

Contact:

PATRICK MURRAY

732-263-5858 (office)

732-979-6769 (cell)

pdmurray@monmouth.edu

Released:

Thursday, February 10, 2011

Please attribute this information to:
**Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey
Press Media Poll**

For more information:
Monmouth University Polling Institute
West Long Branch, NJ 07764
www.monmouth.edu/polling

CHRIS CHRISTIE'S NATIONAL PROFILE

New Jersey public says it has no impact on his job performance

Over the past few months, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has raised his national profile by giving interviews on network and cable TV, campaigning for Republican candidates in other states, and taking a stand on hot-button social issues. This has sent the pundits scurrying as they read the tea leaves about his political ambitions. Back home in the Garden State, local commentators wonder whether the governor should be spending so much time out of state.

The question remains: Does all this national attention make any difference in how Chris Christie runs the state? According to the *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Press Media Poll*, the answer from the New Jersey public appears to be a resounding “No.”

Two-thirds of state residents have been following the buzz about a potential Christie presidential run, including 26% who have heard a lot about this and 41% who have heard a little. Fully 63% of New Jerseyans say national attention over his presidential aspirations has had no impact on Christie's performance as governor. Just 17% say the national attention has made him less effective in his current job, while 11% say it has actually made him more effective.

“As far as most New Jerseyans are concerned, the talk about Christie's presidential ambitions has been no more than a minor diversion from his duties as governor,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

Speculation about the governor's political future was recently stoked when he took a stand on the national hot-button issue of abortion. In a speech at a Right to Life rally on the State House steps, Christie became the first New Jersey governor to clearly lay out a pro-life position. Few New Jerseyans took notice.

Just 1-in-3 say they heard about the speech, including 6% who say they heard a lot and 26% who heard a little. Less than half (44%) of the state are aware that the governor has a “pro-life” position on abortion. Another 16% actually think he comes down on the “pro-choice” side and 40% say they simply don’t know where Christie stands on this issue.

Only 1-in-10 say that the governor’s decision to speak at a pro-life rally has any impact on their opinion of him – with 7% saying it’s made them feel more negatively toward him and 3% saying they now have a more positive opinion.

“Most New Jerseyans do not consider abortion a matter for state government. So Chris Christie’s public stance is not seen as all that relevant to his performance as governor,” said Murray.

In polls conducted during the 2009 gubernatorial campaign, abortion was named by no more than 2% of voters as a key issue driving their decision in that election.

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Press Media Poll* was conducted by telephone with 801 New Jersey adults from February 2 to 7, 2011. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.5 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the New Jersey Press Media newspaper group (Asbury Park Press, Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, and Home News Tribune).

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. Recently, Governor Christie has been suggested as a potential presidential candidate. How much have you heard about this – a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			CHRISTIE JOB RATING	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Approve	Disapprove
A lot	26%	28%	14%	23%	29%	25%	30%	26%
A little	41%	42%	35%	37%	40%	47%	46%	36%
Not at all	33%	30%	51%	39%	30%	29%	24%	38%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	801	718	83	257	316	197	407	304

2. Do you think talk of a potential presidential run has made Chris Christie more effective or less effective as governor, or has it had no impact on his performance as governor?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			CHRISTIE JOB RATING	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Approve	Disapprove
More effective	11%	10%	15%	9%	12%	12%	15%	7%
Less effective	17%	16%	24%	23%	18%	9%	9%	25%
No impact	63%	67%	44%	58%	62%	72%	69%	60%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	8%	16%	11%	8%	8%	6%	7%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	801	718	83	257	316	197	407	304

3. On the issue of abortion would you call Governor Christie pro-choice or pro-life?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			CHRISTIE JOB RATING	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Approve	Disapprove
Pro-choice	16%	17%	13%	17%	14%	20%	18%	15%
Pro-life	44%	45%	41%	41%	43%	49%	47%	45%
(VOL) Don't know	40%	38%	47%	42%	43%	32%	36%	40%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	801	718	83	257	316	197	407	304

4. Governor Christie recently spoke at a Right to Life rally supporting groups that want to make abortion illegal. How much have you heard about this event – a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			CHRISTIE JOB RATING	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Approve	Disapprove
A lot	6%	7%	3%	5%	7%	8%	9%	5%
A little	26%	25%	31%	26%	25%	26%	26%	26%
Not at all	67%	67%	65%	68%	67%	66%	64%	69%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Unwtd N	801	718	83	257	316	197	407	304

5. Has Governor Christie's decision to speak at this rally affected how you feel about him or has it not really changed the opinion you already hold? [If *AFFECTED*: Do you now feel more positive or more negative toward him?]

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			CHRISTIE JOB RATING	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Approve	Disapprove
Positively affected	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	1%
Negatively affected	7%	7%	7%	9%	8%	2%	4%	9%
Not changed opinion	85%	86%	81%	81%	85%	92%	88%	87%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	4%	9%	7%	4%	2%	3%	4%
Unwtd N	801	718	83	257	316	197	407	304

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Press Media Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on February 2 to 7, 2011 with a statewide random sample of 801 adult residents. Sampling and live telephone interviewing services were provided by Braun Research, Inc. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

<i>POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)</i>			
35% Dem	49% Male	28% 18-34	65% White
22% Rep	51% Female	40% 35-54	12% Black
43% Ind		32% 55+	15% Hispanic
			8% Asian/Other

It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute's policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues that affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.

###