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*This poll was conducted by the
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NEW JERSEY IMMIGRATION ATTITUDES STABLE

Poll finds little change after Newark shooting

Much of the public attention around the August 4th shooting of four college students in Newark has focused on the immigration status of the alleged perpetrators. In light of this event, the *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* decided to revisit the immigration poll it released this summer to measure whether opinion on the issue has changed. The current findings show little movement in public opinion from the original poll which was released on July 29, just six days prior to the Newark shooting.

Garden State residents continue to be divided on the overall impact of immigration – both legal and illegal – on the state. Currently, 36% say that immigration in general has been good for New Jersey compared to 43% who say it has been bad for the state. The 7 point gap between seeing immigration as a positive or negative is statistically similar to the 4 point gap measured in July, when opinion stood at 40% good to 44% bad. In the current poll, 19% have mixed feelings or are unsure about the effect of immigration on New Jersey, which is up from 12% in the July poll.

Turning specifically to the issue of illegal immigration, the poll found that just under half (47%) of state residents say illegal immigration is a very serious problem for the state, 33% call it somewhat serious, and 17% say it is not serious. The current numbers represent little change from the July poll, when opinion stood at 46% very serious, 30% somewhat serious, and 22% not serious.

“Illegal immigration continues to be an important issue in the state, but no more so than it was prior to this summer’s shootings,” remarked Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute. “New Jerseyans believe that most illegal immigrants, despite their entry status, tend to be law-abiding in all other respects.”

The current poll asked residents if they feel illegal immigrants are more likely than other New Jerseyans to commit crimes. Whether the question is posed about violent or non-violent crime, a majority in the state say that illegal immigrants are no more likely than the average citizen to engage in criminal behavior. Specifically, 55% say illegal immigrants are about as likely as other New Jerseyans to commit a violent crime like rape or murder and another 17% say they are less likely, compared to 24% who say illegal immigrants are more likely to commit this type of crime. Similarly, 50% of New Jerseyans say illegal immigrants are about as likely as other state residents to commit a non-violent crime like burglary and another 17% say they are less likely, compared to 26% who say they are more likely.

Most New Jerseyans (63%) continue to feel that most illegal immigrants who have worked in the country for at least two years should be given a chance to apply for legal resident status. This compares to 31% who say they should be deported. This finding is unchanged from the July poll when it stood at 65% to 30%.

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted by telephone with 801 New Jersey adults from September 27 to 30, 2007. 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 Gannett New Jersey newspaper group (Asbury Park Press, Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, Home News Tribune, and Ocean County Observer).

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. Overall, do you feel that immigration into New Jersey has been good or bad for the state?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			BORN IN THE U.S.		REGION OF STATE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	North	Central	South
Good	36%	34%	43%	42%	34%	28%	32%	58%	35%	35%	37%
Bad	43%	45%	33%	35%	45%	56%	45%	27%	44%	41%	43%
(VOL) No difference	3%	3%	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%
(VOL) Both good & bad	10%	9%	13%	9%	10%	7%	10%	9%	8%	11%	11%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	9%	10%	13%	7%	5%	10%	4%	10%	10%	6%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	801	688	113	278	310	182	709	86	356	189	230

TREND:	Sept. '07	July '07
Good	36%	40%
Bad	43%	44%
(VOL) No difference	3%	4%
(VOL) Both good & bad	10%	6%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	6%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	801	800

2. Now, thinking about ILLEGAL immigration. How serious a problem do you think the issue of ILLEGAL immigration is for NEW JERSEY right now – very, somewhat, not too, or not at all serious?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			BORN IN THE U.S.		REGION OF STATE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	North	Central	South
Very serious	47%	48%	45%	40%	47%	59%	50%	32%	50%	45%	48%
Somewhat serious	33%	36%	21%	33%	34%	30%	34%	26%	30%	33%	36%
Not too serious	11%	10%	12%	15%	11%	4%	9%	19%	11%	12%	8%
Not at all serious	6%	3%	18%	9%	5%	6%	5%	15%	6%	7%	6%
(VOL) Don't know	3%	3%	5%	3%	4%	2%	2%	7%	3%	3%	2%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	801	688	113	278	310	182	709	86	356	189	230

TREND:	Sept. '07	July '07
Very serious	47%	46%
Somewhat serious	33%	30%
Not too serious	11%	16%
Not at all serious	6%	6%
(VOL) Don't know	3%	2%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	801	408

3. If you had to choose, what do you think should happen to most ILLEGAL immigrants who have lived and worked in the U.S. for at least two years – They should be given a chance to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status OR they should be deported back to their native country? [Note: options were rotated]

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			BORN IN THE U.S.		REGION OF STATE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	North	Central	South
Keep jobs, apply for legal status	63%	61%	71%	69%	59%	54%	59%	84%	64%	63%	59%
Deported to native country	31%	33%	24%	23%	36%	40%	35%	11%	29%	30%	36%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	7%	5%	8%	6%	6%	7%	4%	7%	7%	6%
Unwtd N	801	688	113	278	310	182	709	86	356	189	230

TREND:	Sept. '07	July '07
Keep jobs, apply for legal status	63%	65%
Deported to native country	31%	30%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	6%
Unwtd N	801	800

[NOTE: The following two questions were asked of half the sample:]

4. Do you think illegal immigrants are more likely, less likely, or about as likely as other New Jerseyans to commit violent crimes like rape or murder?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER
More likely	24%	24%
Less likely	17%	16%
About as likely	55%	56%
(VOL) Don't know	4%	5%
Unwtd N	390	334

5. Do you think illegal immigrants are more likely, less likely, or about as likely as other New Jerseyans to commit NON-violent crimes like burglary?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER
More likely	26%	26%
Less likely	17%	15%
About as likely	50%	52%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	8%
Unwtd N	411	354

The Monmouth University/Gannett NJ Poll was designed and analyzed by the Monmouth University Polling Institute research staff. The telephone interviews conducted by Braun Research on September 27-30, 2007 with a statewide random sample of 801 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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