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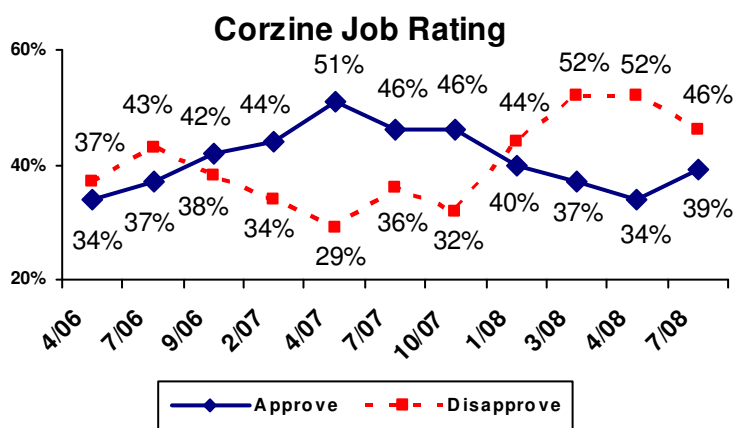
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## CORZINE APPROVAL INCHES UP, BUT HE STILL GETS A “C-MINUS”

*Codey and Christie are viewed more favorably*

Governor Jon Corzine’s job approval ratings have improved slightly from their all-time low in April, according to the latest *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll*. However, he still gets poor grades on handling key issues and could possibly face some formidable challengers in his 2009 re-election bid.



Currently, 39% of New Jerseyans approve of how their governor is handling his job, compared to 46% who disapprove. Another 16% have no opinion. This is a slight improvement from April, when Jon Corzine registered career low job ratings of 34% approve to 52% disapprove. However, he is still a long

way from the positive approval ratings he enjoyed prior to unveiling his now-aborted toll hike plan in January.

Governor Corzine has net positive job ratings only among his fellow Democrats – 51% approve to 33% disapprove. Among independents he stands at 36% approve to 48% disapprove

and among Republicans his job rating is 21% approve to 68% disapprove.

The governor’s ratings remain slightly better than the state legislature’s. Only 27% of New Jerseyans approve of the job their legislature is doing, while 45% disapprove and 28% offer no opinion.

“The governor’s success with last month’s budget negotiations has led to some small improvements in his job ratings,” commented Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute. “Still, he is not seen as making real progress in the areas which most concern New Jersey.”

When asked to grade Corzine on a number of key issues that formed the basis of his 2005 campaign, the public continues to give him C’s and D’s. His overall average grade continues to be a low “C-”. Broken down by partisanship, he averages a “C” among Democrats, a “D+” among Republicans, and a “C-” among independents.

<b>Jon Corzine, Governor Quarterly Report Card</b>					
<b>Subject</b>	<b>July 2008</b>	<i>Prior Grades</i>			
		<i>Jan 2008</i>	<i>July 2007</i>	<i>Sept 2006</i>	<i>April 2006</i>
Cost-Cutting	<b>C-</b>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>
Property Taxes	<b>D+</b>	<i>C-</i>	<i>C-</i>	<i>D+</i>	<i>D+</i>
Government Ethics	<b>C-</b>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>
Cost of Living	<b>D</b>	<i>D</i>	<i>D+</i>	<i>D+</i>	<i>D+</i>
Schools	<b>C</b>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>
Level of Effort	<b>C+</b>	<i>C+</i>	<i>B-</i>	<i>B-</i>	<i>C+</i>
<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C-</b>

According to state residents, Governor Corzine’s performance is below average on providing property tax relief (D+) and making New Jersey a more affordable place to live (D), both of which were key themes in his 2005 campaign. He averages a C- for controlling costs and cutting waste as well as bringing ethics and honesty back to state government. He scores a C for improving our schools and a C+ for the level of effort he puts into working for New Jersey. Compared to the last report card issued in April, the governor has actually dropped a half grade in the areas of property taxes and government ethics. The other grades are unchanged.

Looking ahead to the 2009 election, Jon Corzine may be facing a challenge if he decides to run for a second term. Many pundits have mentioned the name of U.S. Attorney Chris Christie as the potential Republican nominee. Some have also suggested a possible primary challenge from Senate President Dick Codey.

Among the three, Dick Codey has the highest favorability ratings – 45% of New Jerseyans have a favorable opinion of him, compared to 15% who are unfavorable. Another 19% have no opinion and 20% do not recognize his name although he served as governor for 14 months prior to Corzine. Chris Christie garners favorable opinions from 29% of the public and unfavorable ones from just 9%, with 24% who have not formed an opinion and 38% who do not recognize his name.

By comparison, Jon Corzine gets favorable ratings from 42% of the public and unfavorable ones from 43%, with 12% offering no opinion. Examining the ratio of favorable to unfavorable opinion shows Corzine with an even 1:1 positive to negative personal rating. However, both Codey and Christie enjoy a 3:1 positive favorability ratio among New Jerseyans who are able to give a personal evaluation.

Assembly Speaker Joe Roberts, who has not been touted as a gubernatorial aspirant, is viewed favorably by 11% and unfavorably by 9% of the public. However, 27% offer no opinion and more than half of state residents (54%) don't recognize this legislative leader's name.

In addition to finalizing the new budget in June, Governor Corzine can now count new funding for school construction among his legislative successes. The poll found that few residents paid attention to the legislature's approval of \$3.9 billion in new state debt to build schools, mainly in poorer communities. Only half of the public were aware of this legislation, with 22% saying they heard a lot about it and 29% who heard just a little. Another 48% said they did not hear anything about it.

The action, which was done without voter approval, is generally approved by 47% of residents and disapproved by 20%. Another 33% have no opinion on it. However, among those who have heard a lot about this issue, 51% approve while 40% disapprove.

“Public opinion is influenced both by the negative impact of new debt and the positive impact of new schools. Clearly, taking this action while attention was focused on the budget kept the issue off the public's radar screen. That's unlikely to be the case with any new plan to raise tolls,” said Murray

Governor Corzine is expected to unveil a revamped toll road plan in the coming weeks. One idea being floated is to allow private companies to operate certain lanes of the New Jersey Turnpike. Drivers who want to use those private lanes would pay higher tolls, and the extra money would be used to widen the Turnpike. Currently, 58% of New Jerseyans say they would oppose this plan. Only 17% would favor it and 25% have no opinion.

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted by telephone with 1,004 New Jersey adults from July 17 to 21, 2008. This sample has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.1$  percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the Gannett New Jersey newspaper group (Asbury Park Press, Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, and Home News Tribune).

### DATA TABLES

*The questions referred to in this release are as follows:*

(\* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Jon Corzine is doing as governor?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Approve	<b>39%</b>	39%	36%	51%	36%	21%
Disapprove	<b>46%</b>	47%	38%	33%	48%	68%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>16%</b>	14%	26%	16%	16%	11%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<b>1004</b>	<i>889</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>240</i>

TREND:	July 2008	April 2008	March 2008	January 2008	October 2007	July 2007	April 2007	February 2007	Sept 2006	July 2006	April 2006
Approve	39%	34%	37%	40%	46%	46%	51%	44%	42%	37%	34%
Disapprove	46%	52%	52%	44%	32%	36%	29%	34%	38%	43%	37%
(VOL) Don't know	16%	14%	11%	16%	22%	18%	20%	22%	20%	20%	29%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<i>1004</i>	<i>803</i>	<i>805</i>	<i>804</i>	<i>801</i>	<i>800</i>	<i>804</i>	<i>801</i>	<i>800</i>	<i>802</i>	<i>803</i>

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the job the state legislature is doing?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Approve	<b>27%</b>	27%	28%	36%	26%	15%
Disapprove	<b>45%</b>	47%	34%	33%	48%	63%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>28%</b>	26%	38%	31%	26%	22%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<b>1004</b>	<i>889</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>240</i>

TREND:	July 2008	April 2008	March 2008	October 2007	February 2007
Approve	27%	29%	28%	33%	35%
Disapprove	45%	53%	50%	41%	40%
(VOL) Don't know	28%	18%	22%	26%	25%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<i>1004</i>	<i>803</i>	<i>805</i>	<i>801</i>	<i>801</i>

3. I'm going to read you the names of a few people in the news recently. Please tell me if your general impression of each is favorable or unfavorable, or if you don't really have an opinion. If you don't recognize a name, just let me know. [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

A. Governor Jon Corzine

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Favorable	<b>42%</b>	43%	35%	56%	40%	25%
Unfavorable	<b>43%</b>	44%	37%	31%	43%	67%
No opinion	<b>12%</b>	10%	22%	10%	15%	7%
Do not recognize	<b>3%</b>	2%	6%	3%	2%	0%
Unwtd N	<b>1004</b>	889	115	366	356	240

B. Senate President Dick Codey

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Favorable	<b>45%</b>	48%	28%	48%	41%	52%
Unfavorable	<b>15%</b>	15%	14%	10%	20%	16%
No opinion	<b>19%</b>	19%	23%	18%	21%	14%
Do not recognize	<b>20%</b>	18%	36%	23%	18%	18%
Unwtd N	<b>1004</b>	889	115	366	356	240

C. Assembly Speaker Joe Roberts

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Favorable	<b>11%</b>	12%	3%	13%	11%	6%
Unfavorable	<b>9%</b>	10%	5%	5%	10%	13%
No opinion	<b>27%</b>	28%	20%	23%	30%	28%
Do not recognize	<b>54%</b>	50%	72%	58%	48%	54%
Unwtd N	<b>1004</b>	889	115	366	356	240

D. U.S. Attorney Chris Christie

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Favorable	<b>29%</b>	30%	22%	28%	31%	30%
Unfavorable	<b>9%</b>	9%	11%	11%	8%	8%
No opinion	<b>24%</b>	25%	18%	21%	21%	26%
Do not recognize	<b>38%</b>	37%	49%	40%	40%	35%
Unwtd N	<b>1004</b>	889	115	366	356	240

4. I'd like you to grade the Corzine administration on how it has handled specific issues. For each one I read, please give a letter grade of A, B, C, D or F for failing. What grade would you give the Corzine administration for ... ?

A. Controlling costs and cutting waste

TREND:	July 2008	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	<b>6%</b>	6%	7%	7%	5%
B	<b>17%</b>	19%	21%	19%	20%
C	<b>25%</b>	29%	31%	31%	29%
D	<b>15%</b>	15%	15%	13%	14%
F - Failing grade	<b>28%</b>	24%	20%	21%	20%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>9%</b>	7%	6%	9%	13%
Unwtd N	<b>1004</b>	804	800	800	803

B. Providing property tax relief

<b>TREND:</b>	<b>July 2008</b>	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	<b>7%</b>	6%	8%	5%	5%
B	<b>12%</b>	18%	20%	15%	12%
C	<b>25%</b>	28%	24%	25%	21%
D	<b>21%</b>	14%	16%	14%	15%
F - Failing grade	<b>28%</b>	28%	26%	31%	35%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>7%</b>	5%	6%	9%	13%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<b>1004</b>	804	800	800	803

C. Bringing ethics and honesty back to state government

<b>TREND:</b>	<b>July 2008</b>	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	<b>7%</b>	10%	8%	11%	8%
B	<b>19%</b>	25%	26%	25%	27%
C	<b>28%</b>	28%	28%	28%	24%
D	<b>16%</b>	11%	15%	13%	12%
F - Failing grade	<b>22%</b>	20%	18%	15%	17%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>7%</b>	6%	5%	7%	11%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<b>1004</b>	804	800	800	803

D. Making New Jersey a more affordable place to live

<b>TREND:</b>	<b>July 2008</b>	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	<b>4%</b>	5%	7%	7%	5%
B	<b>10%</b>	10%	16%	10%	10%
C	<b>24%</b>	20%	20%	24%	23%
D	<b>17%</b>	18%	21%	17%	14%
F - Failing grade	<b>41%</b>	44%	33%	38%	40%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>5%</b>	2%	3%	3%	9%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<b>1004</b>	804	800	800	803

E. Improving our schools

<b>TREND:</b>	<b>July 2008</b>	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	<b>9%</b>	6%	7%	10%	8%
B	<b>19%</b>	25%	26%	21%	19%
C	<b>31%</b>	28%	31%	30%	28%
D	<b>15%</b>	14%	12%	15%	14%
F - Failing grade	<b>15%</b>	18%	14%	12%	16%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>11%</b>	9%	10%	13%	15%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<b>1004</b>	804	800	800	803

5. What grade would you give the governor for the level of effort he puts into working for New Jersey?

<b>TREND:</b>	<b>July 2008</b>	January 2008	July 2007	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	<b>17%</b>	18%	18%	22%	16%
B	<b>26%</b>	30%	33%	28%	26%
C	<b>26%</b>	27%	27%	27%	29%
D	<b>9%</b>	9%	9%	9%	11%
F - Failing grade	<b>15%</b>	12%	9%	8%	11%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>5%</b>	4%	4%	5%	8%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<b>1004</b>	804	800	800	803

6. Last month, the state legislature approved \$3.9 billion in state borrowing to pay for school construction mostly in poor communities. Did you read or hear anything about this, or not? [IF "YES" ASK: Is that a lot or just a little?]

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Yes, a lot	<b>22%</b>	24%	10%	18%	22%	30%
Yes, a little	<b>29%</b>	31%	19%	31%	28%	28%
No, nothing	<b>48%</b>	44%	70%	49%	49%	42%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>1%</b>	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Unwtd N	<b>1004</b>	889	115	366	356	240

7. Do you approve or disapprove of this action, or do you have no opinion on it?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			ISSUE AWARENESS		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lot	Little	None
Approve	<b>47%</b>	47%	48%	59%	38%	38%	51%	51%	43%
Disapprove	<b>20%</b>	21%	16%	10%	25%	33%	40%	24%	9%
No opinion	<b>33%</b>	32%	36%	31%	38%	30%	9%	25%	48%
Unwtd N	<b>1004</b>	889	115	366	356	240	241	337	416

8. And on another issue. Some have proposed allowing private companies to operate certain lanes of the New Jersey Turnpike. Drivers who want to use those private lanes would pay higher tolls, and the extra money would be used to widen the Turnpike. In general, do you favor or oppose this plan, or do you have no opinion on it?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep
Favor	<b>17%</b>	16%	21%	16%	19%	16%
Oppose	<b>58%</b>	59%	54%	54%	63%	62%
No opinion	<b>25%</b>	24%	25%	30%	18%	22%
Unwtd N	<b>1004</b>	889	115	366	356	240

The Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll was conducted and analyzed by the Monmouth University Polling Institute research staff. The telephone interviews were collected by Braun Research on July 17-21, 2008 with a statewide random sample of 1,004 adult residents. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute's policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues which affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.

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