

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, February 27, 1993. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "The Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll."

NEW JERSEYANS MORE OPTIMISTIC; RATINGS OF STATE OFFICIALS IMPROVE; PREVIEW OF THE 1993 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

New Jerseyans' are more optimistic about their state — close to half now feel that New Jersey is "going in the right direction." This is a 15 percentage point increase from April 1992. In addition, the latest *Star Ledger*/Eagleton Poll finds the positive job performance ratings of elected state officials have increased. The Governor's positive ratings increased 7 percentage points to 36 percent and the legislature increased 11 percentage points to a 28 percent positive rating.

The first job performance rating for Bill Clinton shows that 44 percent of New Jerseyans give positive ratings to the President.

The positive job performance ratings for New Jersey's two U. S. Senators have also improved. Senator Bill Bradley receives "excellent" or "good" ratings from 56 percent of the states' residents which is a 6 percentage point increase since April 1992, and Senator Frank Lautenberg has a 42 percent positive rating which is a 3 percentage point increase.

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ATTENTION RADIO STATIONS:

Audio is available after 5:00 P.M. on Saturday, February 27, 1993, from (908)932-3605 (Rutgers Feature Phone).

The telephone survey, conducted with 801 New Jerseyans from February 16 to February 24, 1993, also finds that pocketbook issues such as jobs (17%), taxes (15%), and the economy (14%) are the topics that residents would like the candidates to discuss in the 1993 Gubernatorial campaign. At this time, half of the state's residents do not think Governor Florio deserves to be re-elected, while about 4-in-10 say he merits a second term.

OVERALL CLIMATE IN NEW JERSEY

For the first time since the fall of 1990 when the *Star Ledger*/Eagleton Poll began asking about the direction the state is moving in, more New Jerseyans say things are "going in the right direction" (48%) than "on the wrong track" (45%).

This is a 15 point improvement from April 1992 when 33 percent felt the state was going in the right direction and 60 percent said things in New Jersey "have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track."

"The mood in New Jersey is more upbeat," commented Janice Ballou, Poll Director. "The major change is among the state's Democrats which suggests that their victory in the Presidential election increased their optimism about government and elected officials."

GUBERNATORIAL JOB PERFORMANCE RATINGS

Governor Jim Florio receives positive job performance ratings of "excellent" (6%) or "good" (30%) from 36 percent of New Jersey residents, while 60 percent give him negative ratings of "only fair" (41%) or "poor" (19%). His positive ratings have increased 7 points from September 1992 when 29 percent gave him positive evaluations.

More Democrats (52%) than independents (31%) or Republicans (20%) give the Governor positive job performance ratings. The percentage of Democrats rating the Governor "excellent" or

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"good" increased 9 points from 43 percent, and independents rating the Governor positively increased 6 points from 25 percent in September 1992. The Republicans' positive evaluations of the Governor have remained about the same.

LEGISLATIVE JOB PERFORMANCE RATING

The New Jersey State Legislature has a 28 percent positive rating. One percent gives the legislature a rating of "excellent" and 27 percent say it is "good." Half (51%) of the state's residents feel the legislature is doing an "only fair" job, 13 percent give a "poor" evaluation, and 8 percent do not give a rating. This is an 11 point increase from September 1992 when the legislature's positive rating was 17 percent, and 51 percent said "only fair," 23 percent gave a "poor" evaluation, and 9 percent did not offer an opinion.

Democrats' evaluations of the legislature have improved dramatically since September. There has been a 19 point increase in Democrats' positive ratings of the legislature from 15 percent to 34 percent. Republicans' positive ratings increased 9 points (18% to 27%) and independents 4 points (17% to 21%).

PRESIDENTIAL JOB PERFORMANCE RATINGS

New Jerseyans' first assessment of Bill Clinton's job performance shows that 44 percent feel the President is doing an "excellent" (15%) or "good" (29%) job. Forty-four percent also rate his performance as "only fair" (26%) or "poor" (18%). Twelve percent do not know how to rate the President.

There are strong partisan differences in the positive job performance ratings for the President. While 63 percent of the Democrats rate him as "excellent" or "good," 43 percent of the independents and 21 percent of the Republicans give him this evaluation.

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SENATORIAL JOB PERFORMANCE RATINGS

Fifty-six percent of New Jerseyans give Bill Bradley, the senior U. S. Senator from New Jersey, positive job performance ratings of "excellent" (14%) or "good" (42%) compared to 36 percent who rate him "only fair" (26%) or "poor" (10%). Seven percent report that they do not know how to rate Senator Bradley.

Senator Frank Lautenberg receives "excellent" (7%) or "good" (35%) evaluations from 42 percent of New Jerseyans and 42 percent rate him "only fair" (34%) or "poor" (8%). Fifteen percent do not know how to evaluate Senator Lautenberg's job performance.

THE 1993 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION***Issues***

Forty-six percent of New Jerseyans say that if they had the opportunity to ask the candidates for Governor to talk about one issue they would ask about pocketbook concerns such as jobs (17%), taxes (15%), or the economy (14%). They are also interested in having the candidates discuss government services and programs (14%) such as public school education and automobile insurance; health care (12%); and other social issues (12%) such as crime, child care, and issues related to senior citizens.

Florio Re-election

Thinking about the re-election of Governor Jim Florio, at this time half of the state's residents do not think he deserves to be re-elected compared to 38 percent who say he should be re-elected. Eleven percent say it depends (3%), or they don't know (8%) how they feel about the Governor's re-election.

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Among those who voted for Florio in 1989, 61 percent feel he deserves re-election compared to 31 percent who do not think he should be elected for a second term. There are strong partisan differences with more Democrats (56%) saying he deserves to be re-elected, than independents (34%) or Republicans (18%).

Among those who feel Florio deserves to be re-elected, the main reason they give is their impression that he has been an effective Governor (44%). In addition, those who feel Florio should have a second term mention they support the way he has handled issues (22%) in the state such as taxes and unemployment.

New Jerseyans who do not feel the Governor should be re-elected are most likely to mention negative feelings about specific issues (47%). Taxes are mentioned most by those who view Florio's handling of the issues negatively. The personal characteristics of the Governor, such as the feeling that he did not keep his original campaign promises, are mentioned by 20 percent as a reason for the Governor not deserving a second term.

Ballou commented, "New Jerseyans currently have opinions about Jim Florio as a Governor. Although he has not yet officialy entered the 1993 race for Governor, it will be interesting to see if and how impressions change when he becomes an active candidate."

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BACKGROUND MEMO — RELEASE SL/EP42-1 (EP92-1), SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1993

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton* Poll was conducted between February 16 and February 24, 1993, when a random sample of 801 New Jerseyans, 18 years and older, was interviewed by telephone. Figures based on this sample size are subject to a sampling error of about ± 3.5 percent at a 95 percent confidence interval. 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>
February, 1993	6%	30%	41%	19%	4%	100%	(801)
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	9	43	33	9	5	99	(274)
--Independent	5	26	44	21	4	100	(299)
--Republican	2	18	49	31	--	100	(202)
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>							
September, 1992	4	25	43	22	6	100	(800)
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	9	34	39	13	5	100	(240)
--Independent	2	23	45	23	7	100	(344)
--Republican	1	17	45	32	5	100	(199)
August/September, 1992	4	27	38	26	5	100	(800)
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>
February, 1993	1%	27%	51%	13%	8%	100%	(801)
<i><u>Party ID</u></i>							
--Democrat	--	34	48	11	7	100	(274)
--Independent	--	21	55	16	8	100	(299)
--Republican	2	25	53	13	7	100	(202)
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>							
September, 1992	1	16	51	23	9	100	(800)
<i><u>Party ID</u></i>							
--Democrat	2	13	45	29	10	99	(240)
--Independent	--	17	52	23	8	100	(399)
--Republican	1	17	56	15	11	100	(199)
August/September, 1992	1	21	47	21	10	100	(800)
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 would you rate the job Bill Bradley is doing as Senator--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>
February, 1993	14%	42%	26%	10%	7%	99%	(801)
<i><u>Party ID</u></i>							
--Democrat	23	47	21	4	5	100	(274)
--Independent	11	40	28	11	10	100	(299)
--Republican	7	38	29	21	5	100	(202)
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>							
April, 1992	11	39	33	12	5	100	(800)

"How would you rate the job Frank Lautenberg is doing as Senator--excellent, good, only fair or poor?" [Q.5]

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
February, 1993	7%	35%	34%	8%	15%	99%	(801)
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	12	44	27	3	14	100	(274)
--Independent	6	29	39	8	18	100	(299)
--Republican	4	31	34	18	13	100	(202)

PAST SURVEYS

April, 1992	6	33	34	13	13	99	(800)
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"And, how would you rate the job Bill Clinton 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>
February, 1993	15%	29%	26%	18%	12%	100%	(801)
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	25	38	19	5	12	99	(274)
--Independent	14	29	27	16	15	101	(299)
--Republican	4	17	33	40	6	100	(202)

PAST SURVEYS

(FIRST RATING OF OTHER PRESIDENTS)

<u>Bush</u>							
June, 1989	9	44	31	6	10	100	(800)
<u>Reagan</u>							
May, 1981	21	44	22	8	6	101	(503)
<u>Carter</u>							
April, 1977	13	46	23	5	13	100	(1,003)

"There will be an election for governor in New Jersey this year. Thinking back over Jim Florio's first term in office, do you think he deserves to be re-elected for a second term or not?" [Q.7a]

	<u>Yes, Deserves Re-election</u>	<u>No, Does Not Deserve Re-election</u>	<u>Depends</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
February, 1993	38%	51%	3%	8%	100%	(801)
<i><u>Voter Registration Status</u></i>						
--Registered Voters	40	52	2	6	100	(687)
--Not Registered	29	49	5	17	100	(114)
<i><u>Party ID</u></i>						
--Democrat	56	33	2	8	99	(274)
--Independent	34	55	4	7	100	(299)
--Republican	18	75	2	5	100	(202)
<i><u>Past Vote</u></i>						
--Florio	61	31	3	5	100	(339)
--Courter	13	83	2	2	100	(207)

PAST SURVEYS

September, 1992

"George Bush deserves re-election"

--Registered Voters	36	57	7	--	100	(669)
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"What would you say is the main reason Governor Florio (deserves/does not deserve) to be re-elected?" [Q.7b]

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Deserves</u>	<u>Not Deserve</u>
Personal characteristics (negative)	12%	--	20%
Personal characteristics (positive)	5	11%	1
Governing technique	3	2	3
Governing effectiveness (negative)	6	--	10
Governing effectiveness (positive)	19	44	--
Issues (positive)	10	22	2
Issues (unspecific)	9	7	11
Issues (negative)	27 *	--	47
Other	3	6	2
No reason	1	1	1
Don't know	4	6	3
Total	99%	99%	100%
(n)	(714)	(302)	(412)

*Includes 16 percent who noted negative opinions about taxes.

"If you had the opportunity to ask the candidates for Governor to talk about one issue you feel is important for the voters to know about, what would that issue be?" [Q.8]

	<u>Total</u>
Jobs	17%
Taxes	15
Economy	14
Government services and programs	14 *
Social issues	12
Health care	12
Environment	3
Growth and development	1
Transportation	1
Other	2
Don't know	9
TOTAL	100%
(n)	(717)

*Included in this are 5 percent who mentioned education and 5 percent who named automobile insurance.

"Generally speaking, would you say things in New Jersey are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?" [Q.9]

	<u>Right Direction</u>	<u>Wrong Track</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
February, 1993	48%	45%	7%	100%	(801)
<i>Party ID</i>					
--Democrat	61	34	5	100	(274)
--Independent	42	47	10	99	(299)
--Republican	37	59	4	100	(202)
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>					
April, 1992	33	60	7	100	(799)
<i>Party ID</i>					
--Democrat	33	60	7	100	(219)
--Independent	35	60	5	100	(314)
--Republican	32	61	7	100	(238)
January, 1992	29	62	10	101	(800)
September, 1991	32	63	5	100	(800)
June, 1991	37	55	8	100	(800)
September/October, 1990	19	74	7	100	(800)