

Christie nearly last in new poll in Iowa

Michael Symons

Christie at 1 percent in latest poll, but his eyes are set on New Hampshire

(Photo: AP)

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TRENTON – Perhaps it is wise of Gov. Chris Christie to stake his presidential campaign on New Hampshire and not Iowa, home of the first presidential nominating contest: His candidacy is being buried in the latter state, according to a new poll.



Quinnipiac University says its June 20-29 poll of 666 likely participants in the Iowa caucus measures Christie at 1 percent, putting him in 15th place out of 16 candidates. He's ahead of former New York Gov. George Pataki, who has been out of office for nearly nine years.

Christie was in eighth place, at 3 percent, when Quinnipiac last polled in Iowa in May. He was at 4 percent in February.

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"We knew that he was going to write off Iowa, but it does mean that New Hampshire is critical," said Montclair State University political scientist Brigid Harrison. "Just watching how the campaign operated, a lot of it has been invested in New Hampshire. And also his style and his message, I think, resonate a lot more with the New Hampshire than they would with Iowans. It's a tough sell in Iowa."



Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker led the Iowa field with 18 percent, according to the poll. Businessman Donald Trump and physician Ben Carson were next at 10 percent each.

Christie has the worst favorability ratings in the field in Iowa — by a large margin. Twenty-five percent have a favorable opinion of him and 59 percent have an unfavorable one. That yields a net-negative rating of 34 points. No other candidate was worse than minus-18. Even the polarizing Trump registered a net-negative rating of just 5 points.

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Eighteen percent of poll respondents said they would definitely not support Christie, higher than any candidate except Trump and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, but drifting downward from 26 percent back in February.

Christie has visited Iowa a dozen times as governor, including four visits in his first term, another four in 2014 and four so far this year. He has only visited Iowa once since early March, though, for a two-day swing three weeks ago.

Rutgers University political scientist David Redlawsk, who participated in Democratic politics when he used to live in Iowa, then did polling in the state and wrote a book about its politics, said Christie can't entirely skip Iowa, even though its social conservatives and evangelicals aren't natural fits for him.

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"I think New Hampshire is more fertile ground for Christie than Iowa. But he can't ignore Iowa either," Redlawsk said. "As for New Hampshire he should get an announcement bump for the time being, but it's a long way until February."

Christie officially declared his candidacy for president Tuesday in Livingston, then immediately headed to New Hampshire for five days of campaigning, with a side trip Wednesday to Maine.

The Quinnipiac Poll has a margin of error of 3.8 percentage points.

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