

Christie's coattails unlikely to help GOP win New Jersey statehouse

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By Mark Lagerkvist | New Jersey Watchdog

A blowout win by Gov. Chris Christie in next week's election might be great for his presidential ambitions in 2016.

Yet it probably won't help his fellow Republicans win majorities in the New Jersey Legislature.

A [Rutgers-Eagleton poll](#) found that 50 percent of voters want Democrats to keep control of the Statehouse. Just 38 percent would prefer the GOP to take over in Trenton.

In contrast, Christie has a 24-point lead over his Democratic challenger. He leads Sen. Barbara Buono by 59 percent to 35 percent, according to the most recent [Monmouth University poll](#) of likely voters.

"Right now, voters seem to be quite happy to split their tickets, supporting a Republican governor and a Democratic Legislature," said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton poll.

[Christie's campaign brags](#) that 58 elected Democrats, including Sen. Brian Stack, D-Union City, have jumped on the bandwagon to publicly endorse him for re-election.

"This campaign – and these past three years – has been about bringing people together from both sides of the aisle to get real things done for the people of our state," [stated Christie in a release](#) on his campaign's web site.

While Christie postures as a bipartisan hero, Republican candidates who wish to ride the coattails of their party's biggest figure may be left behind.

"While some individual races will be highly competitive and seats could change hands, Democrats seem to be where they need to be statewide," Redlawsk said. "History suggests the GOP needs to be much closer in this generic ballot test to make major inroads across the state."

All 120 seats in the Legislature are at stake on Nov. 5.

In the Senate, Democrats enjoy a 24-16 majority. The Republicans need a net gain of four seats to tie and five to take control.

In the Assembly, the score is 48-32. The GOP needs to add eight seats to pull even and nine to take the lead.

Conversely, the Democrats could gain veto-proof supermajorities by gaining three seats in the Senate and six seats in the Assembly.

Republicans have not held a majority in either chamber since 2001, when they controlled both the Assembly and Senate.

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted Sept. 3-9 with a scientifically selected random sample of 925 New Jersey adults. Of these, 814 were registered voters. This telephone poll included 782 landline and 143 cell phone adults, all acquired through random digit dialing. The report focused on the preferences of 568 likely voters. The sampling margin of error was plus or minus 4.1 percentage points.

The Monmouth University poll was conducted Oct. 10-12 with a statewide random sample of 1,606 likely voters drawn from a list of registered voters who voted in at least two of the last four general elections, including 824 contacted by interactive voice response on a landline telephone, 447 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 335 contacted by a live interviewer on a cell phone. The sampling margin of error was plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.



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ANY COATTAILS: Does New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie have enough swing to pull in Republican majorities in the state House and Senate?