

Poll: Christie gets high marks, except on economy and property taxes



Christie

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TRENTON — Gov. Chris Christie continues to boast overall poll ratings that are sky-high but also puzzling because the Republican governor is seen as weak on pocketbook issues.

A new Rutgers-Eagleton poll finds that a majority of New Jersey registered voters are persistently negative toward Christie's efforts on the economy and taxes. But Christie has robust favorability and job-performance ratings driven by his post-Sandy disaster response, said pollster David Redlawsk.

Redlawsk said Christie also is boosted by New Jerseyans largely not considering Democrat Barbara Buono an option heading into the Nov. 5 gubernatorial election.

"Poll numbers on handling of the economy and taxes usually trump other factors, but people are desperate for politicians to lead. The

governor, with his Sandy response, has been able to focus on that quality-of-leadership theme,” Redlawsk said in a telephone interview Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Buono has been hamstrung by a lack of resources, and an “unwillingness of many Democratic leaders to promote her have hampered her messaging,” Redlawsk said. “She has not convinced people there is a viable alternative to Christie.”

Christie’s favorable rating is 61 percent and he is viewed unfavorably by 28 percent of voters, the poll found. His overall job grade and approval are strong: 60 percent grade the governor B or higher and 67 percent approve of the overall job he is doing, and 85 percent approve of his post-Sandy work.

Only 42 percent approve of his handling of the economy and jobs, which more than a third say is the biggest problem facing New Jersey, and 38 percent approve of his performance on taxes.

Buono doesn’t have a strong statewide profile, with 43 percent of respondents reporting no real impression of her, and among those with an opinion, 29 percent are negative on Buono and 28 percent are positive. Redlawsk said that is a slippage from a poll last month, attributable to Christie’s unanswered TV ads attacking his opponent.

Results are from a poll of 799 registered voters from Oct. 7 to 13. The margin of error is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

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