

## Rutgers Eagleton: Christie approval rating just over 50%

By PolitickerNJ Staff | August 12th, 2014

As New Jersey Governor Chris Christie ramps up his travel schedule to states like Iowa and New Hampshire, back home his overall job approval continues to hover just above 50 percent, according to this morning's Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. Remaining well below his post-Superstorm Sandy high of 73 percent, 52 percent of registered New Jersey voters now approve of the job Christie is doing overall, a slight dip from his 55 percent approval in April. Forty-one percent disapprove and 7 percent are unsure.

But voters' approval of the job Christie is doing on specific issues is a different story, with more disapproving than approving in most areas. At 59 percent approval, Hurricane Sandy recovery is Christie's highest rating, though a far cry from his high of 87 percent in April 2013. Perceptions of Christie's performance on the state pension fund crisis, asked for the first time this poll, are particularly negative, with 53 percent disapproving of Christie's handling of the issue; only 24 percent approve.

Despite lukewarm job ratings and an embattled past few months for the governor, 57 percent of voters expect Christie to run for president in 2016; only 29 percent believe he will not, while another 14 percent are unsure. Most say Christie's preparations for a possible presidential bid are influencing how he does his job: 48 percent say his decisions on state issues are more about his potential candidacy while 38 percent say he is only doing what is best for New Jersey.

More than half see Christie's travelling and fundraising for the Republican Governors Association which has conveniently taken him to some must-visit locations for 2016 as having no effect on his job as governor, but just over a third say that this has hurt his ability to effectively carry out his current duties.

"As Governor Christie clearly lays the groundwork for a possible presidential run, the results in New Jersey are a mixed bag," said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. "While Christie gets a positive overall rating -- one that is pretty good for a Republican in an otherwise Democratic state -- concerns about specific issues are quite high and have the potential to drive down his overall support over time."

Results are from a statewide poll of 871 New Jerseyans contacted by live callers on both landlines and cell phones from July 28 to Aug. 5, 2014. This release reports on a subsample of 750 registered voters with a margin of error of +/- 4.0 percentage points.