

Poll: Christie no longer top presidential primary pick of N.J. Republicans

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Governor trails Trump in home state.

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New Jersey Republicans no longer consider Chris Christie their top choice to be the next president, with more potential primary voters supporting celebrity businessman Donald Trump than the state's sitting governor, according to a Rutgers-Eagleton Poll released on Monday.

Nearly half of the state's Republicans do not believe Christie would make a good president, [according to the poll](#), which surveyed voters in the Garden State over the last week.

Just 12 percent of G.O.P. voters in New Jersey would actually cast a ballot for the two-term executive if the primary was held now. He placed second, running two points ahead of Jeb Bush and Scott Walker, and nine points behind Trump.

Ashley Koning, the assistant director of the Eagleton Center Rutgers, said the voters "remain sour about the thought of a 'President' Christie and don't expect him to snag the nomination."

"Most share the growing belief that Christie missed his chance to run for president at the height of his popularity," Koning said.

The ranking of Republican candidates does come with a caveat: The question was posed to just 263 potential voters and, as a result, has a higher margin of error than the rest of the poll. Koning said that portion of the survey could be off by 6.8 percent. That means Christie, in theory, could have the support of nearly 19 percent potential primary voters in New Jersey—or less than six percent.

While Christie has boasted about his success as a bipartisan leader, capable of uniting both major parties in a deeply blue state, 84 percent of Democrats and 71 percent of independent voters said they do not believe Christie would make a good president. Forty-five percent of Republicans said the same, with half of respondents saying he would make a good president and 5 percent saying they don't know if he would.

That negative view—that Christie isn't capable of successfully leading the nation—is held across political ideologies, genders, races, major age groups, education levels and regions of the state.



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Regardless of how they feel personally about Christie's ability to lead, more than half of the poll respondents said they think Christie's "best chance of winning the Republican nomination for president" has come and gone. And 6 percent said he never had a shot in the first place. Not even a majority of Republican voters still think the governor has a great chance of being president.

But New Jersey voters think Christie will rank high enough in the polls to be on the stage Thursday in the first presidential debate, which will include just the top ten candidates based on the five most recent polls, and they think he'll perform well.

"About the only thing New Jersey voters and Gov. Christie agree on is their belief that he will make the top 10 Thursday night," Koning said. "New Jerseyans also respect the governor's ability to hold his own if he does join the debate."

The poll, conducted by phone between July 25 and Saturday, surveyed 867 adults, 757 of whom were registered voters. It has a simple margin of error for registered voters of 3.6 percent, and the adjusted margin of error for that subset is 4 percent.

This story has been updated to reflect the fact that the ranking of Republican candidates includes an adjusted margin of error of 6.8 percent.

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