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Feeling overburdened, N.J. residents keep eyes on tax-cutting talk in Trenton

As the income tax cut Gov. **Chris Christie** included in his budget plan, and a competing property tax credit proposal from Democrats, get more coverage in the state, an overwhelming majority of registered voters have finally recognized New Jersey as one of the highest-taxed states in the nation, though their concerns about not getting their money's worth from the taxes they pay is nothing new, according to a poll.

"Historical data show that state and local taxes in New Jersey have been among the highest in the nation for at least the past 40 years," said **David Redlawsk**, director of the Rutgers Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling, in prepared remarks. "But it took a while for people to fully recognize that fact, even though complaints about taxes have been around as long as taxes themselves."

In 1972, only 9 percent of the 914 registered voters polled said that they pay more taxes than other states, but for 2012, that number has climbed to 85 percent.

A [previous Rutgers-Eagleton poll](#) found more resentment toward property taxes than income taxes among registered voters. According to Redlawsk, this preference for property tax relief stems from the greater visibility of monthly or quarterly property tax bills over annual income tax deductions. As a result, the Democrats' proposed property tax credit may still be better received by voters than Christie's proposed income tax cut, Redlawsk said.

"A lot would depend on how the proposed (property tax) credit is sold," Redlawsk said in an e-mail. "A tax rate cut may seem more direct than a credit, but if the credit ends up being worth more to the typical voter, I would expect voters to be more positive toward it."

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