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GARDEN STATE DIVIDED ON SALE OF NJN

But most support some public funding

New Jerseyans feel that NJN television provides a valuable service and government should support it in some way. But the latest *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Press Media Poll* also finds the public is divided on plans to sell the state-owned broadcaster.

NJN TV and radio have been operated by the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority for 40 years. Governor Christie has proposed selling or transferring the station's assets by the end of this year. A legislative task force has been holding hearings on this proposal.

Nearly 6-in-10 (58%) state residents approve of using public funds to help run NJN, compared to 36% who oppose this. The number who currently support state funding is slightly lower than the 62% who felt this way in 1999, but higher than the 51% who said the same in 1994.

Although most residents support state funding of NJN, the public is divided on the proposed sale or transfer – 39% approve of the move and 34% disapprove, with another 26% having no opinion. Among residents who have watched NJN at least once in the past month, opinion on the sale stands at 40% approve to 39% disapprove. But among the smaller number of NJN viewers who are already aware of the proposed sale – representing about 1-in-10 New Jersey residents – just 36% approve of the sale, compared to 55% who disapprove.

The public is unsure whether the sale or transfer of NJN would affect its coverage of New Jersey topics and issues. One-in-five (19%) say a sale would actually improve the station's coverage of the state and a similar number (18%) expect this coverage would get worse. However, most feel that either coverage of the state would not change much (38%) or they don't know how it would change (25%) if the station is no longer owned by state government.

“The general public considers NJN an asset worth supporting. But New Jersey is ambivalent

about whether the station would be better off inside or outside of state government,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

In general, 58% of New Jersey residents say that it is very important to have a television station that focuses on the Garden State and another 30% say this is somewhat important. Only 1-in-10 residents say having a Jersey-centric television station is not important. These results are similar to polls conducted in the 1990s.

The poll also found that 85% of New Jerseyans have heard of NJN. This includes 23% who can name NJN as the state’s public broadcaster – compared to 20% in both 1994 and 1999 and 12% in 1988.

Just over half (51%) of the public report having tuned in to NJN television at least once in the past month. This is down slightly from 59% in 1999 and 56% in 1994, but is higher than numbers recorded in prior decades (36% in 1988, 27% in 1981, and 13% in 1974).

NJN Opinion Trends *						
Year	Aware of NJ Public TV	Have heard of NJN	Can name NJN	Watched NJN in past month	TV with NJ focus very important	NJN should receive state funding
2010	79%	85%	23%	51%	58%	58%
1999	81%	89%	20%	59%	56%	62%
1994	78%	75%	20%	56%	59%	51%
1988	80%	69%	12%	36%	-	-
1981	57%	-	-	27%	-	-
1974	-	-	-	13%	-	-

** Prior results are from surveys conducted by the Eagleton-Rutgers Poll on behalf of the NJ Public Broadcasting Foundation.*

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Press Media Poll* was conducted by telephone with 801 New Jersey adults from September 15 to 19, 2010. 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. Do you pay for your television service or do you use an antenna for your TV reception?
 [If pay: Which company provides your TV service?]

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
Comcast/Xfinity	37%	45%	36%	25%	38%	37%	35%	22%	29%	68%	39%	35%
Cablevision/Optimum	23%	22%	21%	29%	17%	27%	23%	31%	31%	2%	24%	20%
FIOS (Verizon)	17%	16%	18%	20%	23%	17%	14%	23%	16%	9%	18%	17%
Direct TV satellite	9%	8%	9%	11%	13%	8%	7%	9%	8%	11%	9%	10%
Dish Network satellite	3%	2%	5%	2%	2%	3%	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Time Warner	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Service Electric	2%	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%	3%	4%	0%	0%	2%	2%
Don't know	3%	2%	3%	2%	0%	3%	5%	3%	3%	1%	1%	4%
None/Antenna	3%	2%	3%	5%	2%	3%	6%	3%	6%	3%	2%	5%
No TV in house	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	2%	1%	1%	3%	3%	1%	3%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

2. To the best of your knowledge, is there a public television station currently operating in New Jersey, or not?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
Yes	79%	83%	79%	77%	74%	84%	78%	77%	86%	78%	88%	70%
No	10%	6%	12%	14%	14%	8%	10%	11%	6%	13%	7%	14%
(VOL) Don't know	11%	11%	10%	9%	12%	8%	12%	12%	8%	9%	5%	16%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

3. Do you happen to know the name of this public television station? [If YES: What is it called?] [Note: Results add to more than 100% because multiple responses were accepted]

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
NJN	23%	24%	20%	25%	17%	30%	19%	21%	27%	23%	34%	11%
New Jersey Network	4%	6%	5%	1%	1%	5%	6%	3%	3%	7%	7%	2%
Channel 23	3%	3%	1%	5%	0%	4%	4%	1%	1%	7%	4%	2%
Channel 50/52/58	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
WNET/Channel 13	13%	10%	13%	18%	9%	13%	16%	15%	16%	7%	14%	11%
WHYY/Channel 12	8%	7%	9%	11%	9%	8%	9%	10%	8%	7%	7%	9%
News 12 New Jersey	5%	6%	6%	3%	9%	4%	4%	6%	6%	3%	3%	7%
CN8	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Other	3%	5%	3%	1%	4%	2%	3%	2%	4%	3%	4%	2%
No answer	24%	25%	25%	24%	28%	23%	23%	23%	26%	24%	21%	28%
Not aware of any NJ public TV	21%	17%	21%	23%	26%	16%	22%	23%	14%	22%	12%	30%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

4. Have you ever heard of NJN, which is usually received on channel 23 or 50?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
Names NJN in Q3	23%	24%	20%	25%	17%	30%	19%	21%	27%	23%	34%	11%
Yes	62%	66%	63%	55%	61%	61%	63%	59%	60%	67%	66%	56%
No	16%	10%	17%	20%	22%	10%	19%	20%	12%	10%	0%	33%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

5. Have you watched NJN in the past month?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
Yes	51%	55%	50%	43%	37%	55%	55%	48%	53%	52%	100%	0%
No	49%	44%	49%	56%	62%	44%	44%	51%	45%	48%	0%	100%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

6. NJN has many programs with a New Jersey focus. How important do you think it is for there to be a television station that has programs that focus on New Jersey – very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
Very important	58%	69%	54%	52%	56%	62%	55%	61%	54%	57%	70%	46%
Somewhat important	30%	28%	34%	30%	30%	30%	32%	29%	35%	30%	24%	37%
Not very important	7%	3%	8%	10%	11%	5%	6%	6%	9%	7%	6%	9%
Not at all important	3%	1%	3%	6%	3%	2%	4%	2%	1%	5%	1%	5%
(VOL) Don't know	2%	0%	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

7. Currently, NJN receives some funding from the state of New Jersey. In your opinion, should New Jersey tax revenues be used to help fund NJN or not?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
Yes, taxes should be used	58%	69%	58%	42%	54%	62%	58%	58%	58%	60%	68%	47%
No, taxes should not be used	36%	25%	36%	53%	42%	34%	34%	37%	37%	34%	29%	44%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	9%	5%	5%	6%	3%	9%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

8. Have you heard about plans to sell or transfer NJN's operations to a non-profit organization or another public broadcaster, or have you not heard about this?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
Yes, heard	14%	16%	15%	11%	5%	15%	19%	16%	12%	12%	20%	8%
No, not heard	84%	83%	85%	87%	94%	83%	79%	83%	86%	88%	79%	90%
(VOL) Don't know	2%	1%	0%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

9. Do you approve or disapprove of the sale or transfer of NJN from state government?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
Approve	39%	35%	42%	42%	48%	42%	30%	39%	45%	38%	40%	40%
Disapprove	34%	43%	31%	30%	33%	33%	38%	34%	30%	39%	39%	30%
(VOL) Don't know	26%	22%	27%	28%	20%	25%	32%	28%	25%	23%	22%	30%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

10. Do you think NJN's coverage of New Jersey issues and topics will get better, get worse, or not change much if it is sold?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			AGE			REGION OF STATE			NJN VIEWER	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Yes	No
Get better	19%	18%	19%	22%	22%	21%	15%	19%	19%	20%	21%	17%
Get worse	18%	22%	19%	10%	14%	21%	19%	16%	18%	21%	25%	11%
Not change much	38%	41%	35%	37%	42%	34%	38%	41%	35%	35%	35%	40%
(VOL) Don't know	25%	19%	27%	30%	23%	24%	28%	23%	28%	24%	19%	32%
Unwtd N	801	223	382	177	88	311	382	365	190	214	438	355

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Press Media Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on September 15-19, 2010 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>			
<i>35% Dem</i>	<i>48% Male</i>	<i>27% 18-34</i>	<i>68% White</i>
<i>43% Ind</i>	<i>52% Female</i>	<i>40% 35-54</i>	<i>13% Black</i>
<i>22% Rep</i>		<i>33% 55+</i>	<i>12% Hispanic</i>
			<i>7% Asian/Other</i>

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.

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