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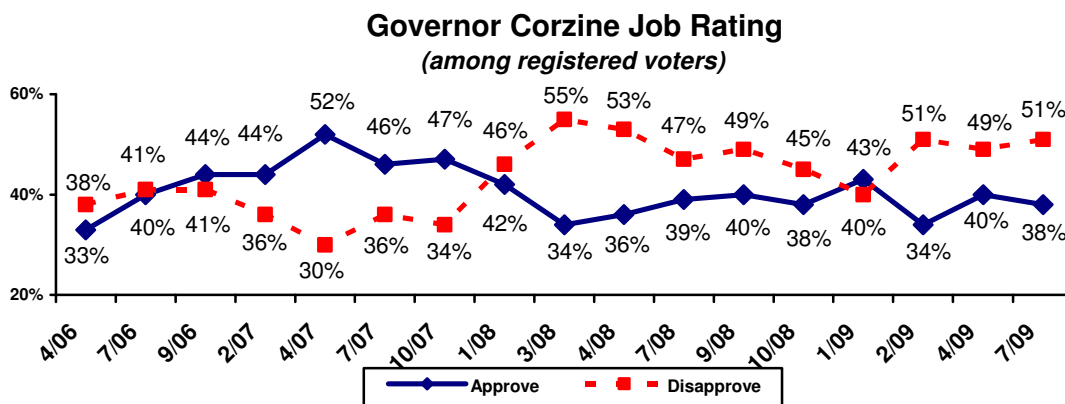
CORZINE REPORT CARD: NO MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Few New Jerseyans satisfied with state budget

Most New Jerseyans feel Governor Jon Corzine has no major accomplishments to point to as he asks voters to give him a second term in Trenton. The latest *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* also finds little movement in his report card grades in key performance areas, as he continues to average a “C–” from the New Jersey public.

Currently, only 37% of New Jersey residents approve of how their governor is handling his job, compared to 49% who disapprove. Among registered voters, his ratings stand at 38% approve to 51% disapprove. This is consistent with Corzine’s job rating since February.

Governor Corzine maintains net positive job ratings only among his fellow Democrats – 53% approve to 30% disapprove. He receives negative ratings from majorities of both independents (57% disapprove to 30% approve) and Republicans (74% disapprove to 21% approve).



With only six months left in his term, few voters feel that Jon Corzine has accomplished much during his time in Trenton. Only 13% say that he has major accomplishments to point to, while 49% say he has minor accomplishments. Another 34% say that he has no real accomplishments. Even among his fellow Democrats, only 23% feel that Corzine has achieved major accomplishments as governor. They are joined by just 9% of Republicans and 7% of independents who feel the same.

“It’s pretty difficult to expect voters to return you to office when all they’ve seen are improvements around the edges. But this is exactly the position Corzine finds himself in,” commented Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

Last month, the governor was successful in getting the legislature to pass a state budget that cut overall spending while preserving some property tax relief. However, the governor shouldn’t expect the public to give him a lot of credit for it.

About three-quarters of the New Jersey public have read or heard about the budget. Among this “aware” group, only 6% say they are satisfied with the budget, while 37% are dissatisfied. The majority – 53% – aren’t particularly satisfied with the budget, but say they can live with it.

“The Corzine camp says that this budget is a product of the poor economy and it would have been worse if the governor hadn’t put New Jersey’s finances on the right footing in the first years of his term. That message isn’t resonating with the public,” said Murray.

Fully 2-in-3 voters (68%) disagree with the governor’s claim that the state has managed its finances well over the past three years. Just 25% side with the governor on this. Most Democrats (57%) join Republicans (78%) and independents (75%) in saying that state finances have not been well-managed during Corzine’s term. These numbers are basically unchanged since May.

Also, only 1-in-10 residents (11%) say that New Jersey’s budget situation is better off than in other states. Another 38% think New Jersey is worse off and 44% say the budget situation is about the same as in other states.

When asked to grade Corzine on a number of key issues that formed the basis of his 2005 campaign for governor, the public continues to give him low C’s and D’s. His overall average grade continues to be a “C–”. Broken down by partisanship, he averages a “C” among Democrats and a “D+” among both Republicans and independents. These grades are identical to

the last report card in issued February.

The governor continues to get his best grade, a C, for improving schools and for the level of effort he puts into working for New Jersey. He scores a C– on bringing ethics and honesty back to state government.

Corzine also scores a C– on controlling costs and cutting waste, which is a slight uptick from the D+ average he earned in February. However, he can only muster a D+ on property taxes and a D on making New Jersey a more affordable place to live.

Jon Corzine, Governor Semi-Annual Report Card							
Subject	July 2009	<i>Prior Grades</i>					
		<i>Feb 2009</i>	<i>July 2008</i>	<i>Jan 2008</i>	<i>July 2007</i>	<i>Sept 2006</i>	<i>April 2006</i>
Cost-Cutting	C-	<i>D+</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>
Property Taxes	D+	<i>D+</i>	<i>D+</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>D+</i>	<i>D+</i>
Government Ethics	C-	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>
Cost of Living	D	<i>D</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>D+</i>	<i>D+</i>	<i>D+</i>
Schools	C	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>
Level of Effort	C	<i>C</i>	<i>C+</i>	<i>C+</i>	<i>B-</i>	<i>B-</i>	<i>C+</i>
Overall grade	C-	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	C	C	<i>C-</i>

The poll also found that the governor continues to do slightly better than the state legislature in the public’s eye. Only 30% of New Jerseyans approve of the job their legislature is doing, while 47% disapprove.

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted by telephone with 923 New Jersey adults from July 9 to 14, 2009. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.2 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. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Jon Corzine is doing as governor?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Approve	37%	38%	32%	53%	30%	21%
Disapprove	49%	51%	43%	30%	57%	74%
(VOL) Don't know	14%	12%	25%	17%	13%	5%
Unwtd N	923	792	131	322	354	221

TREND: <i>Registered voters only</i>	July 2009	April 2009	February 2009	January 2009	October 2008	Sept 2008	July 2008	April 2008	March 2008	January 2008	October 2007	July 2007	April 2007	February 2007	Sept 2006	July 2006	April 2006
Approve	38%	40%	34%	43%	38%	40%	39%	36%	34%	42%	47%	46%	52%	44%	44%	40%	33%
Disapprove	51%	49%	51%	40%	45%	49%	47%	53%	55%	46%	34%	36%	30%	36%	41%	41%	38%
(VOL) Don't know	12%	11%	15%	17%	18%	11%	14%	11%	11%	12%	19%	17%	17%	20%	16%	19%	29%
Unwtd N	792	690	721	413	900	709	889	720	719	698	688	678	668	681	663	670	652

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the job the state legislature is doing?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Approve	30%	31%	25%	37%	25%	23%
Disapprove	47%	48%	43%	36%	55%	60%
(VOL) Don't know	23%	22%	32%	27%	20%	17%
Unwtd N	923	792	131	322	354	221

TREND:	July 2009	February 2009	September 2008	July 2008	April 2008	March 2008	October 2007	February 2007
Approve	30%	25%	29%	27%	29%	28%	33%	35%
Disapprove	47%	52%	47%	45%	53%	50%	41%	40%
(VOL) Don't know	23%	23%	23%	28%	18%	22%	26%	25%
Unwtd N	923	803	808	1004	803	805	801	801

3. I'd like you to grade the Corzine administration on how it has handled specific issues. For each one I read, please give a letter grade of A, B, C, D or F for failing. What grade would you give the Corzine administration for ...? [ITEMS WERE ROTATED]

A. Controlling costs and cutting waste

TREND:	July 2009	February 2009	July 2008	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	5%	4%	6%	6%	7%	7%	5%
B	18%	16%	17%	19%	21%	19%	20%
C	29%	29%	25%	29%	31%	31%	29%
D	15%	19%	15%	15%	15%	13%	14%
F - Failing grade	27%	28%	28%	24%	20%	21%	20%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	3%	9%	7%	6%	9%	13%
Unwtd N	923	803	1004	804	800	800	803

B. Providing property tax relief

TREND:	July 2009	February 2009	July 2008	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	5%	5%	7%	6%	8%	5%	5%
B	13%	10%	12%	18%	20%	15%	12%
C	23%	26%	25%	28%	24%	25%	21%
D	16%	20%	21%	14%	16%	14%	15%
F - Failing grade	35%	35%	28%	28%	26%	31%	35%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	4%	7%	5%	6%	9%	13%
Unwtd N	923	803	1004	804	800	800	803

C. Bringing ethics and honesty back to state government

TREND:	July 2009	February 2009	July 2008	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	8%	6%	7%	10%	8%	11%	8%
B	22%	18%	19%	25%	26%	25%	27%
C	27%	30%	28%	28%	28%	28%	24%
D	14%	18%	16%	11%	15%	13%	12%
F - Failing grade	24%	24%	22%	20%	18%	15%	17%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	4%	7%	6%	5%	7%	11%
Unwtd N	923	803	1004	804	800	800	803

D. Making New Jersey a more affordable place to live

TREND:	July 2009	February 2009	July 2008	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	4%	5%	4%	5%	7%	7%	5%
B	13%	9%	10%	10%	16%	10%	10%
C	23%	18%	24%	20%	20%	24%	23%
D	16%	20%	17%	18%	21%	17%	14%
F - Failing grade	42%	45%	41%	44%	33%	38%	40%
(VOL) Don't know	3%	2%	5%	2%	3%	3%	9%
Unwtd N	923	803	1004	804	800	800	803

E. Improving our schools

TREND:	July 2009	February 2009	July 2008	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	8%	8%	9%	6%	7%	10%	8%
B	24%	18%	19%	25%	26%	21%	19%
C	31%	34%	31%	28%	31%	30%	28%
D	15%	15%	15%	14%	12%	15%	14%
F - Failing grade	15%	17%	15%	18%	14%	12%	16%
(VOL) Don't know	8%	8%	11%	9%	10%	13%	15%
Unwtd N	923	803	1004	804	800	800	803

4. What grade would you give the governor for the level of effort he puts into working for New Jersey?

TREND:	July 2009	February 2009	July 2008	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	14%	12%	17%	18%	18%	22%	16%
B	28%	26%	26%	30%	33%	28%	26%
C	25%	28%	26%	27%	27%	27%	29%
D	13%	14%	9%	9%	9%	9%	11%
F - Failing grade	15%	15%	15%	12%	9%	8%	11%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%	8%
Unwtd N	923	803	1004	804	800	800	803

5. Thinking about Corzine's term as governor so far, would you say that he has major accomplishments, minor accomplishments, or no real accomplishments to point to?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Major accomplishments	13%	14%	9%	23%	7%	9%
Minor accomplishments	49%	48%	50%	53%	52%	36%
No real accomplishments	34%	34%	33%	20%	37%	53%
(VOL) Don't know	4%	3%	9%	4%	4%	3%
Unwtd N	923	792	131	322	354	221

6. Do you agree or disagree that the state government has managed its finances well over the past three years?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Agree	25%	25%	23%	34%	18%	20%
Disagree	68%	68%	67%	57%	75%	78%
(VOL) Don't know	8%	7%	10%	9%	8%	2%
Unwtd N	923	792	131	322	354	221

TREND:	July 2009	May 2009
Agree	25%	23%
Disagree	68%	69%
(VOL) Don't know	8%	8%
Unwtd N	923	391

7. Compared to other states, is New Jersey's budget situation better, worse, or about the same?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Better	11%	12%	8%	16%	9%	8%
Worse	38%	36%	46%	32%	40%	49%
About the same	44%	44%	43%	48%	43%	37%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	8%	3%	5%	8%	7%
Unwtd N	923	792	131	322	354	221

TREND:	July 2009	May 2009
Better	11%	7%
Worse	38%	40%
About the same	44%	43%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	11%
Unwtd N	923	803

8. How much have you read or heard about the state budget that was passed last month – a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Lot	19%	20%	15%	15%	24%	21%
Little	55%	56%	50%	63%	49%	52%
Nothing	25%	23%	34%	21%	26%	25%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	2%
Unwtd N	923	792	131	322	354	221

[The following question was asked only of those who said "a lot" or "a little" to Q8, moe= ± 3.7%]

9. How would you describe your reaction to the budget – would you say you are satisfied with it, not particularly satisfied but you can live with it, or you are definitely dissatisfied with it?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Satisfied	6%	5%	11%	9%	4%	1%
Can live with	53%	55%	46%	65%	48%	42%
Dissatisfied	37%	36%	41%	24%	44%	53%
(VOL) Don't know	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%	4%
Unwtd N	713	627	86	254	268	177

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 July 9-14, 2009 with a statewide random sample of 923 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 3.2 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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