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Months after Sandy, Christie's Approval Rating Shows some Slippage

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It's been six months since Hurricane Sandy ripped apart New Jersey's shoreline. For many Superstorm-battered victims who are still in the process of rebuilding, it seems like yesterday.

In the weeks after Sandy, Garden State voters gave Gov. Chris Christie the thumbs up for his job performance, but according to

a new Rutgers-Eagleton Poll released Wednesday, some weak spots have appeared to emerge.

It's the state's consistently high unemployment rate, which hovers well above the national average, and the lack of jobs that nag voters polled, and because of that, Christie's ratings have dropped slightly since February.

Just 42 percent of voters approve of Christie's handling of the state's economy and job creation, and only 37 percent approve of his tax policy, according to the survey. About 50 percent approve of Christie's efforts on education, the budget, and crime.

No doubt, soon after Sandy, New Jerseyans were relieved with the speed of recovery efforts, despite unhappiness about the state's poor economic conditions: 68 percent approve of his overall job performance, 64 percent have a favorable impression, and 60 percent grade Christie A or B.

Other polls have shown the Republican governor ahead in the race against his Democratic challenger, State Senator Barbara Buono, but this latest study suggests there is evidence Christie's ratings are coming down from his record highs. Christie's overall job performance is down five points and favorability is down six points from a February Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. His approval ratings on the economy and taxes have fallen three points.

"Christie still has ratings any governor would love, but all-time highs generally come back toward earth over time," said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University in a statement. "With Sandy recovery helping drive overall approval and voters all but ecstatic at his efforts there, Christie remains in great political shape."

Results are from a poll of 923 New Jersey adults conducted statewide among both landline and cell phone households from April 3-7. A subsample of 819 registered voters reported on here has a margin of error of +/- 3.7 percentage points.

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