

Poll: N.J. voters warm up to Obama, views on Christie unchanged

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By **Matt Friedman/Statehouse Bureau**

By

TRENTON — New Jersey voters are liking President Obama more and more while their views of Gov. Chris Christie are mostly unchanged, according to a Rutgers-Eagleton poll released this morning.

Sixty percent of registered voters in the Garden State now view Obama favorably, according to the poll, while 33 percent view him unfavorably. That's up significantly from November, when 52 percent saw him favorably and 37 percent unfavorably, and is the highest rating since the polling organization started asking the question in September, 2010.

Obama's lowest rating in a Rutgers-Eagleton poll was October, 2010, when 44 percent saw him favorably and 45 percent unfavorably.

Voters are also warming to Obama's job performance. Forty-eight percent grade him with an A or B — up from 37 percent in November. The number of voters giving him a D or an F is largely unchanged, at 30 percent, while the number of voters giving him a C is 22 percent — down from 31 percent in November.

Pollster David Redlawsk attributed the bump to independent voters.

"Independent and moderate voters are the key to winning re-election in New Jersey," he said. "If Obama's numbers continue to tick up among these groups, he will be in good shape in November. It appears that his latest moves to be more assertive against the Republican Congress and to take on his opponents more directly may be paying off, at least here."

The poll of 914 registered voters was conducted from February 9 to 11 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.3 percentage points.

While President Obama's ratings have been on an upward trend for several months, Gov. Chris Christie's are largely unchanged from November. Forty-seven percent now rate him favorably compared to 42 percent who rate him unfavorably.

Forty-three percent give Christie A or B, while 32 percent give him a D or F. Twenty-four percent assign the governor a C.

"Governor Christie's favorability ratings in our polls have stayed within a very small range, between 44 percent and 49 percent, since he was inaugurated," said Redlawsk. "His job performance grade bounces around a bit more, depending on how voters view the particular issues of the day. But where voters prefer Obama personally to his job performance, the two measures are closely tied in the case of the governor."

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File photo

New Jersey voters are warming to President Obama, while their view of Gov. Chris Christie is fairly static, according to a Rutgers-Eagleton poll released this morning.