

Contact:

PATRICK MURRAY

732-263-5858 (office)

732-979-6769 (cell)

pdmurray@monmouth.edu

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For more information:

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

NEW JERSEY DIVIDED ON RED LIGHT CAMERAS

Most say revenue is bigger motive than safety

New Jersey is reaching the end of a five year pilot program that uses cameras to enforce red light infractions and, according to the *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll*, state residents do not agree on what should happen next. Most say that increased revenues rather than improved road safety are the primary reasons towns want to use the devices.

New Jersey is divided on the idea of using cameras to issue tickets to people who drive through red lights. Overall, 44% approve of the concept versus 38% who disapprove of this type of enforcement. Another 18% have no opinion. New Jersey drivers who have received a red light ticket are opposed to the program by a 51% disapprove to 42% approve margin. Other residents who have seen these cameras in their travels are divided at 42% approve to 40% disapprove. Only those who have never noticed a red light camera in the state register majority support at 52% approve to 26% disapprove.

The poll also found there is no clear public consensus on what should happen now that the pilot program is about to expire. About 4-in-10 (39%) New Jerseyans say the program should be shut down entirely, 32% say it should be expanded to all towns in the state, and 26% say it should be continued as a limited pilot program.

“A plurality of New Jerseyans want the program to end while a slight majority want it to continue in some form. One issue is whether those who want to expand the program feel it is fair to continue to limit it to certain towns,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute. “Public opinion on red light cameras may be influenced by perceptions of local officials’ motives for installing these cameras aside from their potential safety benefits.”

When asked about the main reason why towns install red light cameras, most (60%) New Jerseyans say that local governments are more concerned with raising money for their coffers. Only 27%

say that local officials are primarily concerned with improving road safety. There are no significant partisan or regional differences in this opinion.

Most (74%) New Jerseyans have come across a red light camera while traveling around the state and about 1-in-7 report that they have received a summons for a red light infraction. This includes 10% who received a ticket while driving their own car and 4% who said the summons they received was actually caused by another driver who was using their car. Another 1% report that they caused the infraction while driving another person’s car and that person ended up receiving the ticket. Most residents (59%) say it is unfair that red light camera tickets are automatically issued to the car owner regardless of who was driving, while 36% feel this is a fair practice.

Among those who have received a red light camera ticket, 4-in-10 (42%) report that they have become safer drivers because of it while 57% say it hasn’t changed their driving behavior. Among those who have seen the red light cameras but never received a ticket, 24% say they have become safer drivers because of the cameras compared to 76% who say it has not affected their driving habits.

Overall, 44% of Garden State residents report that they have heard a lot about the use of red light cameras to ticket people who drive through red lights, 43% have heard a little, and only 14% have heard nothing at all about this program.

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by telephone with 802 New Jersey adults from September 17 to 21, 2014. 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 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. How much have you read, seen or heard about red light cameras which are used at intersections to ticket people who drive through red lights? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South
A lot	44%	46%	33%	45%	42%	46%	46%	42%	34%	43%	51%	41%	51%	41%
A little	43%	43%	42%	43%	43%	41%	39%	46%	48%	44%	37%	43%	40%	48%
Nothing at all	13%	10%	24%	11%	14%	13%	15%	11%	17%	12%	12%	15%	9%	11%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%

2. Do you approve or disapprove of towns using red light cameras to issue tickets to people who drive through red lights, or do you have no opinion on this?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION			RED LIGHT CAMERA EXPERIENCE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Ticketed	Seen them	Not seen
Approve	44%	44%	46%	51%	40%	41%	34%	54%	42%	45%	46%	45%	42%	46%	42%	42%	52%
Disapprove	38%	41%	26%	27%	42%	45%	47%	28%	34%	40%	39%	38%	43%	35%	51%	40%	26%
No opinion	18%	16%	29%	22%	18%	14%	19%	17%	25%	15%	16%	17%	15%	20%	7%	19%	22%

3. New Jersey has been running a red light camera pilot program in certain communities for the past few years. That program is about to expire. A. do you think the red light camera program should be expanded to let all towns in the state install red light cameras; B. do you think the pilot program should continue in just a few areas, or C. do you think the red light camera program should be ended entirely?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION			RED LIGHT CAMERA EXPERIENCE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Ticketed	Seen them	Not seen
Expanded to all towns	32%	31%	34%	38%	27%	32%	26%	37%	34%	31%	30%	32%	27%	34%	30%	31%	33%
Continue pilot	26%	25%	32%	29%	27%	22%	26%	27%	29%	28%	22%	26%	26%	29%	20%	26%	32%
Ended entirely	39%	41%	29%	31%	42%	44%	46%	32%	34%	39%	42%	38%	45%	34%	49%	40%	31%
(VOL) Don't know	3%	3%	5%	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%	2%	5%	4%	1%	3%	1%	3%	5%

4. Do you think the towns that use these red light cameras are more concerned about improving road safety or more concerned about raising money for the town?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION			RED LIGHT CAMERA EXPERIENCE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Ticketed	Seen them	Not seen
Improving road safety	27%	26%	35%	32%	24%	26%	25%	30%	34%	28%	21%	30%	21%	30%	20%	25%	37%
Raising money for their town	60%	63%	46%	56%	64%	59%	65%	54%	55%	58%	65%	61%	62%	57%	74%	62%	46%
(VOL) Both equally	9%	8%	13%	9%	8%	10%	7%	11%	8%	11%	8%	6%	13%	9%	6%	9%	10%
(VOL) Don't know	4%	3%	6%	3%	4%	5%	3%	5%	3%	3%	6%	3%	4%	5%	0%	3%	7%

5. Are you aware or not aware that red light camera tickets are issued to the owner of the car that went through the light, regardless of who was driving it?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION			RED LIGHT CAMERA EXPERIENCE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Ticketed	Seen them	Not seen
Aware	72%	74%	65%	73%	74%	70%	78%	67%	68%	77%	70%	74%	72%	70%	97%	79%	44%
Not aware	27%	26%	32%	27%	25%	30%	21%	33%	30%	23%	29%	25%	27%	30%	3%	21%	54%
(VOL) Refused	1%	0%	3%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%

6. Do you think it is fair or unfair that red light camera tickets are issued to the car owner regardless of who was driving?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION			RED LIGHT CAMERA EXPERIENCE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Ticketed	Seen them	Not seen
Fair	36%	35%	38%	36%	34%	40%	36%	35%	33%	38%	35%	40%	31%	34%	39%	34%	38%
Unfair	59%	61%	53%	60%	61%	53%	58%	60%	61%	59%	58%	54%	66%	61%	60%	61%	57%
(VOL) Depends	3%	3%	5%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%	4%	1%	4%	1%	4%	2%
(VOL) Don't know	2%	1%	5%	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	0%	3%	2%	2%	1%	0%	2%	3%

7. Have you seen any of these red light cameras while driving in New Jersey, or not?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South
Yes	74%	75%	66%	74%	75%	72%	76%	71%	77%	75%	68%	71%	75%	74%
No	25%	23%	33%	25%	24%	28%	23%	27%	22%	23%	30%	28%	23%	25%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

8. Have you ever personally received a ticket from one of these cameras? [If YES: Was it you or someone else driving the car?]

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION			RED LIGHT CAMERA EXPERIENCE
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Ticketed
Yes, I was driving	10%	11%	6%	11%	8%	11%	9%	11%	6%	13%	9%	11%	10%	9%	67%
Yes, someone else was driving my car	4%	4%	3%	3%	6%	1%	4%	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	5%	3%	27%
(VOL) Yes – I was driving someone else's car and they received the ticket	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	6%
No, never received a ticket	85%	84%	88%	85%	84%	87%	85%	85%	85%	84%	87%	85%	85%	86%	0%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

[QUESTION 9 WAS ASKED OF THOSE WHO HAVE SEEN THE CAMERAS: n=571, moe=+/-4.1 %.]

9. Do you think having red light cameras has made you a safer driver, or hasn't it affected how you drive? [If SAFER: Has this made you safer just at the intersections with red light cameras or when you drive on other roads as well?]

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION			RED LIGHT CAMERA EXPERIENCE	
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Ticketed	Seen them
Safer – but just at camera intersections	8%	8%	9%	13%	7%	2%	9%	7%	7%	9%	7%	7%	11%	6%	18%	6%
Safer – on other roads as well	13%	12%	17%	21%	7%	13%	7%	19%	10%	13%	15%	12%	11%	17%	18%	12%
Safer – not sure to what extent	6%	5%	9%	10%	2%	8%	8%	4%	8%	6%	4%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%
Has not affected how I drive	72%	74%	63%	57%	82%	78%	75%	69%	73%	72%	72%	75%	72%	71%	57%	76%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	1%	3%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from September 17 to 21, 2014 with a statewide random sample of 802 adult residents, including 602 contacted via live interview on a landline telephone and 200 via live interview on a cell phone. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey questionnaire design, data weighting and analysis. Data collection support provided by Braun Research (field) and SSI (RDD sample). 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.

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)			
36% Dem	50% Male	28% 18-34	63% White
45% Ind	50% Female	38% 35-54	13% Black
19% Rep		34% 55+	15% Hispanic
			9% Asian/Other

	TOTAL	MARGIN OF ERROR															
		REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			REGION			RED LIGHT CAMERA EXPERIENCE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	North	Central	South	Ticketed	Seen them	Not seen
Unweighted N	802	680	122	261	352	149	423	379	134	219	448	341	201	230	117	454	219
Moe	3.5%	3.8%	8.9%	6.1%	5.2%	8.0%	4.8%	5.0%	8.5%	6.6%	4.6%	5.3%	6.9%	6.5%	9.1%	4.6%	6.6%

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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