

Stockton Poll: Christie Widens Lead Over Buono for Governor

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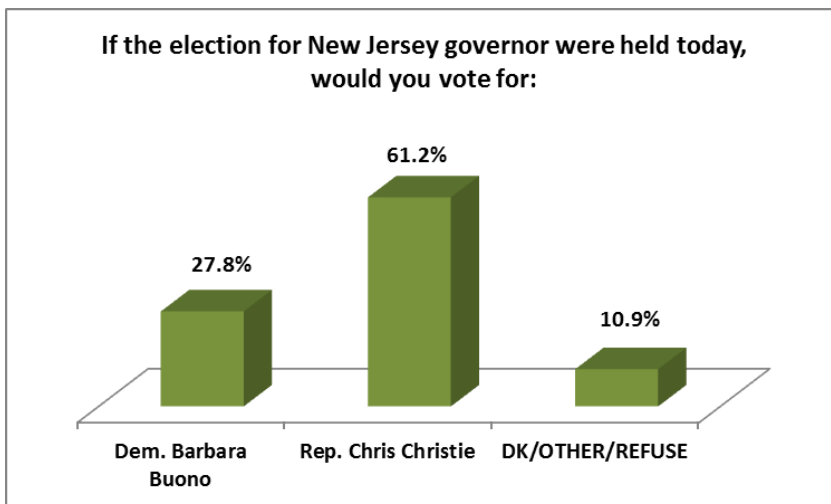
Thursday, October 10, 2013

Contact: Maryjane Briant
News and Media Relations Director
Galloway Township, NJ 08205
Maryjane.Briant@stockton.edu
(609) 652-4593

Galloway Township, NJ- Republican Gov. Chris Christie has extended an already-large lead over his challenger, Democratic State Sen. Barbara Buono, in the gubernatorial election, according to a statewide poll released today by the Stockton Polling Institute.

The incumbent holds a 33-point advantage over Buono in the poll of 800 likely general election voters, with Christie supported by 61 percent to only 28 percent supporting his challenger. Eleven percent are undecided, support another candidate, or refuse to say whom they are voting for.

The poll results show the governor widening a 28-point lead found in a Stockton Poll in mid-September.



The statewide poll was conducted with 800 likely New Jersey voters from Oct. 3-8, 2013.

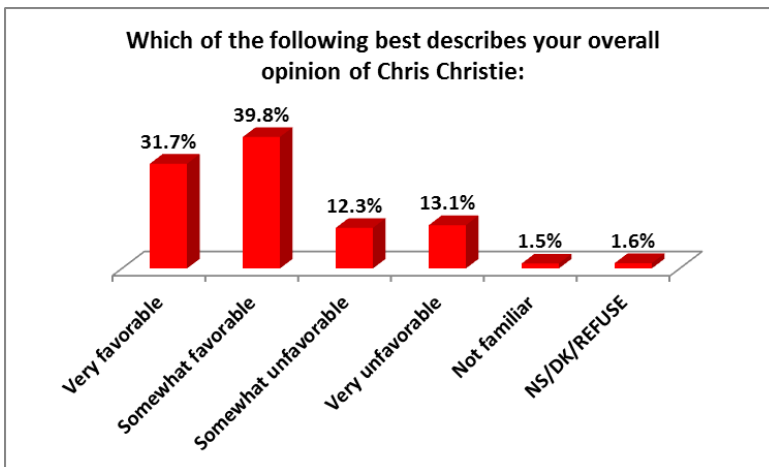
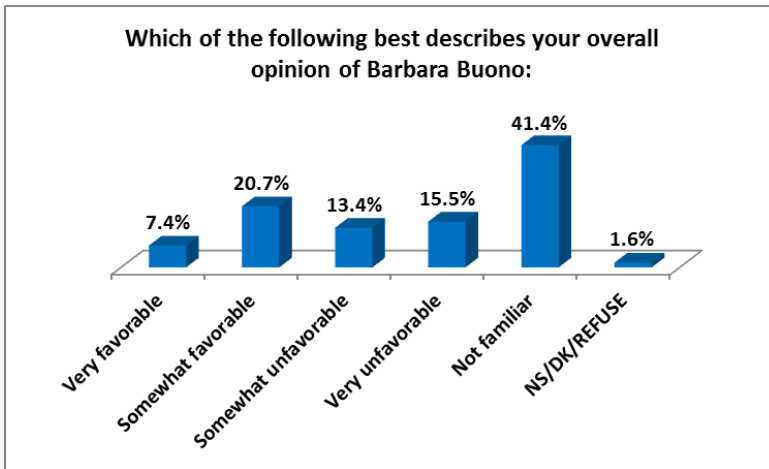
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Interviewers called both land lines and cell phones from The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey campus. The survey has a margin of error of +/-3.5 percent. The Stockton Polling Institute is part of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton College.

With the Nov. 5 election less than a month away, Buono continues to struggle to become known among voters, with 41 percent saying they are not familiar with her. Among those who do recognize the senator from Middlesex County, as many people have an unfavorable opinion of her (29 percent) as those who view her favorably (28 percent).

Christie achieves nearly universal name recognition (97 percent), and 72 percent say their opinion of him is either very or somewhat favorable. Sixty-four percent rate Christie's job performance as excellent or good, with 35 percent rating it as fair or poor.



“Senator Buono is up against the formidable hurdles of Governor Christie’s advantages in fundraising, name recognition and general support from the public,” said Daniel J. Douglas, director of the Hughes Center.

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The governor's support runs deep, cutting across demographic factors including household income, education level, sex, age, and Hispanic ethnicity. He leads in every county except the Democratic strongholds of Hudson and Essex counties. The only exception is that black/African American voters strongly support Democrat Buono by a 4-to-1 margin.

Buono also leads 55 percent to 34 percent among Democratic voters, who outnumber Republicans in New Jersey. However, an overwhelming 93 percent of Republicans say they are voting for Christie, with only 5 percent supporting Buono. Independent/unaffiliated voters also favor Christie by a large margin, 65 percent to 18 percent.

	Buono	Christie
Men	22.8%	63.9%
Women	32.5%	58.6%
White	22.2%	68.7%
Black/African American	68.5%	17.4%
Hispanic/Latino	25.5%	58.2%
Democrats	55.0%	33.9%
Republicans	5.0%	92.9%
Unaffiliated	18.1%	65.4%

Not surprisingly in light of the governor's support, 56 percent say New Jersey is heading in the right direction, while 30 percent say it is on the wrong track.

When asked to name their top funding priorities from a list of nine state budget areas, 22 percent identify property taxes and 21 percent say jobs was a priority. Seventeen percent identify K-12 education, and 12 percent name health care. Rounding out the list is higher education (9 percent), state workers' pensions and environment (both 6 percent), transportation (4 percent) or some other budget priority (2 percent).

Seventy-nine percent say property taxes have gone up either a lot or a little in the past three years, with only 4 percent saying they have decreased a lot or a little. Twelve percent say they have remained steady.

Finally, a majority of 75 percent supports raising the state's minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$8.25 an hour and providing annual cost-of-living increases. Twenty-two percent oppose the ballot proposal, and 3 percent are undecided. Among opponents and undecideds, 36 percent would switch to supporting the minimum wage increase if cost-of-living increases were not included.

Sixty-four percent support a proposal to allow veterans groups to use proceeds from raffles and games of chance to fund operating expenses, with 25 percent preferring to keep those funds dedicated to charitable and educational purposes only, and 11 percent undecided.

Methodology

Interviews were conducted at the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy's Stockton Polling Institute by live interviewers calling from the Stockton College campus. The poll was conducted with 800 likely general election voters from Oct. 3-8, 2013. Interviewers called both land lines and cell phones. All prospective respondent households in the state have the same chance of joining the sample because of random selection. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.5 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. MOE is higher for subsets. Data are weighted based on United States Census Bureau demographics for the New Jersey voting population.

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About the Hughes Center

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy (www.stockton.edu/hughescenter) at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey serves as a catalyst for research, analysis and innovative policy solutions on the economic, social and cultural issues facing New Jersey. The Center is named for William J. Hughes, whose distinguished career includes service in the U.S. House of Representatives, Ambassador to Panama and as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Stockton College. The Hughes Center can be found at www.facebook.com/Hughes.Center.Stockton.College and can be followed on Twitter @hughescenter.



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