

The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll

REVISED 10/31/93

EMBARGOED – NOT FOR RELEASE UNTIL: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1993

RELEASE: SL/EP 46-1 (EP 96-1)

CONTACT: JANICE BALLOU
OR KEN DAUTRICH

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*."

FLORIO MAINTAINS LEAD

With just a few days left before the election, voters favor the incumbent Jim Florio over the challenger Christine Todd Whitman by a margin of 48 to 39 percent among likely voters. However, there are signs that many New Jerseyans are still in the process of selecting a candidate to vote for. Since a poll taken in mid-October Florio's support has declined 4 percentage points and the percentage of undecided voters has increased from 8 to 13 percent. In addition, when different types of voters describe who they are going to vote for, the margin between the candidates changes.

Looking at the vote choice among those voters who have the highest probability of voting and allocating voters who initially say they are undecided -- Florio has 53 percent, Whitman has 45 percent, and the independent candidates receive 2 percent of the vote.

ATTENTION RADIO STATIONS:

Audio is available after 8:00 A.M. on Monday, November 1, 1993, from (908) 932-3605 (Rutgers Feature Phone).

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll* was conducted by telephone with a random sample of 801 likely voters between October 27 and 30. The poll also shows that even at this late date 72 percent of the voters are firm in their choice for Governor while 27 percent have not firmed up their choice and 2 percent say they are going to vote for one of the seventeen independent candidates.

Poll Director Janice Ballou commented, "What we have is a snapshot of the electorate with some of the voters still fuzzy about how they will actually vote on election day. Many New Jersey voters--as we have seen in past elections--will be making their decisions about who to vote for in the final days of the campaign. At this time women voters and New Jerseyans who view themselves as independents are the most likely to be uncertain or to switch candidates. So these are the voters the candidates need to appeal to in the final days before the election.

VOTE CHOICE

Among likely voters, Governor Jim Florio currently gets 48 percent of the votes compared to 39 percent who prefer Christine Todd Whitman, and 13 percent who are undecided. While the support for Whitman remains the same as in a mid-October poll, those who say they will vote for Florio declined from 52 to 48 percent and undecided voters increased from 8 to 13 percentage points.

The poll also estimated the vote choice of those who have the highest probability of voting in the election assuming turnout is about 56 percent. Among these probable voters 53 percent select Florio, 45 percent choose Whitman, and 2 percent say they will vote for one of the 17 independent candidates.

Among likely voters, Florio and Whitman receive about the same partisan support, with 75 percent of the Democrats supporting Florio and 75 percent of the Republicans choosing Whitman. Florio leads among independent voters with 47 percent compared to 39 percent who pick Whitman and 15 percent who are undecided.

At this time, males are just about as likely to vote for Florio (45%) as Whitman (43%). Women are more likely to say they will vote for Florio (51%) than Whitman (35%). However, women are also somewhat more likely than men to be undecided by a margin of 14 to 11 percent.

Since the mid-October poll, there has been a 10 percentage point decrease in women's support for Florio. The largest change among women voters is a 17 percentage point increase in support for Whitman among Republican women and a 9 percentage point decrease in support for Florio among Democratic women. The Democratic women have not gone to Whitman, they have moved into the group of undecided voters. Since mid-October there has been a 10 percentage point decline in support

for Whitman among independent women voters and a similar increase in the undecided voters in this group.

In almost all age groups, the percentage of undecided voters has also increased with most of this change resulting in a decline in the support for Florio. Whitman leads among 18 to 29 year old voters 45 to 41 percent. The candidates are about even among the 30 to 49 year old age group with Whitman at 46 percent and Florio at 45 percent. Florio is preferred over Whitman in the older age groups. Among those who are 50 to 64 years old his margin is 50 to 34 percent and among those 65 years old or older he leads 56 to 31 percent.

There is only a 2 percentage point difference between the among those who say they have a lot of interest in the election. Florio has the support of 47 percent of this group and Whitman has 45 percent.

Among those who have selected a candidate to vote for, the majority (51%) percent say that they are voting more for one candidate than against the other. Sixty-four percent of the Florio supporters say that they are voting for him, and 31 percent say they are voting against Whitman. Support for Whitman is the opposite with 59 percent saying their vote for her is more against Florio and 36 percent say they are voting for her.

Although Jim Florio currently leads his opponent Christine Todd Whitman as the voter's choice for Governor, just 45 percent say that he deserves to be re-elected. However, 7 percent say that on Election Day they will vote for him even though they do not think he deserves re-election. In addition, 35 percent will vote for Whitman, 4 percent will vote for an independent candidate, and 9 percent are uncertain about what they will do as an alternative to voting for Florio on Election Day.

THE POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE

Even at this point in the election 13 percent of the voters say they have not decided on a candidate. In addition, 16 percent of the voters who select a candidate say they might change their mind before election day. The percentage of possible switchers is about equal for both candidates. Fifteen percent of the Florio supporters say they might change their minds and 18 percent of those that choose Whitman feel this way.

Also, while 72 percent of the likely voters are firm in their support for either Whitman (32%) or Florio (40%), 27 percent are uncertain about their choice or remain undecided.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

While neither candidate has a majority of voters who hold a favorable impression of them, Florio is favored by more voters than Whitman. Forty-five percent have favorable impressions of Florio, 40 percent unfavorable, and 14 percent do not have an impression of the incumbent. Whitman has a favorable rating from 38 percent of likely voters, 36 percent give her unfavorable ratings and 26 percent do not have an opinion of the Republican challenger.

More likely voters feel that Florio (49%) rather than Whitman (36%) will do a better job of addressing the issue they feel is most important to them. However, when voters consider which candidate will do a better job of improving economic conditions in New Jersey, the plurality (38%) say it does not make a difference who is elected compared to 32 percent who say Florio will do a better job and 30 percent who feel this way about Whitman.

THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTION AND RECALL REFERENDUM

On an overall statewide basis, more likely voters say they will vote for Democrats (41%) than Republicans (37%) in Tuesday's State Senate races with 23 percent undecided. In the legislative races for State Assembly 38 percent say they will vote for Democratic candidates, 40 percent for Republicans, and 22 percent don't know.

There will also be a referendum on the ballot which, if approved, would allow New Jersey citizens to recall their elected officials. Most voters (56%) have not heard about the recall referendum. However, 42 percent say they will vote for it, 12 percent against it, and 44 percent do not know how they will vote. Support for the referendum increases among those who say they know the most about it. Among those who know a lot about the referendum 77 percent will vote for it, and among those who know some about it support is at 63 percent.

BACKGROUND MEMO — RELEASE SL/EP46-1 (EP96-1), SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1993

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton* Poll was conducted between October 27 and 29, 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 601 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 ± 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>
LATE OCTOBER, 1993							
--Likely Voters							
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat							
--Independent							
--Republican							
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>							
October, 1993							
--Likely Voters	5	32	30	31	1	99	(601)
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	10	47	24	17	1	99	(210)
--Independent	3	31	31	35	1	101	(213)
--Republican	2	12	36	48	3	101	(157)
September, 1993							
--Likely Voters	7	34	38	19	2	100	(591)
June, 1993							
--Likely Voters	9	29	36	24	2	100	(633)

"How much interest do you have in this election--a lot, some, a little, or none at all?" [Q.5]

	<u>A</u> <u>Lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A</u> <u>Little</u>	<u>None</u> <u>At All</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
LATE OCTOBER, 1993							
--Likely Voters							
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat							
--Independent							
--Republican							
<i>Vote Choice</i>							
--Florio							
--Undecided							
--Whitman							

PAST SURVEYS

October, 1993							
--Likely Voters	57	28	12	2	--	99	(601)
<i>Party ID</i>							
--Democrat	54	29	15	2	--	100	(210)
--Independent	60	28	10	2	--	100	(213)
--Republican	59	25	12	3	1%	100	(157)
<i>Vote Choice</i>							
--Florio	55	29	13	3	--	100	(300)
--Undecided	47	31	20	2	--	100	(45)
--Whitman	62	26	10	2	--	100	(232)
September, 1993							
--Likely Voters	55	33	10	2	--	100	(591)
June, 1993							
--Likely Voters	64	27	7	2	1	101	(633)

"The Republican/Democratic candidate for Governor is (Christine Todd Whitman/Jim Florio). 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.6, Q.7]

	<u>Very</u> <u>Favorable</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>Favorable</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>Very</u> <u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>Doesn't</u> <u>Know</u> <u>Candidate</u>	<u>No</u> <u>Opinion/</u> <u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

WHITMAN--Likely Voters

Party ID
--Democrat
--Independent

--Republican

FLORIO--Likely VotersParty ID

--Democrat

--Independent

--Republican

PAST SURVEYS

October, 1993

WHITMAN--Likely Voters	12	21	18	18	5	28	102	(600)
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Party ID

--Democrat	5	9	22	25	9	30	100	(210)
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--Independent	11	24	18	15	1	31	100	(212)
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--Republican	23	32	11	11	3	20	100	(157)
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FLORIO--Likely Voters	17	28	17	23	--	16	101	(600)
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Party ID

--Democrat	30	37	9	9	--	17	102	(210)
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--Independent	13	28	19	25	--	15	100	(212)
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--Republican	5	12	27	41	--	15	100	(157)
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September, 1993

WHITMAN--Likely Voters	8	22	16	7	5	43	100	(590)
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FLORIO--Likely Voters	15	30	18	18	1	18	100	(590)
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June, 1993

WHITMAN--Likely Voters	10	21	11	7	6	46	101	(633)
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FLORIO--Likely Voters	18	27	19	19	--	17	100	(633)
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"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.8]

	<u>Whitman</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Florio</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

--Probable Voters

Party ID

--Democrat

--Independent

--Republican

Gender

- Male
- Female

Age

- 18 - 29
- 30 - 49
- 50 - 64
- 65 or over

Interest in the election

- A lot
- Some
- A little/none

Type of Place

- Center city
- City and old suburbs
- New suburbs
- Rural

Region

- North
- Central
- South

Gender and Party

- Male Democrat
- Female Democrat
- Male independent
- Female independent
- Male Republican
- Female Republican

Continued on following page.

[Q.8 continued]

	<u>Whitman</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Florio</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>					
October, 1993					
--Likely Voters	40	8	52	100	(577)
<i>Party ID</i>					
--Democrat	14	6	79	99	(203)
--Independent	46	9	45	100	(204)
--Republican	70	7	23	100	(152)
<i>Gender</i>					
--Male	49	8	43	100	(295)
--Female	31	8	61	100	(282)
<i>Age</i>					
--18 - 29	45	8	47	100	(83)
--30 - 49	43	8	49	100	(229)
--50 - 64	43	5	51	99	(136)
--65 or over	30	9	61	100	(121)
<i>Interest in the election</i>					
--A lot	44	6	50	100	(331)
--Some	37	9	54	100	(161)
--A little/none	32	12	56	100	(84)
<i>Type of Place</i>					
--Center city	20	12	67	99	(49)
--City and old suburbs	38	7	55	100	(111)
--New suburbs	43	8	49	100	(364)
--Rural	45	2	53	100	(53)
<i>Region</i>					
--North	37	9	54	100	(265)
--Central	44	4	52	100	(159)
--South	41	10	49	100	(153)
<i>Gender and Party</i>					
--Male Democrat	18	6	76	100	(78)
--Female Democrat	12	6	82	100	(125)
--Male independent	49	11	40	100	(118)
--Female independent	41	7	52	100	(86)
--Male Republican	76	4	20	100	(92)
--Female Republican	60	12	28	100	(60)
September, 1993					
--Likely Voters	38	15	47	100	(584)
June, 1993					
--Likely Voters	43	9	48	100	(617)

Those choosing either Whitman or Florio were asked if they were "very sure about voting for her/him, or might you change your mind before election day?" [Q.9a] Of the Whitman voters percent said they were sure and percent said they might change. percent of Florio voters were firm while percent said they might switch.

Undecided voters were asked "at this moment do you lean more towards Whitman, or more towards Florio?" Twenty-two percent leaned to Whitman, 22 percent to Florio and the remainder did not state a preference. [Q.10]

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

	<u>WHITMAN</u>			<u>Undecided</u>	<u>FLORIO</u>				<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
	<u>Firm</u>	<u>Soft</u>	<u>Lean</u>		<u>Lean</u>	<u>Soft</u>	<u>Firm</u>	<u>Other</u>		
LATE OCTOBER, 1993										
--Likely Voters										
<i>Party ID</i>										
--Democrat										
--Independent										
--Republican										
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>										
October, 1993										
--Likely Voters	28 *	12	2	4	2	14	38	3	103 **	(592)
<i>Party ID</i>										
--Democrat	8	6	2	3	1	17	60	2	99	(207)
--Independent	29	15	1	5	3	13	31	2	99	(209)
--Republican	55	13	1	5	1	7	15	3	100	(157)
September, 1993										
--Likely Voters	26 *	12	3	9	3	21	26	1	101	(590)
June, 1993										
--Likely Voters	28	14	1	5	3	19	29	2	101	(627)

"When did you decide who you would vote for — in the last few days, in the last couple of weeks, in the last month or two, or did you know all along?" [Q.9b]

	<u>Last Few Days</u>	<u>Last Couple of Weeks</u>	<u>Last Month or Two</u>	<u>Knew All Along</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
LATE OCTOBER, 1993							
--Likely Voters							
<i>Vote Choice</i>							
--Florio							
--Undecided							
--Whitman							

*Figure has been adjusted for rounding purposes.

**Figure calculates to 103 due to rounding.

Would you say you're voting more for (candidate of choice) or more against the other candidate?" [Q.11a]

	<u>More For</u>	<u>More Against</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

Vote Choice

--Florio

--Undecided

--Whitman

"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.12]

	<u>Very Likely</u>	<u>Somewhat Likely</u>	<u>Not Very Likely</u>	<u>Not At All Likely</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

Party ID

--Democrat

--Independent

--Republican

PAST SURVEYS

October, 1993	5	12	24	54	4	99	(601)
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Party ID

--Democrat

--Independent

--Republican

September, 1993	4	18	26	46	6	100	(590)
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"Thinking about the issue you feel is most important that the next Governor will have to handle — which candidate, Florio or Whitman, do you think will do a better job of addressing that issue?" [Q.13]

	<u>Florio</u>	<u>Whitman</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Makes No Difference</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

Vote Choice

--Florio

--Undecided

--Whitman

"Which candidate for Governor do you think would do a better job of improving economic conditions in New Jersey — Jim Florio or Christine Todd Whitman, or don't you think it makes much difference?" [Q.14]

	<u>Florio</u>	<u>Whitman</u>	<u>No Difference</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

Vote Choice

--Florio

--Undecided

--Whitman

"Do you think Jim Florio deserves to be re-elected to a second term as governor, or not?" [Q.24]

	<u>Yes, Deserves Re-election</u>	<u>No, Does Not Deserve Re-election</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Depends</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

Voter Registration Status

--Likely Voters

Party ID

--Democrat

--Independent

--Republican

Vote Choice

--Whitman

--Undecided

--Florio

PAST SURVEYS

October, 1993

Voter Registration Status

--Likely Voters	47	46	7	100	(601)
<u>Party ID</u>					
--Democrat	74	22	4	100	(210)
--Independent	41	51	8	100	(213)
--Republican	20	73	7	100	(157)
<u>Vote Choice</u>					
--Whitman	6	92	2	100	(232)
--Undecided	24	40	36	100	(45)
--Florio	85	11	4	100	(300)

September, 1993

Voter Registration Status

--Likely Voters	44	45	11	100	(589)
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June, 1993

--Likely Voters	43	47	10	100	(633)
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February, 1993 Total*

--Registered Voters	40	52	8	100	(687)
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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]

"Now, pretend that it is Election Day and you are about to pull the lever to vote for Governor, who are you voting for?" [Q.25]

	<u>Florio</u>	<u>Whitman</u>	<u>Names Some Other Candidate</u>	<u>Will Not Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

--Probable Voters

Vote Choice

--Florio

--Undecided

--Whitman

"And, if the election were held today, would you vote for the Democratic or Republican candidates for State Assembly?" [Q.17]

	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>One Democrat/ One Republican</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

Vote Choice

--Florio

--Undecided

--Whitman

"This year on the ballot there is a referendum which will allow for the recall of elected officials. How much have you read or heard about the recall referendum — a lot, some or not much?" [Q.18a]

	<u>A Lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A Little</u>	<u>None At All</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

Vote Choice

--Florio

--Undecided

--Whitman

"And, do you think you will vote for or against this referendum?" [Q.18b]

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Won't Vote</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

AMONG THOSE WHO THINK FLORIO SHOULD NOT BE RE-ELECTED:

"What do you think you will do on Election Day? [Q.15b]

<u>Vote For Christie Whitman</u>	<u>Stay Home And Not Vote</u>	<u>Vote For One Of The Independent Candidate</u>	<u>Vote For Florio</u>	<u>Other/ Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

Vote Choice

--Florio

--Undecided

--Whitman

"In November there will be an election for the representative 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 State Senate from your district?" [Q.16]

<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
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LATE OCTOBER, 1993

--Likely Voters

--Probable Voters

Vote Choice

--Florio

--Undecided

--Whitman