

# The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll

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## RELEASE INFORMATION

A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in Sunday's *Star-Ledger*. Other newspapers may also use this information in their Sunday editions. Electronic media may release after 5:00 P.M. Saturday, September 26, 1992. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "The Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll."

## DEMOCRATS FAVORED STATEWIDE IN CONGRESSIONAL RACES; FLORIO RATING IMPROVES

Registered voters in New Jersey say they will vote for the Democratic candidates for Congress in their own district over the Republican candidates by a 44 percent to 31 percent margin -- a Democratic edge of 13 points. In 1990 and 1988 Democrats held smaller four point and five point leads statewide over the Republicans in the Congressional races.

The latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton Poll, conducted by telephone from September 9 to September 15 with 800 New Jersey adults (663 of who are registered voters), also shows that Governor Florio's positive ratings increased by 5 points to 29 percent since April of this year. During the same time period George Bush's positive rating fell 5 points to 31 percent.

### THE CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION

PERCENTAGES PRESENTED IN THIS SECTION ARE BASED ON THE  
663 RESPONDENTS WHO INDICATED THEY ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE.

By a margin of 44 percent to 31 percent, New Jersey voters say they are planning to vote for the Democratic candidate for Congress in the election this November; however, fully

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### ATTENTION RADIO STATIONS:

Audio is available after 5:00 P.M. on Saturday, September 26, 1992, from (908)932-3605 (Rutgers Feature Phone).

one-quarter of voters are undecided. Two years ago voters in the state favored the Democratic candidates by a 39 percent to 35 percent margin, and four years ago the Democrats were also favored by a 39 percent to 34 percent margin.

Among those who say they are planning to vote for Bill Clinton for President, 70 percent say they intend to vote for the Democratic Congressional candidate in their district, while 8 percent say they will vote for the Republican candidate. Among Bush voters, 62 percent plan to vote for the Republican Congressional candidate, and 13 percent say they will vote for the Democrat.

Ken Dautrich, Associate Poll Director, commented, "Right now it looks like Bill Clinton's coattails extend further than George Bush's in New Jersey. There are not only more Clinton voters, but Clinton voters are more likely to vote for the Democratic candidates for Congress than Bush voters are to vote for the Republicans."

Vote intentions for Congress among New Jersey voters this year are also falling largely along partisan lines. Eighty-one percent of Democrats say they will vote for the Democratic candidates for Congress in their district, while 78 percent of Republicans intend to vote for the Republican candidate. Those considering themselves to be "independent" lean more toward the Democratic candidates by a 37 percent to 26 percent margin.

By an eleven point margin (45% to 34%), New Jersey voters say they would prefer to see the Democrats in control of Congress rather than the Republicans. Seventy-seven percent of Bill Clinton voters say they would rather see the Democrats in control of Congress, compared to 72 percent of George Bush voters who would prefer to see a Republican-controlled Congress.

Sixty-four percent of registered voters in New Jersey know that the Democrats now control Congress, compared to 12 percent who think the Republicans do and 25 percent who say they don't know.

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The survey also shows that more New Jersey voters would prefer to have the same political party control the Presidency and Congress, rather than have different parties control the two branches of government. Fifty-five percent say that it is better to have a President and majority in Congress from the same party so "they can work together and get things done," compared to 39 percent who say that it's better to have the branches controlled by different parties so they can "watch over each other

and represent different points of view." Voters intending to vote for Bush are more likely than Clinton voters to say the same party should control both branches by a margin of 66% to 50%.

A key focal point in this year's presidential election are the economic problems facing the country -- 73 percent identify economic issues as being the most important. The survey asked voters who is most responsible for the nation's economic woes, President Bush or the Congress. Twenty-seven percent indicate that Congress is responsible, while 22 percent say Bush. A plurality of voters (43%), however, say that Bush and the Congress are about equally responsible for the poor economy.

Democrats (45%) are more likely to say Bush is responsible for the poor economy than are independents (16%) and Republicans (2%); and Republicans (54%) are more likely to hold Congress accountable for economic conditions than are independents (26%) and Democrats (11%). Fully half of the independents say Bush and the Congress are equally responsible, compared to 38 percent of Republicans and 37 percent of Democrats.

### ***RATINGS OF THE PRESIDENT/VICE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS***

**PERCENTAGES PRESENTED IN THIS SECTION ARE BASED ON  
THE FULL SAMPLE OF 800 NEW JERSEY ADULTS.**

Thirty-one percent of New Jersey residents now give President George Bush job performance ratings of either "excellent" (4%) or "good" (27%). Thirty-one percent say the

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President is doing an "only fair" job, and 37 percent say his performance is "poor." Bush's positive rating is down five points from 36 percent four months ago, and is down 25 points from 56 percent one year ago.

Vice President Dan Quayle receives a 26 percent positive rating of "excellent" (5%) or "good" (21%) from New Jerseyans. Thirty-two percent rate his performance as "only fair," while 37 percent say he is doing a poor job. Last year at this time, Quayle's positive rating in New Jersey was 29 percent.

Only 15 percent of state residents give Congress a positive rating of either "excellent" (1%) or "good" (14%), while 43 percent say "only fair" and 38 percent say "poor." However, when it comes to rating the Congressional representative from one's own district, 34 percent offer a positive rating (4% excellent and 30% good).

***RATINGS OF THE GOVERNOR AND STATE LEGISLATURE***

**PERCENTAGES PRESENTED IN THIS SECTION ARE BASED ON THE  
FULL SAMPLE OF 800 NEW JERSEY ADULTS.**

Positive ratings given to Governor Jim Florio are at 29 percent (4% excellent and 25% good), up five points since April of this year, and up 11 points from two years ago when the Governor's rating was at it's lowest point. In the current survey, 43 percent say Florio is doing an "only fair" job, and 22 percent rate his performance as "poor." The percent giving him a "poor" rating was 30 percent four months ago and 45 percent two years ago.

Dautrich commented, "Over the past two years we have picked up a continued trend toward softening of negative evaluations of Florio's performance. The current poll not only shows that trend continuing, but also for the first time shows a significant improvement in positive evaluations of the Governor."

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Among Democrats, 43 percent give Governor Florio a positive job performance rating, compared to 25 percent of independents and 18 percent of Republicans.

Seventeen percent of New Jerseyans offer a positive job performance rating to the New Jersey state legislature (1% excellent and 16% good). Fifty-one percent rate the legislature "only fair," while 23 percent rate it's performance as "poor." These ratings are virtually unchanged from four months ago. Residents offer a higher positive rating (36%) of their own representatives in the state senate and assembly.

The current poll shows that 55 percent of residents know that the Republicans control the New Jersey state legislature, whereas 27 percent incorrectly think the Democrats are in control. In October of 1991, 44 percent knew that the Democrats controlled the state legislature at that time.

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## BACKGROUND MEMO — RELEASE SL/EP39-3 (EP89-3), SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1992

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton* Poll was conducted between September 9 and 15, 1992, when a random sample of 800 New Jerseyans, 18 years and older, was interviewed by telephone. This sampling yielded a total of 663 respondents who reported being registered to vote. Some of the findings presented in this release are based on the sample of 800 New Jersey adults. Sampling error for this group is  $\pm 3.5$  percent. Other figures in this release are based on registered voters and are subject to a sampling error of about  $\pm 4$  percent. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from that population. Sampling error does not take into account other possible sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The questions and figures referred to in this release are presented below. The location of each question on the actual questionnaire is in brackets.

"How would you rate the job Jim Florio is doing as Governor--excellent, good, only fair or poor?" [Q.2]

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(800)</b>
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	9	34	39	13	5	100	(240)
--Independent	2	23	45	23	7	100	(344)
--Republican	1	17	45	32	5	100	(199)
<b>PAST SURVEYS</b>							
April, 1992	2	22	42	30	4	100	(800)
January, 1992	3	23	35	36	2	99	(800)
September, 1991	3	20	39	34	5	101	(800)
June, 1991	4	20	34	37	6	101	(800)
February, 1991	3	19	35	38	4	99	(800)
September/October, 1990	3	15	33	45	5	101	(800)
July, 1990	4	19	36	32	8	99	(800)
March, 1990	8	34	34	14	10	100	(800)

"And, how would you rate the job the New Jersey State Legislature is doing--excellent, good, only fair or poor? [Q.3]

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(800)</b>
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	2	13	45	29	10	99	(240)
--Independent	--	17	52	23	8	100	(344)
--Republican	1	17	56	15	11	100	(199)
<b>PAST SURVEYS</b>							
April, 1992	--	19	50	23	8	100	(800)
September, 1991	2	20	46	17	15	100	(800)
June, 1991	2	23	45	20	9	99	(800)
July, 1990	4	28	42	16	11	101	(800)
March, 1990	2	31	45	13	9	100	(800)

"How good a job are the representatives from your district in the State Senate and Assembly doing--excellent, good, only fair or poor?" [Q.4]

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(800)</b>
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	7	29	41	12	11	100	(240)
--Independent	4	29	38	18	12	101	(344)
--Republican	2	40	36	9	14	101	(199)
<b><u>PAST SURVEYS</u></b>							
September, 1991	5	36	31	13	15	100	(800)
June, 1991	4	36	35	15	10	100	(800)
July, 1990	8	36	29	12	15	100	(800)
October, 1987	8	43	31	7	11	100	(1,000)

"Which party controls the New Jersey State Legislature--the Republicans or the Democrats?" [Q.5]

	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(800)</b>
<b><u>PAST SURVEYS</u></b>					
October, 1991	21	44	35	100	(800)

"How would you rate the job George Bush is doing as President--excellent, good, only fair, or poor? [Q.6]

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(800)</b>
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	2	11	21	66	--	100	(240)
--Independent	2	26	37	32	2	99	(344)
--Republican	10	51	33	6	--	100	(199)
<b><u>PAST SURVEYS</u></b>							
April, 1992	8	28	34	30	1	101	(800)
January, 1992	5	32	38	22	2	99	(800)
October, 1991	15	41	31	11	2	100	(800)
June, 1991	24	45	21	9	1	100	(800)
February, 1991	31	40	20	8	1	100	(800)

"How would you rate the job Dan Quayle is doing as Vice-President--excellent, good, only fair, or poor? [Q.8]

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(800)</b>
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	2	10	28	59	2	101	(240)
--Independent	4	22	31	35	7	99	(344)
--Republican	10	35	39	11	5	100	(199)
<b>PAST SURVEYS</b>							
October, 1991	4	25	32	21	19	101	(800)
June, 1991	6	29	36	17	13	101	(800)

"And, how would you rate the job Congress has done during the past year--excellent, good, only fair, or poor?" [Q.9]

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(800)</b>
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	2	19	50	27	2	100	(240)
--Independent	--	14	39	42	5	100	(344)
--Republican	2	8	42	44	4	100	(199)

"How would you rate the job the representative to Congress from your district is doing--excellent, good, only fair, or poor?" [Q.10]

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>(800)</b>
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	6	34	39	11	11	101	(240)
--Independent	2	28	42	11	17	100	(344)
--Republican	4	28	40	14	15	101	(199)

"There will be an election for the U.S. House of Representatives in your district in November. If you were voting today, would you vote for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?" [Q.46]

	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>						
--Registered Voters	<b>44%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(663)</b>
<i>Party ID</i>						
--Democrat	81	4	--	14	99	(202)
--Independent	37	26	1	36	100	(278)
--Republican	6	78	1	15	100	(172)
<i>Presidential Vote Choice</i>						
--Clinton	70	8	--	21	99	(340)
--Bush	13	62	1	24	100	(267)
<b>PAST SURVEYS</b>						
September/October, 1990	39	35	--	25	99	(613)
October, 1988	39	34	--	27	100	(623)

"Do you know which party controls Congress? (IF YES, PROBE: Which one?)" [Q.47]

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>					
--Registered Voters	<b>64%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>(663)</b>
<i>Party ID</i>					
--Democrat	56	14	30	100	(202)
--Independent	64	12	24	100	(278)
--Republican	75	8	17	100	(172)

"Which party would you rather see in control of the Congress--the Democrats or the Republicans?" [Q.48]

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>						
--Registered Voters	<b>45%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>(663)</b>
<i>Party ID</i>						
--Democrat	87	3	5	5	100	(202)
--Independent	36	34	10	19	99	(278)
--Republican	4	81	6	9	100	(172)
<i>Presidential Vote Choice</i>						
--Clinton	77	7	4	12	100	(340)
--Bush	9	72	8	11	100	(267)

"Some say that the country's current economic problems are mainly the result of the performance of Republican president George Bush. Others claim that the country's economic problems are mainly the result of the performance of



the Democratically controlled Congress. Who do you feel is most responsible for the country's economic problems, President Bush, the Democratic Congress, or both?" [Q.50]

	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Congress</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Neither/ Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>						
--Registered Voters	22%	27%	43%	7%	99%	(663)
<i>Party ID</i>						
--Democrat	45	11	37	7	100	(202)
--Independent	16	26	50	9	101	(278)
--Republican	2	54	38	5	99	(172)
<i>Presidential Vote Choice</i>						
--Clinton	39	8	47	7	101	(340)
--Bush	5	54	36	6	101	(267)

"Which of these two statements best describes your opinion: It's better to have a President and a majority of Congress from the same political party so they can work together and get things done; *OR*, It's better to have a President and a majority of Congress from different political parties so they can watch over each other and represent different points of view." [Q.51]

	<u>Same Party</u>	<u>Different Parties</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>					
--Registered Voters	55%	39%	6%	100%	(663)
<i>Party ID</i>					
--Democrat	47	50	3	100	(202)
--Independent	56	36	9	101	(278)
--Republican	65	28	7	100	(172)
<i>Presidential Vote Choice</i>					
--Clinton	50	47	4	101	(340)
--Bush	66	27	7	100	(267)

"If the election for President were held today and you had to choose between Bill Clinton, the Democrat; and George Bush, the Republican; who would you vote for? (IF RESPONDENT SAYS "OTHER," PROBE: `But, if you had to choose only between Clinton and Bush who would you vote for?)" [Q.18]

	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Won't Vote</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>September, 1992</b>						
--Registered Voters	52%	39%	7%	2%	100%	(663)

"Different people are concerned with different issues. What do you feel if the most important problem facing the country that the next President will have to solve? DO NOT READ OPTIONS. IF MORE THAN ONE GIVEN, PROBE: Which do you think is most important?" [Q.30]

	<b>September, 1992</b> <b><u>Total</u></b>
Economic Issues	73%
Health Care	5
Social Services (welfare, child care, poor, handicapped)	4
Drug/Alcohol Abuse	2
Education/Schools	2
Foreign Policy Issues	2
Abortion	1
Environment	1
Other/Don't Know/None	<u>11</u>
TOTAL	101%
	(n=663)