

Contact:

**PATRICK MURRAY**

732-263-5858 (office)

732-979-6769 (cell)

*pdmurray@monmouth.edu*

Released:

**Tuesday, September 17, 2013**

*Please attribute this information to:*

***Monmouth University/  
Asbury Park Press Poll***

*For more information:*

Monmouth University Polling Institute  
West Long Branch, NJ 07764  
*www.monmouth.edu/polling*

## **GOV. CHRISTIE FIRST TERM REPORT CARD**

*Sandy recovery earns the highest grades, property taxes the lowest*

Governor Chris Christie's job approval rating continues to be solidly high according to the latest ***Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll***. The poll also asked New Jerseyans to grade the governor's administration in seven areas as he approaches the end of his term and seeks re-election. The highest grades are earned for Superstorm Sandy recovery and the lowest are for property tax relief.

Currently, Governor Christie holds a 61% approve to 24% disapprove job rating among all Garden State residents. Among registered voters, his rating stands at 63% approve to 24% disapprove. These findings are off Christie's post-Sandy high of 70% in February, but are similar to his ratings this past April. The governor's job rating continues to be significantly higher than in any pre-Sandy poll.

Gov. Christie continues to earn positive marks from large majorities of Republicans (89%) and independents (64%). He also does relatively well among Democrats – 47% approve and 37% disapprove of his job performance. However, this poll marks the first time since Sandy hit that Democratic approval of Christie has dipped below 50%.

As in other post-Sandy polling, there is no evidence of a gender gap in the governor's rating – 62% of men and 61% of women approve. He also continues to do well among a group he has battled with in the past; public workers give him a 50% approve to 37% disapprove rating.

“The governor continues to hold a strong post-Sandy standing among New Jersey residents. The only evidence of a dip comes from Democrats, and even that group remains relatively positive,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

With the governor approaching the end of his first term, the poll found that 36% of Garden State residents say Gov. Christie has major accomplishments to point to, 49% say he has minor accomplishments, and just 10% say he has no accomplishments. This finding is slightly lower than in

December, when 42% said he could claim major accomplishments, but it is still higher than polls taken prior to Superstorm Sandy.

In fact, Sandy leads the list when New Jerseyans are asked to grade the Christie administration's performance in seven different areas. More than 7-in-10 New Jerseyans grade the administration's Sandy recovery efforts an "A" (35%) or "B" (37%). Another 17% give a "C" grade and very few give a "D" (5%) or "F" (3%). In December, the Christie administration earned an "A" from 61% and a "B" from 24% of New Jerseyans for its immediate handling of the storm and its aftermath.

Sandy recovery is not the only issue facing the state. When it comes to controlling costs and cutting waste, a key plank in then-candidate Christie's 2009 campaign, the administration gets good grades from 4-in-10 constituents – 12% give an "A" and 28% a "B," while 1-in-5 give only a "D" (10%) or "F" (11%). Another 31% give a "C." The 40% who give positive grades on this issue is down from 54% in December and 47% in April 2012, but the current results are in line with earlier polls.

"After Sandy, the governor's hallmark accomplishment is in the area of state spending. Public opinion isn't quite as rosy as it was a few months ago, but this is still a strong suit for Christie," said Murray.

On the issue of education, nearly 4-in-10 New Jerseyans give Gov. Christie an "A" (12%) or "B" (27%) for improving the state's schools, while just over 1-in-4 say he has earned only a "D" (12%) or "F" (15%). Another 27% give him a "C." Christie receives fewer positive grades on education than he did in December (45%), but the results are similar to the 37% who gave positive grades in April 2012 and is higher than readings taken prior to then.

"Despite battles with the NJEA and public concern over school funding cuts early in his term, Gov. Christie maintains net positive feedback for his handling of education," said Murray.

Voters are split on three other issues covered in the poll. When it comes to creating jobs, about the same number of New Jerseyans give the governor positive marks of "A" (6%) or "B" (23%) as give negative marks of "D" (13%) or "F" (15%). Another 36% give him a "C."

New Jerseyans are also divided on the administration's handling of same-sex marriage, with 3-in-10 who give an "A" (12%) or "B" (18%) grade compared to 3-in-10 who give a "D" (10%) or "F" (21%) grade. Another 19% give a "C."

The same is true on gun ownership and control – 3-in-10 give an "A" (9%) or "B" (21%) grade and 3-in-10 give a "D" (12%) or "F" (19%) grade. Another 27% give a "C."

While the results on these three issues – jobs, marriage, and guns – are evenly divided between A/B and D/F grades, the results are more negative at the extreme ends of the grading scale – about twice as many New Jerseyans give the Christie administration the lowest grade of "F" versus the highest grade of "A" on each of these issues.

The perennial issue of property taxes is the only area covered in the poll where the governor’s grades are more negative than positive. More residents give his administration a “D” (15%) or “F” (20%) than award him an “A” (7%) or “B” (20%). Another 29% give a “C.” These grades are basically unchanged since April 2012 and are only slightly more positive than they were in the second year of Christie’s term.

“Property tax relief is the only area where the governor’s grades have been consistently weak. This has little impact on his overall job rating, though, because New Jerseyans place most of the blame for this problem on the legislature, past governors, and local entities,” said Murray.

Republicans give more positive than negative grades on all seven issues. Democrats give more negative than positive grades on five of the issues, but are evenly divided on controlling costs and improving schools. Independents mirror the statewide averages across these issues, although they are slightly more negative than average on the administration’s job creation efforts.

The poll also finds that the state legislature has a slightly positive job rating – 39% approve to 34% disapprove among all residents and 38% approve to 36% disapprove among registered voters. This is down a few points from other polls taken this year, but is still better than pre-Sandy polls going back to 2007 when opinion was decidedly negative.

President Barack Obama currently holds a 51% approve to 40% disapprove rating among New Jersey residents and a 50% approve to 41% disapprove rating among the state’s voters. This is the president’s lowest job approval rating in more than a year. In February, Obama held a 60% approve to 33% disapprove rating among Garden State voters.

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by telephone with 783 New Jersey adults from September 6 to 10, 2013. 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 Asbury Park Press and its sister publications (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 Chris Christie is doing as governor?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
Approve	<b>61%</b>	63%	52%	47%	64%	89%	62%	61%	50%	64%
Disapprove	<b>24%</b>	24%	23%	37%	21%	7%	23%	25%	37%	21%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>15%</b>	13%	25%	16%	15%	4%	15%	14%	13%	15%

TREND: <i>All adults</i>	Sept. 2013	April 2013	Feb. 2013	Dec. 2012	Sept. 2012	July 2012	April 2012	Feb. 2012	Oct. 2011	Aug. 2011	May 2011	Feb. 2011	Sept. 2010	July 2010	April 2010	Feb. 2010
Approve	61%	63%	70%	67%	53%	52%	51%	52%	54%	48%	47%	47%	45%	44%	41%	33%
Disapprove	24%	26%	17%	21%	35%	36%	35%	38%	38%	42%	49%	40%	38%	44%	44%	15%
(VOL) Don't know	15%	11%	14%	12%	11%	12%	14%	10%	9%	9%	5%	12%	17%	12%	15%	52%
Unwtd N	783	806	803	816	805	803	804	803	817	802	807	801	801	801	804	803

TREND: <i>Registered voters</i>	Sept. 2013	April 2013	Feb. 2013	Dec. 2012	Sept. 2012	July 2012	April 2012	Feb. 2012	Oct. 2011	Aug. 2011	May 2011	Feb. 2011	Sept. 2010	July 2010	April 2010	Feb. 2010
Approve	63%	65%	70%	69%	55%	53%	50%	55%	55%	50%	46%	49%	44%	45%	42%	31%
Disapprove	24%	26%	16%	22%	36%	35%	38%	37%	37%	41%	49%	41%	40%	43%	44%	15%
(VOL) Don't know	13%	10%	13%	9%	10%	12%	12%	9%	8%	8%	5%	9%	16%	12%	13%	53%
Unwtd N	674	694	697	726	715	678	692	709	693	730	725	718	726	747	719	716

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

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
Approve	<b>39%</b>	38%	44%	44%	34%	46%	41%	37%	36%	39%
Disapprove	<b>34%</b>	36%	26%	33%	38%	31%	39%	30%	44%	32%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>27%</b>	27%	29%	23%	29%	24%	20%	33%	20%	29%

TREND: <i>Registered Voters</i>	Sept. 2013	April 2013	Feb. 2013	Dec. 2012	Sept. 2012	July 2012	April 2012	Feb. 2012	Oct. 2011	Aug. 2011	May 2011	Feb. 2011
Approve	38%	41%	40%	43%	32%	34%	37%	34%	33%	35%	32%	29%
Disapprove	36%	42%	35%	34%	43%	45%	41%	42%	45%	48%	48%	45%
(VOL) Don't know	27%	17%	25%	22%	25%	21%	23%	24%	22%	17%	20%	26%
Unwtd N	674	694	697	726	715	678	692	709	693	730	725	718

TREND: <i>Registered Voters Continued</i>	July 2010	April 2010	Feb. 2010	July 2009	Feb. 2009	Sept. 2008	July 2008	April 2008	March 2008	Oct. 2007	Feb. 2007
Approve	25%	19%	24%	31%	23%	29%	27%	28%	25%	32%	34%
Disapprove	49%	57%	49%	48%	55%	50%	47%	55%	53%	43%	42%
(VOL) Don't know	26%	24%	27%	22%	22%	21%	26%	17%	22%	25%	23%
Unwtd N	747	719	716	792	721	709	889	720	719	688	681

3. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as president?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
Approve	<b>51%</b>	50%	56%	78%	45%	21%	49%	54%	50%	52%
Disapprove	<b>40%</b>	41%	33%	18%	44%	75%	44%	36%	43%	40%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>9%</b>	8%	11%	4%	12%	4%	7%	10%	8%	9%

TREND: <i>Registered voters</i>	Sept. 2013	April 2013	Feb. 2013	Dec. 2012	April 2012	Feb. 2012	Oct. 2011	Aug. 2011	May 2011	Sept. 2010	July 2010	April 2010	Feb. 2010	Oct. 2009	July 2009
Approve	50%	55%	60%	58%	54%	51%	47%	52%	60%	47%	51%	54%	53%	54%	59%
Disapprove	41%	42%	33%	35%	41%	42%	46%	39%	36%	44%	42%	41%	38%	33%	29%
(VOL) Don't know	8%	2%	7%	6%	5%	6%	7%	9%	4%	9%	6%	5%	9%	14%	12%
Unwtd N	674	694	697	726	692	709	693	730	725	726	747	719	716	785	792

4. Thinking about Chris Christie'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			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
Major accomplishments	<b>36%</b>	37%	32%	31%	32%	53%	33%	39%	34%	36%
Minor accomplishments	<b>49%</b>	48%	55%	49%	52%	43%	51%	47%	48%	49%
No real accomplishments	<b>10%</b>	12%	5%	15%	11%	2%	12%	9%	13%	10%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>5%</b>	4%	9%	5%	5%	2%	4%	5%	5%	5%

TREND:	September 2013	December 2012	September 2012	August 2011	May 2011	February 2011
Major accomplishments	36%	42%	31%	24%	23%	25%
Minor accomplishments	49%	41%	43%	40%	40%	39%
No real accomplishments	10%	11%	21%	34%	34%	34%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	5%	5%	3%	2%	2%
Unwtd N	783	816	805	802	807	801

5. I'd like you to grade the Christie administration on how it has handled specific issues over the past year. 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 Christie administration for [READ ITEM]? [ITEMS WERE ROTATED]

Controlling costs and cutting waste

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
A - Highest grade	<b>12%</b>	14%	4%	7%	13%	23%	13%	12%	14%	12%
B	<b>28%</b>	30%	21%	23%	28%	40%	29%	28%	26%	29%
C	<b>31%</b>	29%	44%	31%	35%	25%	37%	26%	23%	33%
D	<b>10%</b>	10%	11%	15%	9%	6%	7%	13%	11%	10%
F - Failing grade	<b>11%</b>	11%	9%	14%	11%	3%	11%	11%	19%	9%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>7%</b>	7%	11%	10%	4%	3%	3%	11%	8%	7%

TREND:	September 2013	December 2012	April 2012	August 2011	February 2011	July 2010
A - Highest grade	12%	17%	18%	12%	18%	21%
B	28%	37%	29%	22%	23%	22%
C	31%	25%	26%	34%	27%	24%
D	10%	8%	11%	14%	13%	12%
F - Failing grade	11%	7%	10%	14%	14%	15%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	7%	5%	4%	4%	6%
Unwtd N	783	816	804	802	801	801

Providing property tax relief

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
A - Highest grade	<b>7%</b>	6%	12%	4%	7%	12%	7%	7%	7%	7%
B	<b>20%</b>	20%	19%	13%	19%	34%	22%	17%	19%	20%
C	<b>29%</b>	28%	34%	30%	30%	24%	30%	28%	21%	30%
D	<b>15%</b>	16%	13%	17%	18%	12%	17%	14%	20%	14%
F - Failing grade	<b>20%</b>	22%	11%	28%	17%	13%	17%	23%	24%	20%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>9%</b>	9%	11%	9%	9%	5%	7%	12%	9%	9%

TREND:	September 2013	December 2012	April 2012	August 2011	February 2011	July 2010
A - Highest grade	7%	7%	11%	4%	5%	10%
B	20%	23%	17%	16%	19%	21%
C	29%	31%	27%	30%	24%	24%
D	15%	15%	16%	17%	18%	15%
F - Failing grade	20%	17%	21%	26%	27%	23%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	8%	8%	6%	8%	6%
Unwtd N	783	816	804	802	801	801

Improving our schools

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
A - Highest grade	<b>12%</b>	12%	14%	11%	10%	20%	11%	14%	13%	12%
B	<b>27%</b>	26%	30%	22%	29%	37%	30%	24%	21%	28%
C	<b>27%</b>	27%	26%	26%	27%	26%	27%	26%	19%	28%
D	<b>12%</b>	13%	10%	10%	16%	6%	13%	11%	16%	11%
F - Failing grade	<b>15%</b>	16%	11%	24%	14%	3%	14%	17%	27%	13%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>7%</b>	6%	9%	7%	4%	8%	4%	9%	5%	7%

TREND:	September 2013	December 2012	April 2012	August 2011	February 2011	July 2010
A - Highest grade	12%	11%	13%	8%	10%	12%
B	27%	34%	24%	20%	22%	17%
C	27%	27%	25%	26%	22%	22%
D	12%	10%	14%	17%	15%	12%
F - Failing grade	15%	10%	16%	23%	26%	32%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	9%	7%	5%	5%	5%
Unwtd N	783	816	804	802	801	801

Creating jobs

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
A - Highest grade	<b>6%</b>	6%	7%	4%	4%	11%	7%	5%	4%	6%
B	<b>23%</b>	20%	34%	19%	21%	34%	23%	22%	24%	22%
C	<b>36%</b>	37%	29%	33%	40%	33%	38%	34%	27%	38%
D	<b>13%</b>	14%	10%	14%	17%	7%	12%	15%	16%	12%
F - Failing grade	<b>15%</b>	16%	12%	22%	13%	7%	15%	15%	22%	14%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>7%</b>	7%	8%	7%	5%	8%	5%	9%	6%	7%

Same-sex marriage

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
A - Highest grade	<b>12%</b>	12%	13%	12%	10%	14%	8%	15%	9%	12%
B	<b>18%</b>	17%	18%	14%	17%	26%	17%	18%	16%	18%
C	<b>19%</b>	19%	21%	16%	22%	21%	24%	15%	16%	20%
D	<b>10%</b>	10%	12%	11%	12%	7%	12%	9%	11%	10%
F - Failing grade	<b>21%</b>	22%	16%	29%	19%	13%	20%	22%	28%	20%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>20%</b>	20%	19%	17%	20%	19%	19%	21%	19%	20%

Gun ownership and control

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
A - Highest grade	<b>9%</b>	10%	8%	8%	8%	16%	10%	9%	3%	11%
B	<b>21%</b>	20%	28%	16%	20%	34%	23%	19%	21%	21%
C	<b>27%</b>	27%	23%	25%	29%	25%	26%	27%	32%	26%
D	<b>12%</b>	12%	13%	12%	14%	7%	13%	11%	12%	12%
F - Failing grade	<b>19%</b>	20%	13%	28%	16%	7%	20%	17%	23%	18%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>12%</b>	12%	15%	11%	13%	11%	9%	16%	10%	13%

6. And what grade would you give the Christie administration for the state's recovery from Superstorm Sandy?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		PUBLIC WORKER	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No
A - Highest grade	<b>35%</b>	34%	39%	29%	33%	50%	35%	34%	27%	36%
B	<b>37%</b>	38%	32%	39%	39%	27%	36%	38%	41%	36%
C	<b>17%</b>	18%	16%	17%	19%	15%	18%	17%	20%	17%
D	<b>5%</b>	5%	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%
F - Failing grade	<b>3%</b>	3%	4%	6%	2%	2%	4%	3%	5%	3%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>2%</b>	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%

TREND:	September 2013	December 2012*
A - Highest grade	35%	61%
B	37%	24%
C	17%	7%
D	5%	3%
F - Failing grade	3%	3%
(VOL) Don't know	2%	2%
Unwtd N	783	816

\* Question wording in December 2012 was: "And what grade would you give the Christie administration for handling Superstorm Sandy?"

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from September 6 to 10, 2013 with a statewide random sample of 783 adult residents, including 580 contacted on a landline telephone and 203 on a cell phone. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey questionnaire design, data weighting and analysis. 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>			
37% Dem	49% Male	27% 18-34	63% White
42% Ind	51% Female	40% 35-54	13% Black
21% Rep		33% 55+	15% Hispanic
			9% Asian/Other
<i>Registered Voter Sample (weighted)</i>			
37% Dem	47% Male	21% 18-34	67% White
40% Ind	53% Female	43% 35-54	12% Black
23% Rep		36% 55+	14% Hispanic
			7% Asian/Other

	<i>MARGIN OF ERROR</i>									
	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>REGISTERED VOTER</i>		<i>PARTY ID</i>			<i>GENDER</i>		<i>PUBLIC WORKER</i>	
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Dem</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>Rep</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Unweighted N</i>	783	674	109	253	315	167	376	407	162	613
<i>moe</i>	3.5%	3.8%	9.4%	6.2%	5.5%	7.6%	5.1%	4.9%	7.7%	4.0%

*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.*

###