>	<u>Lonegan</u>	<u>Schroeder</u>	<u>All the same</u>	<u>None of the above</u>	<u>DK/ RF</u>
	49%	21%	3%	1%	-	2%	3%	1%	1%	19%

“Do you approve or disapprove of the way Jon Corzine is handling his job as Senator?” (J1)

POLL 153 / May 2005 Registered Voters	Approve 53%	Disapprove 23%	DK/RF 24%	(n) (519)
<u>Party ID</u>				
--Democrat	71	6	23	(194)
--Independent	46	30	24	(122)
--Republican	35	42	23	(136)
<u>Gender</u>				
--Male	57	23	20	(248)
--Female	49	23	27	(271)
February 2005 Registered Voters	Approve 61%	Disapprove 18%	DK/RF 21%	(n) (678)

“Thinking back over Corzine’s term as Senator, would you say that he has major accomplishments to point to, minor accomplishments, or no real accomplishments?” (J2)

POLL 153 / May 2005 Registered Voters	Major 14%	Minor 46%	No Real Ones 21%	DK/RF 19%	(n) (519)
<u>Party ID</u>					
--Democrat	23	46	7	24	(194)
--Independent	7	48	27	19	(122)
--Republican	8	46	31	15	(136)
<u>Gender</u>					
--Male	12	48	24	17	(248)
--Female	15	44	19	22	(271)
February 2005 Registered Voters	Major 16%	Minor 45%	No Real Ones 20%	DK/RF 19%	(n) (678)