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## **NJ GOVERNOR: IT'S ANYONE'S GAME**

*Christie, Corzine neck and neck as Daggett fades*

Just days before selecting their next governor, New Jersey voters are clearly divided. The only sure bet from the latest **Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll** is that the winner will be either a Republican or a Democrat. As of Friday night, challenger Chris Christie held an insignificant one point lead over incumbent Jon Corzine among likely voters, 43% to 42%. Two weeks ago, the race was tied at 39% each. Independent Chris Daggett has faded to 8%, after reaching 14% in the previous poll.

Republican voters give 86% support to their party's nominee, compared to 6% for Corzine and 5% for Daggett. Democratic voters give 77% support to their party's nominee, compared to 11% for Christie and 9% for Daggett.

"This election will be defined by turnout like few others before it. Many Democrats are sitting on the sidelines and not considered to be likely voters at this point. They may be unenthusiastic about their governor, but can they be prodded to the polls for other reasons? If not, Christie may eke out the win," said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

A key dynamic in this race has been the vacillations of independent voters. The GOP nominee Christie now garners a 51% majority with this important voting bloc compared to just 29% for Democrat Corzine. The major shift is a drop in Daggett's support from 22% of independent voters two weeks ago to just 10% in the current poll.

"Independent voters are simply unhappy with the job Governor Corzine has done over the past four years. After a brief flirtation with Daggett's candidacy, many seem to have returned to Christie as their best chance for change," said Murray.

Jon Corzine's job performance rating stands at 35% approve to 55% disapprove among likely voters, including an anemic 21% to 69% among independents. The governor's personal rating stands at 39% favorable to 49% unfavorable, which has been fairly stable since July.

The Republican's ratings, though, have rebounded from the steady slide they experienced throughout the year. Currently, voter opinion of Chris Christie stands at 44% favorable to 36% unfavorable. It had dipped to 40% favorable to 41% unfavorable in mid-October.

"Political operatives live by the mantra that negative ads work. That may be true, but there is also a tipping point where too many negative ads can backfire. Perhaps we have reached that point in this race," said Murray.

Fully 73% of New Jersey voters say that Jon Corzine has unfairly attacked Chris Christie. A smaller majority of 54% say Christie has done the same against the governor. Independents are more likely to say that Corzine (78%) rather than Christie (46%) has launched unfair assaults. Unsurprisingly, Republicans agree, with 82% saying Corzine has attacked unfairly and 37% saying the same about Christie. On the other hand, Democratic voters are equally as likely to blame both Corzine (62%) and Christie (68%) for unfair attacks in this campaign.

The poll also found that independent candidate Chris Daggett's personal rating is now 22% favorable to 22% unfavorable, which is less positive than the 28% to 15% rating he held two weeks ago. A majority (56%) of likely voters still say they don't know enough to form an opinion about him.

The shift in voter opinion of Daggett is particularly pronounced among Republicans, going from a net positive 29% to 15% in mid-October to a net negative 18% to 30% in the current poll. "It seems that a good number of Republicans have gone from seeing Daggett as a credible candidate to an unwelcome spoiler," said Murray.

Some observers have speculated that the conservative wing of the Republican Party may withhold support for their nominee. However, the poll found that 90% of Republican voters who say they supported Steve Lonegan in the GOP primary are backing Chris Christie in the general election, which is statistically similar to the 95% who initially backed Christie in June and still support him today.

**– Green Acres Bond –**

Voters going to the polls on November 3<sup>rd</sup> will also be asked to approve a \$400 million bond measure to fund Green Acres, water supply and floodplain protection, farmland and historic preservation projects, as well as park improvements. However, just 16% have heard a lot about this public question and 43% have heard a little. Another 41% of likely voters have heard nothing about the bond issue they will be asked to vote on.

Currently, just over half (51%) of likely voters indicate they will support the bond, while 28% will definitely vote against it and 21% are undecided or won't vote on the question.

The text of the public question and interpretive statement on the ballot mentions the word debt only once. Currently, just 35% of voters say they know that the measure would require new state borrowing. Another 16% actually think that there will be no debt involved and 49% say they have no

idea. After being informed that the \$400 million program would require additional state borrowing, support for the bond drops to 30% in the poll.

“Past polling on public bond referenda suggests that most undecided voters will fall into the ‘no’ camp on election day. At only 51 percent support, this bond issue could be in trouble, especially if voters link the word ‘bond’ with ‘debt.’ It may be fortunate for proponents of this measure that most voters don’t,” said Murray.

Candidate Support by Party						
Likely Voters	Late Oct 09	Mid Oct 09	Early Oct 09	Sept 09	Aug 09	July 09
<b>Democrats</b>						
Corzine	77%	76%	75%	77%	74%	71%
Christie	11%	8%	8%	10%	17%	15%
Daggett	9%	11%	8%	6%	2%	3%
Other	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%
Undecided	3%	5%	9%	6%	5%	11%
<b>Republicans</b>						
Corzine	6%	6%	7%	7%	9%	9%
Christie	86%	81%	86%	83%	87%	83%
Daggett	5%	8%	3%	5%	2%	3%
Other	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Undecided	3%	4%	3%	4%	2%	6%
<b>Independents</b>						
Corzine	29%	21%	28%	30%	24%	26%
Christie	51%	45%	49%	53%	56%	47%
Daggett	10%	22%	11%	4%	7%	7%
Other	3%	2%	2%	2%	4%	1%
Undecided	6%	10%	10%	11%	9%	18%

The Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll was conducted by telephone with 1,041 New Jersey likely voters from October 28 to 30, 2009. This sample has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.0$  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. If the election for governor was held today, would you vote for Jon Corzine the Democrat, Chris Christie the Republican, Chris Daggett the independent, or some other candidate? [If undecided: At this moment do you lean more towards Corzine or more towards Christie?] [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		RACE		AGE			REGION		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	White	Black & Hispanic	18 to 34	35 to 54	55+	North	Central	South
Corzine	<b>42%</b>	77%	29%	6%	36%	49%	35%	73%	55%	40%	39%	44%	37%	44%
Christie	<b>43%</b>	11%	51%	86%	49%	38%	50%	19%	29%	46%	47%	42%	47%	44%
Daggett	<b>8%</b>	9%	10%	5%	9%	7%	8%	5%	8%	8%	8%	9%	8%	6%
Other candidate	<b>1%</b>	0%	3%	0%	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%	0%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>5%</b>	3%	6%	3%	5%	6%	6%	1%	7%	4%	6%	5%	5%	6%
Unwtd N	<b>1041</b>	360	390	269	503	538	886	100	149	495	381	475	285	268

TREND: Likely voters	Late Oct 2009	Mid Oct 2009	Early Oct 2009	September 2009	August 2009	July 2009
Corzine	42%	39%	40%	39%	36%	37%
Christie	43%	39%	43%	47%	50%	45%
Daggett	8%	14%	8%	5%	4%	4%
Other candidate	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	7%	8%	7%	8%	13%
Unwtd N	1041	1004	527	531	484	527

2. Please tell me if your general impression of the following candidates is favorable or unfavorable, or if you don't have an opinion. [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

Jon Corzine

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			VOTE CHOICE			
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
Favorable	<b>39%</b>	71%	25%	9%	91%	2%	16%	25%
Unfavorable	<b>49%</b>	16%	64%	84%	3%	91%	67%	36%
No opinion/Don't recognize	<b>12%</b>	13%	10%	7%	7%	7%	17%	39%
Unwtd N	<b>1041</b>	360	390	269	356	458	89	120

TREND: Likely voters	Late Oct 2009	Mid Oct 2009	Early Oct 2009	September 2009	August 2009	July 2009
Favorable	39%	37%	40%	37%	37%	41%
Unfavorable	49%	51%	49%	53%	53%	50%
No opinion/Don't recognize	12%	12%	10%	10%	10%	9%
Unwtd N	1041	1004	527	531	484	527

Chris Christie

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			VOTE CHOICE			
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
Favorable	<b>44%</b>	17%	50%	83%	7%	90%	19%	25%
Unfavorable	<b>36%</b>	59%	32%	10%	70%	3%	66%	22%
No opinion/Don't recognize	<b>19%</b>	24%	18%	7%	22%	7%	16%	52%
Unwtd N	<b>1041</b>	360	390	269	356	458	89	120

TREND: Likely voters	Late Oct 2009	Mid Oct 2009	Early Oct 2009	September 2009	August 2009	July 2009
Favorable	44%	40%	41%	48%	49%	50%
Unfavorable	36%	41%	39%	30%	33%	26%
No opinion/Don't recognize	19%	19%	19%	22%	18%	24%
Unwtd N	1041	1004	527	531	484	527

Chris Daggett

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			VOTE CHOICE			
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
Favorable	<b>22%</b>	23%	26%	18%	17%	16%	90%	17%
Unfavorable	<b>22%</b>	17%	24%	30%	16%	34%	4%	13%
No opinion/Don't recognize	<b>56%</b>	61%	51%	52%	67%	50%	6%	70%
Unwtd N	<b>1041</b>	360	390	269	356	458	89	120

TREND: Likely voters	Late Oct 2009	Mid Oct 2009	Early Oct 2009	September 2009	August 2009	July 2009
Favorable	22%	28%	17%	11%	11%	7%
Unfavorable	22%	15%	8%	6%	9%	10%
No opinion/Don't recognize	56%	56%	75%	83%	80%	82%
Unwtd N	1041	1004	527	531	484	527

3. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Jon Corzine is doing as governor?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			VOTE CHOICE			
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
Approve	<b>35%</b>	62%	21%	10%	78%	4%	9%	26%
Disapprove	<b>55%</b>	25%	69%	87%	8%	94%	82%	47%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>10%</b>	13%	10%	3%	14%	2%	9%	26%
Unwtd N	<b>1041</b>	360	390	269	356	458	89	120

TREND: Likely voters	Late Oct 2009	Early Oct 2009	September 2009	August 2009	July 2009
Approve	35%	41%	34%	35%	40%
Disapprove	55%	55%	58%	58%	53%
(VOL) Don't know	10%	5%	9%	7%	7%
Unwtd N	1041	527	531	484	527

4. Which ONE of the following issues matters most in deciding how you will vote for governor? [ITEMS WERE ROTATED]

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID				VOTE CHOICE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
Property taxes	36%	27%	38%	49%	19%	51%	43%	32%
Corruption in government	14%	8%	20%	16%	8%	19%	16%	7%
The economy and jobs	27%	34%	20%	23%	40%	19%	15%	22%
Health care	15%	24%	10%	8%	25%	4%	17%	21%
(VOL) None of these	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	1%	3%
(VOL) Can't choose	7%	6%	10%	3%	5%	6%	7%	15%
Unwtd N	1041	360	390	269	356	458	89	120

5. Which ONE of the following candidate qualities matters most in deciding how you will vote for governor? [ITEMS WERE ROTATED]

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID				VOTE CHOICE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
Is honest	22%	20%	25%	21%	20%	19%	28%	33%
Has the right experience	13%	20%	12%	3%	28%	3%	5%	8%
Can bring needed change	32%	26%	33%	40%	17%	46%	43%	29%
Shares my values	28%	30%	23%	34%	32%	30%	21%	14%
(VOL) None of these	2%	1%	4%	1%	2%	1%	1%	7%
(VOL) Can't choose	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%	2%	10%
Unwtd N	1041	360	390	269	356	458	89	120

6. If Chris Christie beats Jon Corzine, do you think this will change the way that state government operates a lot, a little, or not at all?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID				VOTE CHOICE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
A lot	36%	38%	29%	46%	40%	42%	20%	20%
A little	40%	31%	46%	46%	30%	52%	35%	37%
Not at all	19%	24%	20%	7%	24%	6%	42%	27%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	6%	5%	1%	7%	1%	2%	16%
Unwtd N	1041	360	390	269	356	458	89	120

TREND: Likely voters		
	Late Oct 2009	Early Oct 2009
A lot	36%	35%
A little	40%	42%
Not at all	19%	20%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	4%
Unwtd N	1041	527

7. Regardless of how you will vote, which candidate has the best plan to lower property taxes – Corzine, Christie, Daggett, or none of them?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID				VOTE CHOICE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
Corzine	15%	31%	6%	1%	37%	0%	2%	5%
Christie	29%	9%	35%	54%	3%	64%	5%	15%
Daggett	8%	8%	10%	7%	4%	4%	54%	6%
None of them	37%	38%	41%	29%	43%	26%	30%	54%
(VOL) Don't know	11%	14%	7%	9%	14%	5%	9%	20%
Unwtd N	1041	360	390	269	356	458	89	120

8. Which candidate has attacked his opponent unfairly in this election – Jon Corzine, Chris Christie, both of them, or neither of them?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID				VOTE CHOICE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
Jon Corzine only	29%	11%	38%	48%	7%	55%	14%	20%
Chris Christie only	10%	17%	6%	3%	20%	2%	8%	3%
Both of them	44%	51%	40%	34%	53%	30%	66%	50%
Neither of them	13%	15%	10%	14%	14%	9%	9%	18%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	5%	6%	2%	6%	3%	3%	9%
Unwtd N	1041	360	390	269	356	458	89	120

9. In addition to the race for governor, there will also be a public question on the ballot regarding an open space bond. Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all about this ballot measure?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID		
		Dem	Ind	Rep
Lot	16%	13%	18%	18%
Little	43%	40%	44%	48%
Nothing at all	41%	46%	38%	34%

10. This measure would authorize the state to issue 400 million dollars in bonds to fund Green Acres, water supply and floodplain protection, and farmland and historic preservation projects. It will also fund park improvements and facilities. Will you vote for or against this bond measure, or not vote at all on this question?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			HEARD OF QUESTION			REQUIRES NEW DEBT		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Lot	Little	Nothing	Yes	No	Don't Know
For	51%	62%	44%	43%	51%	51%	50%	42%	67%	52%
Against	28%	16%	38%	38%	41%	30%	22%	47%	14%	20%
Won't vote at all	8%	8%	7%	8%	4%	5%	13%	4%	9%	10%
(VOL) Don't know	13%	14%	11%	11%	3%	14%	15%	6%	9%	18%
Unwid N	1041	360	390	269	182	466	393	404	150	487

11. As far as you know, does this measure require any new state debt to fund it, or not?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			HEARD OF QUESTION		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Lot	Little	Nothing
Yes, requires new debt	35%	27%	42%	41%	54%	43%	19%
No, does not require	16%	19%	15%	13%	24%	16%	14%
(VOL) Don't know	49%	55%	43%	46%	22%	42%	67%

12. If you knew this 400 million dollar bond would require borrowing and new state debt, would you vote for or against this bond measure? *[Includes those already aware of debt from question 11]*

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			HEARD OF QUESTION		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Lot	Little	Nothing
For	30%	37%	26%	28%	44%	34%	21%
Against	58%	50%	64%	63%	52%	54%	64%
(VOL) Won't vote either way	3%	2%	3%	3%	0%	3%	3%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	12%	6%	7%	5%	9%	12%

13. How worried are you about the direction of the nation's economy in the next year – very, somewhat, not too, or not at all worried?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID				VOTE CHOICE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Corzine	Christie	Daggett	Undecided
Very worried	56%	46%	59%	69%	39%	70%	53%	59%
Somewhat worried	33%	40%	30%	25%	43%	25%	32%	30%
Not too worried	8%	9%	9%	4%	11%	4%	11%	9%
Not at all worried	3%	4%	3%	2%	5%	1%	3%	2%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

The Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll was conducted and analyzed by the Monmouth University Polling Institute research staff. The telephone interviews were collected on October 28-30, 2009 with a statewide random sample of 1,041 likely voters. For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.0 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			
Likely Voter Sample (weighted)			
40% Dem	48% Male	20% 18-34	76% White
34% Ind	52% Female	45% 35-54	9% Black
26% Rep		35% 55+	10% Hispanic
			5% Asian/Other

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