

Majority of N.J. voters blame Republican Party for government shutdown, poll shows

Government Shutdown Coverage

As Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), above, and Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) announced a deal to end the government shutdown and raise the nation's debt ceiling, a new poll showed New Jersey voters largely blame the Republican Party for the crisis. (*Getty Images*)

TRENTON — As leaders in the U.S. Senate today announced a deal to [end the federal government shutdown](#), a new poll shows more than half of New Jersey's registered voters blame Republicans in Congress for the crisis.

The poll, conducted by the Rutgers-Eagleton Institute of Politics, found 52 percent of those surveyed blamed the GOP, while 19 percent blamed President Barack Obama and five percent blamed congressional Democrats. Another 20 percent blamed everyone.

One in five of those surveyed said they had been personally affected by the shutdown. About a quarter of those said they or a family member had been hurt because of furloughs, or that their business has been affected. Other respondents said they had problems accessing personal benefits or government-funded programs.

About two-thirds of those surveyed said Republicans should have kept the federal government open without demanding changes to the new healthcare law.

"Those directly affected are very frustrated, and even those not seeing direct effects say the shutdown was the wrong way to go," said David Redlawsk, director of the poll and a professor of political science at Rutgers. "While Obama's ratings have not been affected, reactions to the Tea Party movement have become more negative."

[Gov. Christie, Sen. Buono on government shutdown](#) In the second gubernatorial debate held in Montclair University, both candidates were asked about their stance on the government shutdown. (Source: NJTV)

About 55 percent of respondents said they had an unfavorable opinion of the Tea Party, up from 48 percent when the poll last asked about the group in November 2011. The approval rating for Obama remained unchanged from September at 59 percent

The poll of 799 New Jersey registered voters was conducted by telephone from Oct. 7 to Oct 13 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.4 percentage points.

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