

Poll: Christie's coattails are short

Matt Friedman/The Star-Ledger
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Gov. Chris Christie appears in Long Branch today. (*Andrew Mills/The Star-Ledger*)

TRENTON — Gov. Chris Christie's coattails do not appear to extend to the state Legislature, according to a Rutgers-Eagleton poll released today.

Although Republican Christie has a 32-point lead over Democratic gubernatorial nominee Barbara Buono — 59 percent to 27 percent — the poll found that more voters plan to choose Democrats to represent them in the state Legislature than Republicans.

Forty percent say they'll vote for Democrats for state Assembly while 42 percent said they will pick Democrats in state Senate contests. Twenty-six percent said they will pick Republicans for Assembly, while the same number said they'd pick Republicans for state Senate.

"While Democrats worry about low turnout due to both the U.S. Senate special election three weeks earlier and the lack of enthusiasm so far for Buono, the preference for Democrats in the Legislature remains strong," said pollster David Redlawsk. "As always with statewide generic ballot tests, some individual races are likely to be much closer. These questions do not get at specific races."

The poll, however, found that negative impressions of Democrats in the Legislature are increasing. In April, 41 percent of voters had a favorable impression of the Democrat-led Legislature while 20 percent had an unfavorable one. Now, 30 percent have a favorable impression and 26 percent have an unfavorable one.

Democrats currently hold a 48-32 majority in the Assembly and a 24-16 majority in the state Senate.

The poll of 888 registered voters was conducted from June 3 to June 9 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.3 percentage points.

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