

Poll: Christie victory unlikely to make way for GOP legislators

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According to a poll by Rutgers-Eagleton, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie will be sporting some short coattails this election season.

Coattails signify Christie's power to influence races lower down on the ballot, says Rutgers-Eagleton Professor David Redlawsk.

"The basic idea of coattails is that a candidate at the top of the ballot, let's say running for president or running for governor, has influence on how voters vote in races lower on the ballot," Redlawsk said. "The reason this is often thought to happen is that people have a lot of information typically about the highest level race, like the race for governor, and a lot less information about the race for the legislature, they don't tend to know the candidates as well."

The poll, released Monday, found that only 35 percent of Christie supporters plan on also supporting Republican candidates for General Assembly, while 27 percent planned to support Democrats.

"Our sense is if this holds, it's unlikely that the legislature will switch over to the Republican side," Redlawsk said. "At the same time, the governor has certainly shown that he has gotten much of his program through even with Democrats controlling the legislature."

Republicans are also outnumbered throughout the state. Eighty percent of Democrats polled said they would vote for their own party in Assembly races, while the remainder was unsure.

The poll also found that among those who do not support Christie, 67 percent plan on voting for Democratic Assembly candidates, while five percent plan on voting for GOP candidates. Results were similar when it came to the state Senate races: 69 percent of those who do not support Christie planned to back Democratic candidates for state Senate, while eight percent planned to back GOP candidates.