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## **JERSEY'S FAVORITE PRESIDENTS: REAGAN, CLINTON**

*Few plan to do anything special to mark Presidents' Day*

Presidents' Day is upon us, and so the *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* decided to ask Garden State residents to name their favorite president. While poll participants were asked to select from all presidents since 1789, the results skew toward those who were in office during most New Jerseyans' lifetimes, with Ronald Reagan (24%) and Bill Clinton (22%) topping the chart.

Third place honors go to John F. Kennedy (11%), while two men from Illinois tie for fourth place – Abraham Lincoln (7%) and the current incumbent Barack Obama (7%). They are followed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt (5%) in sixth place.

George Washington (3%), for whom the holiday was created in 1880 – it is still officially called “Washington’s Birthday” – pulls into a seventh place tie with Harry S Truman (3%). Rounding out New Jersey’s top ten all time favorite presidents are Jimmy Carter (2%) and George W. Bush (2%).

Garden State Democrats clearly prefer Clinton (34%), with Obama (12%), JFK (10%), and Reagan (10%) trailing behind. New Jersey Republicans overwhelmingly pick Reagan (50%), with Lincoln (7%), George W. Bush (7%), and Washington (6%) as also-rans. Independents are split, with Reagan (24%) just ahead of Clinton (21%), while JFK (13%) comes in third.

“Ronald Reagan garners the most bipartisan support of any president, but is especially revered among his fellow Republicans here in New Jersey,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute. “But among the state’s oldest residents, John F. Kennedy is also remembered with great fondness.”

JFK (23%) edges past Reagan (22%) as the favorite president of New Jerseyans age 55 and older, with Clinton (12%) coming in third. Among those age 35 to 54, Reagan (30%) tops Clinton (26%). And among the state’s youngest adults age 18 to 34, Clinton is tops (28%), followed by Reagan (19%) and Obama (14%).

The poll also asked New Jerseyans in the workforce whether they get a paid day off to celebrate Presidents' Day. Just under 4-in-10 (38%) report that their employer gives them the day off with pay. However, it depends where you work. Among all full-time workers, public employees (70%) are twice as likely as those who work for private companies (35%) to report getting Presidents' Day off with pay.

Regardless of whether they get the day off, few New Jersey residents (16%) say they plan to do something special to mark Presidents' Day this year. Those who either get the day off (19%) or are not in the workforce (18%) are only slightly more likely than those who have work today (13%) to do anything honoring the 43 occupants of the nation's highest office. [*The poll did not ask what they plan to do.*]

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted by telephone with 803 New Jersey adults from January 27 to 31, 2010. This sample has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.5$  percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the Gannett New Jersey 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. Who is your favorite president of all time? [*List was NOT read*]

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY			AGE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+
George Washington	3%	4%	1%	2%	4%	6%	4%	3%	4%
John Adams	<1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Thomas Jefferson	<1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
James Madison	<1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Andrew Jackson	<1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Abraham Lincoln	7%	7%	5%	7%	8%	7%	11%	7%	3%
Teddy Roosevelt	1%	1%	4%	1%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%
Franklin D. Roosevelt	5%	5%	3%	7%	4%	2%	2%	3%	9%
Harry S Truman	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%	3%	0%	2%	7%
Dwight D. Eisenhower	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	4%
John F. Kennedy	11%	12%	3%	10%	13%	5%	5%	5%	23%
Lyndon Johnson	<1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Richard Nixon	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Gerald Ford	<1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Jimmy Carter	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	0%	1%	3%	1%
Ronald Reagan	24%	25%	24%	10%	24%	50%	19%	30%	22%
George Bush (Senior)	1%	2%	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%	2%	0%
Bill Clinton	22%	21%	29%	34%	21%	5%	28%	26%	12%
George W. Bush	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	7%	3%	2%	1%
Barack Obama	7%	6%	14%	12%	7%	0%	14%	6%	3%
No answer	7%	6%	11%	7%	5%	9%	9%	6%	6%
Unwtd N	803	716	87	251	329	195	127	307	361

2. Presidents' Day is on Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup> this year. Will you be doing anything special to mark Presidents' Day, or not?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY			AGE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+
Yes	<b>16%</b>	16%	16%	16%	16%	17%	12%	19%	18%
No	<b>81%</b>	80%	84%	79%	83%	81%	85%	81%	77%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>3%</b>	3%	0%	4%	1%	2%	4%	0%	5%
Unwtd N	<b>803</b>	716	87	251	329	195	127	307	361

[The following question was asked only of people who are currently employed: moe=+/-4.5%]

3. Do you get a paid day off from work on Presidents' Day, or not?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY			AGE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+
Yes	<b>38%</b>	36%	48%	41%	35%	40%	36%	41%	37%
No	<b>57%</b>	60%	42%	50%	63%	60%	53%	57%	63%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>5%</b>	4%	10%	9%	3%	0%	11%	2%	1%
Unwtd N	<b>464</b>	408	56	153	183	113	98	233	129

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted and analyzed by the Monmouth University Polling Institute research staff. The telephone interviews were collected by Braun Research on January 27-31, 2010 with a statewide random sample of 803 adult residents. 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.

*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 which affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.*

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