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

ALL OF THE PERCENTAGES IN THIS RELEASE ARE BASED ON "LIKELY VOTERS" — NEW JERSEY RESIDENTS WHO REPORT THEY ARE CURRENTLY REGISTERED TO VOTE AND SAY THAT THEY ARE PROBABLY OR DEFINITELY GOING TO VOTE.

FLORIO LEADS WHITMAN; VOTER INTEREST DECLINES

Against a backdrop of declining interest in the election, Jim Florio receives support from 47 percent of likely New Jersey voters compared to 38 percent for Christine Todd Whitman. Fifteen percent of the likely voters say that they are undecided about who they will vote for.

The latest *Star Ledger*/Eagleton Poll indicates that being the front runner now may not insure a victory in November. Among the voters who are committed to their choice for Governor, the race is even with 26 percent selecting Mrs. Whitman and 26 percent saying they will vote for Governor Florio. This means 48 percent of the voters are less committed or are undecided about whom to vote for.

In addition, among those voters who are the most interested in the election, and therefore more likely to actually cast a vote on Election Day, the election is a statistical dead heat with 42 percent selecting Whitman and 46 percent Florio.

ATTENTION RADIO STATIONS:
Audio is available after 8:00 A.M. on Monday, September 20, 1993, from (908) 932-3605 (Rutgers Feature Phone).

The poll of 591 likely voters, New Jerseyans who are registered to vote and say they will definitely or probably vote on Election Day, conducted by telephone between September 10 and 15, also shows that since June there has been a 9 percentage point decline — from 64 to 55 percent — in voters who have a lot of interest in the election.

Janice Ballou, Director of the Poll, noted, "With only half of the voters committed to a candidate there are plenty of opportunities for both candidates. These uncommitted voters are critical to the candidate who wants to win this election. They are the group that is most likely to be influenced by the October debates and the candidates' advertisements."

THE RACE FOR GOVERNOR

Right now neither candidate has a majority of the votes that is needed to win the election. Forty-seven percent of likely voters choose Jim Florio compared to 38 percent who pick Christine Todd Whitman and 15 percent are undecided. However, there are indications that New Jersey voters are becoming less rather than more certain about their selection for Governor. Overall the percentage of undecided voters increased 6 percentage points from 9 percent in June, and this shift has benefitted Florio. While Whitman's support declined 5 percentage points, the Governor's support has remained the same as it was in June.

The major shift in voter preference is among independent voters. In June independent voters were more likely to show support for Whitman (46%) than Florio (41%) with 13 percent undecided. While the percent of independents supporting Florio has stayed about the same (45%), the percent selecting Whitman declined to 35 percent, and those who are undecided increased to 20 percent.

Partisan support for Whitman has stayed about the same as in June with 73 percent of the Republicans selecting their party's candidate, 19 percent choosing Florio and 8 percent are undecided. In June 76 percent were for Whitman, 17 percent for Florio, and 7 percent undecided.

Florio's partisan support has declined from 79 percent in June to 73 percent. This is primarily because Democrats who report that they are undecided have increased from 7 to 13 percent. Fourteen percent of the Democrats say they will vote for Whitman which is unchanged from June.

Looking at the commitment the voters have for their candidates, the Whitman voters are more loyal than the Florio supporters. Among those choosing Whitman, 68 percent say they are sure about their choice while 32 percent might change their mind. In comparison, 55 percent of Florio supporters

are sure about their selection and 45 percent report they might change their mind.This results in 26 percent of the voters saying they are committed to Whitman and 12 percent who support her, but are not as committed. A similar 26 percent of the voters also say they are committed to Florio, and 21 percent support him, but are not as committed.

In addition, this current snapshot of the voters' choice for governor suggests that Whitman may have the potential to win more voters than Florio. While 29 percent of the Whitman and undecided voters say that they might possibly vote for Florio, 49 percent of undecided and Florio supporters would consider voting for Whitman.

Among those who have a lot of interest in the election, Florio (46%) and Whitman (42%) are in a statistical dead heat. This is also true among male voters — 42 percent say they will vote for Whitman and 44 percent for Florio. However, female voters are showing a preference for Florio by a margin of 51 to 32 percent. Voters who are 65 or over are more likely to support Florio (64%) than Whitman (27%). The race is closer among 18-29 year olds (46% Whitman; 45% Florio), 30 to 49 year olds (42% Whitman; 47% Florio), and those 50-64 years old (48% Whitman; 47 percent Florio). The race is also close in the New Jersey suburbs where Whitman has 42 percent to Florio's 43 percent, and in Central New Jersey where Whitman has 44 percent compared to Florio's 41 percent.

Looking at Florio as the incumbent, 44 percent of the voters say he deserves a second term as Governor compared to 45 percent who do not think he should be re-elected. This is about the same as in June. From a partisan perspective, 68 percent of the Democrats say he deserves re-election, compared to 41 percent of the independents, and 20 percent of the Republicans.

CLIMATE FOR THE ELECTION

Voter apathy may have an influence on choosing who will be the next Governor. Since June there has been a 9 percentage point decline in likely voters who are interested in this election. In June 64 percent said they had a lot of interest in the upcoming election compared to 55 percent who feel that way now.

"Since interest is one way to assess the potential for actually voting on November 2, this reduction in interest is very important to the dynamics of the campaign," said Ballou. "It suggests that

some voters may decide to `sit this one out.' In addition, among voters who are more interested in the election and more likely to actually vote, Whitman and Florio are currently in a statistical dead heat."

Also contributing to the dynamics of the election is the voters' assessments of the candidates. While just 7 percent of the voters are very satisfied with their choice of candidates for Governor, 51 percent are somewhat satisfied, 28 percent somewhat dissatisfied, and 9 percent are very dissatisfied.

Also, 22 percent of the voters say they are very (4%) or somewhat (18%) likely to vote for one of the independent candidates who will be running for governor. Independent voters (26%) are more likely than Democrats (19%) or Republicans (15%) to consider an independent candidate for governor.

With an incumbent Governor in the race, the record of the current administration can become a campaign issue. Among likely voters, half (50%) feel that things in New Jersey have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track while 42 percent say things are going in the right direction. Voters who favor Whitman (80%) are more likely than Florio supporters (25%) to say thing are off on the wrong track. Also, Republicans (71%) are more likely than independents (50%) or Democrats (33%) to feel things are off on the wrong track.

The percentage who feel things are on the wrong track is about the same as in June for the Democrats, however, this is a decline of 7 percentage points for independents, and 3 percentage points for Republicans.

The Governor's positive job performance rating of excellent (7%) and good (34%) among likely voters is 41 percent which is somewhat higher than the 38 percent in June. The main change has been an increase in the excellent and good evaluations given by independents (from 33% to 36%) and Republicans (14% to 26%).

KNOWLEDGE AND IMPRESSIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

More voters can identify the incumbent Governor, Jim Florio, as the Democratic candidate (80%) than know Christine Todd Whitman is the Republican candidate (57%). Republicans (70%) are more likely than independents (58%) or Democrats (47%) to be able to name her as a candidate. In

comparison, 76 percent of Democrats, 82 percent of independents and 84 percent of Republicans can name Florio.

Fifty-one percent of the voters now say they know a lot (9%) or some (42%) about Whitman which is an 8 percentage point increase from June. In comparison, 86 percent of the voters know a lot (41%) or some (45%) about Florio which is about the same as in June.

Overall, 45 percent of likely voters have a very (15%) or somewhat (30%) favorable overall impression of Florio, 36 percent have a very (18%) or somewhat (18%) unfavorable impression, and 18 percent say they do not have an impression of Florio. In comparison, at this time, more voters (48%) either don't know Whitman (5%) or don't have an impression of her (43%) than can assess if they have a favorable (30%) or unfavorable (23%) general impression. This is about the same as it was in June.

THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

In addition to the election for governor, all of the 120 seats in the New Jersey Legislature will be contested in November. Right now, 35 percent of the likely voters say they will select a Democrat for the State Senate, 35 percent will vote for a Republican, and 30 percent have not yet decided who they will vote for. In the election for the State Assembly, the percentages are about the same with 36 percent saying they will vote for a Democrat, 34 percent for a Republican, one percent for some other candidate and 29 percent who don't yet know who they will vote for.

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BACKGROUND MEMO — RELEASE SL/EP44-1 (EP94-1), SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1993

The latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton Poll was conducted between September 10 and 15, 1993, when a random sample of 801 New Jerseyans, 18 years and older, was interviewed by telephone. This release is based on a subgroup of 591 likely voters. These are people who are registered to vote and say they will probably or definitely vote on Election Day. Figures based on this sample size are subject to a sampling error of about ±4 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]

	Excellent	Good	Only Fair	Poor	Don't Know	Total	(n)
September, 1993							
--Likely Voters	**7%**	**34%**	**38%**	**19%**	**2%**	**100%**	**(591)**
Party ID							
--Democrat	16	45	31	7	2	101	(199)
--Independent	4	32	43	19	2	100	(224)
--Republican	3	23	40	34	1	100	(146)
PAST SURVEYS							
June, 1993							
--Likely Voters	9	29	36	24	2	100	(633)
Party ID							
--Democrat	17	45	29	7	2	100	(213)
--Independent	7	26	38	28	1	100	(235)
--Republican	--	14	44	40	3	101	(172)

"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.3]

	Right Direction	Wrong Track	Don't Know	Total	(n)
September, 1993					
--Likely Voters	**42%**	**50%**	**9%**	**101%**	**(591)**
Party ID					
--Democrat	58	33	10	101	(199)
--Independent	41	50	9	100	(224)
--Republican	25	71	4	100	(146)
Vote Choice					
--Florio	65	25	10	100	(276)
--Undecided	30	53	17	100	(89)
--Whitman	17	80	3	100	(219)
PAST SURVEYS					
June, 1993					
--Likely Voters	38	53	8	99	(633)
Party ID					
--Democrat	58	32	10	100	(213)
--Independent	36	57	7	100	(235)
--Republican	19	74	7	100	(172)

"How much interest do you have in this election--a lot, some, a little, or none at all?" [Q.6]

	A Lot	Some	A Little	None At All	Don't Know	Total	(n)
September, 1993							
--Likely Voters	**55%**	**33%**	**10%**	**2%**	**--**	**100%**	**(591)**
Party ID							
--Democrat	50	36	11	2	1%	100	(199)
--Independent	56	31	10	3	--	101	(224)
--Republican	62	30	8	--	--	100	(146)
Vote Choice							
--Florio	53	35	9	2	1	100	(276)
--Undecided	46	35	16	3	--	100	(89)
--Whitman	61	30	8	1	--	100	(219)
PAST SURVEYS							
June, 1993							
--Likely Voters	64	27	7	2	1	101	(633)
Party ID							
--Democrat	60	28	9	3	--	100	(213)
--Independent	63	29	7	1	--	100	(235)
--Republican	69	23	5	2	2	101	(172)
Vote Choice							
--Florio	60	31	6	2	--	99	(295)
--Undecided	50	29	17	2	2	100	(58)
--Whitman	71	22	5	1	1	100	(264)
September, 1989							
--Likely Voters	44	37	14	4	1	100	(707)

"Do you know who the (Republican/Democratic) candidate for Governor is?" [Q.7, Q.11] ASKED OF THOSE WHO DID NOT NAME (WHITMAN/FLORIO): "The (Republican/Democratic) candidate is Christine Todd Whitman/Jim Florio)--have you ever heard of (her/him) before?" [Q.8, Q.12]

	Names	Recognizes	Doesn't Recognize	Total	(n)
SEPTEMBER, 1993					
WHITMAN--Likely Voters	**57%**	**38%**	**5%**	**100%**	**(588)**
Party ID					
--Democrat	47	47	6	100	(198)
--Independent	58	37	5	100	(224)
--Republican	70	28	2	100	(145)
FLORIO--Likely Voters	**80**	**20**	**1**	**101**	**(590)**
Party ID					
--Democrat	76	23	2	101	(199)
--Independent	82	18	--	100	(224)
--Republican	84	16	--	100	(146)

"How much do you think you know about (Christine Todd Whitman/Jim Florio)--a lot, some or just a little?" [Q.9, Q.13]

	A Lot	Some	A Little	Does Not Know Candidate	Don't Know	Total	(n)
WHITMAN--Likely Voters							
September, 1993	**9%**	**42%**	**44%**	**5%**	**--**	**100%**	**(590)**
June, 1993	7	36	50	6	1%	100	(633)
FLORIO--Likely Voters							
September, 1993	**41**	**45**	**13**	**1**	**1**	**100**	**(590)**
June, 1993	35	49	15	--	1	100	(633)

"Is your general impression of (Christine Todd Whitman/Jim Florio) favorable or unfavorable, or don't you really have an opinion about (her/him)? Is that very (favorable/unfavorable) or somewhat (favorable/unfavorable)?" [Q.10, Q.14]

	Very Favorable	Somewhat Favorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Doesn't Know Candidate	No Opinion/ Don't Know	Total	(n)
SEPTEMBER, 1993								
WHITMAN--Likely Voters	**8%**	**22%**	**16%**	**7%**	**5%**	**43%**	**100%**	**(590)**
Party ID								
--Democrat	2	13	20	13	6	47	101	(199)
--Independent	6	22	16	4	5	46	99	(224)
--Republican	19	33	10	2	2	34	100	(146)
FLORIO--Likely Voters	**15**	**30**	**18**	**18**	**1**	**18**	**100**	**(590)**
Party ID								
--Democrat	28	39	12	4	2	16	101	(199)
--Independent	13	29	19	19	--	20	100	(224)
--Republican	4	21	25	34	--	16	100	(146)
PAST SURVEYS								
JUNE, 1993								
WHITMAN--Likely Voters	10	21	11	7	6	46	101	(633)
FLORIO--Likely Voters	18	27	19	19	--	17	100	(633)

"Suppose the election for Governor was held today and you had to choose right now--would you vote for Christine Todd Whitman, the Republican, or Jim Florio, the Democrat?" [Q.15]

	Whitman	Undecided	Florio	Total	(n)
September, 1993					
--Likely Voters	**38%**	**15%**	**47%**	**100%**	**(584)**
Party ID					
--Democrat	14	13	73	100	(198)
--Independent	35	20	45	100	(221)
--Republican	73	8	19	100	(145)
Gender					
--Male	42	14	44	100	(300)
--Female	32	17	51	100	(284)
Age					
--18 - 29	46	9	45	100	(87)
--30 - 49	42	11	47	100	(226)
--50 - 64	48	5	47	100	(133)
--65 or over	27	9	64	100	(131)
Interest in the election					
--A lot	42	13	46	101	(322)
--Some	34	16	50	100	(193)
--A little/none	28	25	46	99	(67)
Type of Place					
--Center city	16	27	58	101	(45)
--City and old suburbs	31	10	59	100	(121)
--New suburbs	42	16	43	101	(370)
--Rural	42	15	44	101	(48)
Region					
--North	35	14	51	100	(271)
--Central	44	15	41	100	(153)
--South	36	18	47	101	(160)
Gender and Party					
--Male Democrat	17	12	71	100	(77)
--Female Democrat	12	14	74	100	(121)
--Male independent	35	21	44	100	(129)
--Female independent	35	20	46	101	(92)
--Male Republican	74	6	20	100	(88)
--Female Republican	72	11	18	101	(57)
PAST SURVEYS					
June, 1993					
--Likely Voters	43	9	48	100	(617)
Party ID					
--Democrat	14	7	79	100	(209)
--Independent	46	13	41	99	(229)
--Republican	76	7	17	100	(168)
Gender					
--Male	43	8	49	100	(303)
--Female	43	11	46	100	(314)

Those choosing either Whitman or Florio were asked if they were "very sure about voting for her/him, or might you change you mind before election day?" [Q.17] Of the Whitman voters 68 percent said they were sure and 32 percent said they might change. Fifty-five percent of Florio voters were firm while 45 percent said they might switch.

Undecided voters were asked "at this moment do you lean more towards Whitman, or more towards Florio?" Twenty-one percent leaned to Whitman, 21 percent to Florio and the remainder did not state a preference. [Q.16]

With the leaners allocated, and with firmness of preference taken into account, voters displayed the following pattern:

	WHITMAN				FLORIO					
	Firm	Soft	Lean	Undecided	Lean	Soft	Firm	Other	Total	(n)
September, 1993										
--Likely Voters	**26%***	**12%**	**3%**	**9%**	**3%**	**21%**	**26%**	**1%**	**101%**	**(590)**
Party ID										
--Democrat	7	8	3	7	4	24	49	1	103**	(199)
--Independent	19	15	4	12	4	24	20	1	99	(224)
--Republican	60	12	2	3	2	14	5	1	100	(146)
PAST SURVEYS										
June, 1993										
--Likely Voters	28	14	1	5	3	19	29	2	101	(627)
Party ID										
--Democrat	10	8	1	5	1	21	55	--	101	(218)
--Independent	25	22	1	7	5	17	23	--	100	(238)
--Republican	56	18	3	3	1	13	6	--	100	(174)

"Is there any chance you might vote for (Christine Todd Whitman/Jim Florio) on election day or have you decided that you will definitely not vote for (her/him) no matter what else happens in the campaign?" [Q.18a/Q.18b]

	Is Chance Would Vote For	Definitely Will Not Vote For	Don't Know	Total	(n)
SEPTEMBER, 1993					
WHITMAN Voters/Might vote for FLORIO					
--Likely Voters	**29%**	**54%**	**17%**	**100%**	**(291)**
FLORIO Voters/Might vote for WHITMAN					
--Likely Voters	**49**	**37**	**13**	**99**	**(349)**
PAST SURVEYS					
JUNE, 1993					
WHITMAN Voters/Might vote for FLORIO					
--Likely Voters	32	58	10	100	(310)
FLORIO Voters/Might vote for WHITMAN					
--Likely Voters	49	40	11	100	(350)

*Figure has been adjusted for rounding purposes.
**Figure calculates to 103 due to rounding.

"Overall, how satisfied are you with the current field of candidates running for governor this year--very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?" [Q.19]

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know	Total	(n)
September, 1993	**7%**	**51%**	**28%**	**9%**	**5%**	**100%**	**(589)**

"Do you think Jim Florio deserves to be re-elected to a second term as governor, or not?" [Q.20]

	Yes, Deserves Re-election	No, Does Not Deserve Re-election	Don't Know/ Depends	Total	(n)
September, 1993					
Voter Registration Status					
--Likely Voters	44%	45%	11%	100%	(589)
Party ID					
--Democrat	68	22	10	100	(198)
--Independent	41	47	12	100	(224)
--Republican	20	73	8	101	(146)
Vote Choice					
--Whitman	6	91	3	100	(219)
--Undecided	22	40	37	99	(89)
--Florio	82	9	9	100	(275)
PAST SURVEYS					
June, 1993					
--Likely Voters	43	47	10	100	(633)
Party ID					
--Democrat	73	20	7	100	(213)
--Independent	38	51	11	100	(235)
--Republican	14	76	10	100	(172)
*February, 1993 Total	38	51	11	100	(801)
--Registered Voters	40	52	8	100	(687)

"There are independent candidates running for governor who will also be on the ballot. How likely is it you might vote for one of these candidates--very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?" [Q.21]

	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Very Likely	Not At All Likely	Don't Know	Total	(n)
September, 1993	**4%**	**18%**	**26%**	**46%**	**6%**	**100%**	**(590)**
Party ID							
--Democrat	4	15	27	51	4	101	(199)
--Independent	4	22	27	40	7	100	(224)
--Republican	--	15	26	53	5	99	(146)

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*Wording in February was: "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]

"In November there will be an election for the representatives from your district in the State Senate and Assembly. If the election were held today, would you vote for the Democratic or Republican candidate for the State Senate from your district?" [Q.22]

	Democrat	Republican	Other/ Don't Know	Total	(n)
September, 1993	**35%**	**35%**	**30%**	**100%**	**(590)**
Party ID					
--Democrat	74	7	19	100	(199)
--Independent	24	31	45	100	(224)
--Republican	1	84	15	100	(146)
PAST SURVEYS					
October, 1991					
--Likely Voters	35	44	21	100	(538)

"And, if the election were held today, would you vote for the Democratic or Republican candidates for State Assembly?" [Q.23]

	Democrat	Republican	Other	Don't Know	Total	(n)
September, 1993	**36%**	**34%**	**1%**	**29%**	**100%**	**(590)**
Party ID						
--Democrat	75	7	1	18	101	(199)
--Independent	25	30	--	45	100	(224)
--Republican	4	81	1	14	100	(146)
PAST SURVEYS						
October, 1991						
--Likely Voters	34	40	5	22	101	(539)

OTHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION (For comparative purposes, the following results are for all New Jersey adults.)

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

	Excellent	Good	Only Fair	Poor	Don't Know	Total	(n)
For all New Jersey adults							
September, 1993	**5%**	**32%**	**40%**	**20%**	**4%**	**101%**	**(801)**
June, 1993	8	28	36	23	5	100	(801)
February, 1993	6	30	41	19	4	100	(801)
September, 1992	4	25	43	22	6	100	(800)
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)

"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.3]

	Right Direction	Wrong Track	Don't Know	Total	(n)
September, 1993	**40%**	**51%**	**8%**	**99%**	**(801)**
April, 1993	40	52	8	100	(801)
February, 1993	48	45	7	100	(801)
April, 1992	33	60	7	100	(799)
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)