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The Political State

The Record's team takes on New Jersey politics

Rutgers-Eagleton poll shows Christie's favorability is increasing

Posted by Melissa Hayes on Tuesday, June 12, 2012 6:00 am | Comments

Governor Christie's favorability among voters has reached an all-time high, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton poll.

For the first time since he took office, 50 percent of those polled gave Christie a favorable rating, according to the poll released today. That's up 4 percentage points from late March.

Of those polled, 39 percent gave Christie an unfavorable rating and 11 percent had no opinion. Men were more likely to rate the governor favorably than women, according to the poll.

"After some weakening between November and March, Governor Christie's favorability rating has rebounded to as positive as we've seen," said Poll Director David Redlawsk, a political science professor at Rutgers, in a statement.

Redlawsk noted that Christie's popularity has grown even as he pushes to merge the state's higher education institutions.

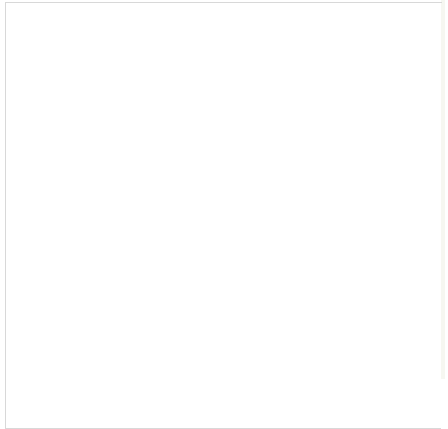
"Despite recent controversies over plans for Rutgers and less-than-positive economic news, voters are trending toward more positive ratings for the governor and the state," he said. "But more improvement will probably require more voters to think things are getting better, not just standing still."

Christie gained more support from independent voters, seeing an increase of 12 points to 55 percent rating him favorably. Only 27 percent of Democrats gave Christie a favorable rating and GOP support dropped from 85 to 79 percent.

Low- and high-income voters offered the governor more support, while the middle class was somewhat less supportive, according to the poll.

"The recent intense focus on tax cuts may be one reason high-income voters who would benefit the most see the governor in a better light," Redlawsk said. "But lower-income voters also have become more positive. This makes sense given that earlier polling we've done shows low-income voters likely to overestimate how much they would gain from the tax cut proposals."

His job performance ratings are also up. Christie received an 'A' or 'B' rating from 46 percent of those



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polled, which is up 3 points from the last poll.

Those giving him a 'D' or 'F' fell three points to 29 percent, while 24 percent gave Christie a 'C,' the same amount as the March poll.

Of the voters polled 51 percent said New Jersey is going in the right direction, up four points from March. While 40 percent continue to say the state is on the "wrong track." The remaining polled said they were unsure how the state is doing.

Of those that said the state is going in the right direction, 51 percent said it was because "things are changing for the better" and 46 percent said they gave New Jersey a positive rating "simply because things are not getting worse."

Of the 40 percent that said the state is headed in the wrong direction, two-third said it's "simple because things are not getting better" and 30 percent said it is because "things are changing for the worse."

Rutgers-Eagleton polled 1,191 adults with a sub-sample of 1,065 registered voters between May 31 and June 4.



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