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Poll: Buono struggling to gain voter support, even among Democrats

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BY MELISSA HAYES



Governor Christie continues to lead Democratic challenger Barbara Buono in polls.

Governor Christie's efforts to give voters a negative impression of his opponent, state Sen. Barbara Buono, before she can introduce herself seems to be working, according to a Rutgers pollster.

A Rutgers- Eagleton Poll released today shows Christie is leading Buono by a large margin, 59 percent to 27 percent. And more than eight in 10 voters – including most Democrats – expect him to win another term.

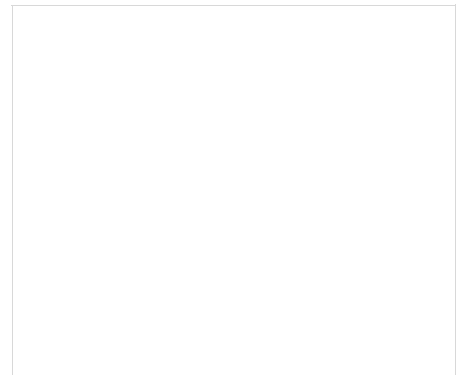
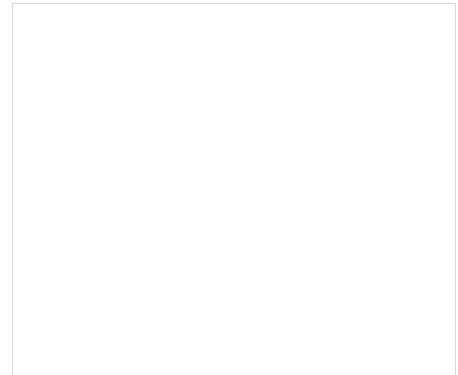
“Since cutting Christie’s margin by 10 points in April, Buono has made absolutely no additional progress,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. “While her name recognition has climbed to 46 percent of voters from only 30 percent in April, nearly all of that increase has come from voters who now have an unfavorable impression of her. The onslaught of attack ads by Governor Christie’s campaign appears to be having its desired effect.”

While Christie continues to enjoy a 64 percent favorability rating, in large part for his handling of superstorm Sandy, Buono is struggling, according to the poll.

More than half of the voters surveyed have no opinion of her and only 22 percent have a favorable view, up four points from an April Rutgers-Eagleton poll. Meanwhile, negative views of Buono have doubled to 24 percent, the latest poll found.

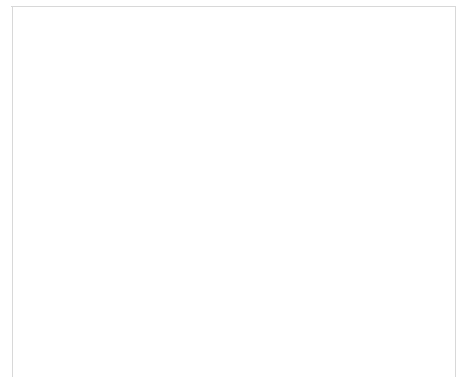
Buono continues to have trouble among her own party with only 33 percent of Democrats saying they have a favorable opinion of her and most offering no opinion at all.

Although Christie’s campaign and the Republican Governors Association are running ads criticizing Buono’s record in both the state Senate and Assembly, only 13 percent of those polled said the campaign ads have been



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The poll found that even among voters who have a favorable impression of Buono, she leads only 64 percent to 26 percent. Among those with a favorable view of Chrisite, however, the Republican governor wins 84 percent, losing only 6 percent to his Democratic challenger.

“There is little, if any, good news for Buono in these numbers,” said Redlawsk. “Post-Superstorm Sandy, it seems that voters feel Christie can do no wrong, making her battle more than uphill.”

Supporters remain loyal to Christie, with 85 percent of those who voted for him four years ago saying they will vote for him again this year. He even wins 2012 Obama voters 45 percent to 38 percent.

And despite changes to the state’s pension and health benefits systems, which have government employees contributing more money, voters in public employee union house holds prefer Christie 45 percent to 39 percent, the poll found.

Rutgers-Eagleton surveyed 888 New Jersey adults from June 3 to 9. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.3 percentage points. Of those polled, 763 are registered voters.

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