



# WNBC/Marist Poll

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## New Jersey Race for Governor

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**All references must be sourced WNBC/Marist Poll**

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This WNBC/Marist Poll reports:

- **Hotly contested race for governor is *thisclose*:** Jon Corzine and Doug Forrester are in a statistical dead heat among New Jersey voters likely to vote on Election Day. Corzine receives the support of 44% of likely voters compared with 43% for Doug Forrester. 13% are undecided. When undecided voters are asked which candidate they are leaning toward, the results become 47% for Jon Corzine and 45% for Doug Forrester. 8% of likely voters remain undecided.

**Question Wording:** If the election for governor were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

<b>October 2005</b>	Doug Forrester Republican	Jon Corzine Democrat	Other	Undecided
Likely Voters	43%	44%	<1%	13%
Likely Voters w/ Leaners	45%	47%	<1%	8%
Registered Voters	38%	45%	<1%	17%

- **Behind the numbers...a politically polarized New Jersey electorate:** Over three-quarters of Republicans and 73% of political conservatives likely to vote on Election Day support Doug Forrester. In contrast, 74% of Democrats and 68% of voters who describe themselves as politically liberal support Jon Corzine. More independents and moderate voters, who often hold the balance in statewide elections, prefer Corzine over Forrester. But many of these voters, 20% of independents and 15% of moderates, are yet to make up their minds.

**Question Wording:** If the election for governor were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

Likely Voters	Doug Forrester Republican	Jon Corzine Democrat	Other	Undecided
<b>Party</b>				
Democrat	20%	74%	<1%	6%
Republican	78%	11%	<1%	11%
Independent	33%	47%	<1%	20%
<b>Ideology</b>				
Liberal	21%	68%	<1%	11%
Moderate	35%	50%	<1%	15%
Conservative	73%	20%	<1%	7%
<b>Gender</b>				
Men	44%	42%	<1%	14%
Women	42%	47%	<1%	11%
<b>Age</b>				
Under 45	30%	60%	<1%	10%
45 or older	46%	42%	<1%	12%

- **Many voters strongly support their choice for governor:** 67% of likely voters who have a preference in the race for governor are firmly committed to their candidate. 24% say they somewhat support their choice, and only 9% say they might vote differently on Election Day. 69% of Doug Forrester’s supporters say they are strongly committed to him. 66% of Jon Corzine’s supporters say they are firmly committed to their choice.

**Question Wording:** Would you say that you strongly support (candidate name), somewhat support (candidate name), or do you think that you might vote differently on Election Day?

Likely Voters	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Might Vote Differently	Unsure
<b>October 2005</b>	67%	24%	9%	<1%
Doug Forrester	69%	20%	10%	1%
Jon Corzine	66%	27%	7%	<1%

- **A majority of state voters have a positive view of both candidates for governor:** Both Doug Forrester and Jon Corzine are viewed positively by many New Jersey voters. 52% of the state’s registered voters have a favorable view of Doug Forrester, and 56% have a favorable impression of Jon Corzine.

**Question Wording:** In general, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of Doug Forrester/Jon Corzine?

Registered Voters	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure/Never Heard
Doug Forrester	52%	33%	15%
Jon Corzine	56%	35%	9%

- **But only half are satisfied with the choice of candidates for governor:** Only 50% of registered voters in New Jersey are satisfied with the candidates running for governor. 44% say they are not satisfied, and 6% are unsure.

**Question Wording:** In general, are you satisfied or not satisfied with the candidates who are running for governor in New Jersey?

Registered Voters	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Unsure
October 2005	50%	44%	6%

- **One on one...image:** Although about one in five voters are unsure if there are specific differences in their impressions of the candidates for governor, Jon Corzine is generally perceived by more voters than Doug Forrester as having the qualities to be governor. These qualities include experience, the ability to unify the state, to represent all regions, to move the state forward, to run the state government well, to understand the problems of New Jersey, to be a better leader, and to care about the people of the state. 31% of registered voters do not see either candidate as being more honest or trustworthy.

**Question Wording:** As governor, do you think Doug Forrester or Jon Corzine is more likely to:

Registered Voters	Forrester	Corzine	Unsure
Be a better leader for New Jersey	35%	45%	20%
Understand the problems facing NJ	34%	45%	21%
Care more about people like yourself	34%	41%	25%
Better represent all regions of the state	33%	47%	20%
Run state government well	32%	45%	23%
Unify the state & get it working together	31%	47%	22%
Move NJ forward in the next 4 years	31%	46%	23%
Be more honest and trustworthy	31%	38%	31%
Have the better experience to be governor	27%	54%	19%

- One on one...the issues:** However, when it comes to the issues, voters divide over which candidate would do a better job as governor. Forrester edges Corzine on reducing property taxes and cleaning up government corruption, two important issues for New Jersey voters in this campaign. Corzine is seen by more voters as likely to do a better job improving education, bringing jobs and businesses to the state, and making health care more affordable.

**Question Wording:** Do you think Doug Forrester or Jon Corzine is more likely to do a better job as governor for each of the following:

Registered Voters	Forrester	Corzine	Unsure
Reducing property taxes	43%	39%	18%
Dealing with the state budget	42%	40%	18%
Cleaning up government corruption	41%	36%	23%
Making it more affordable to live in NJ	38%	40%	22%
Bringing more jobs and businesses to NJ	37%	45%	18%
Handling security against a terror attack	33%	37%	30%
Improving the quality of education	31%	46%	23%
Making health care more affordable	31%	47%	22%

- But many voters see campaign as more about attacks, not issues:** 58% of registered voters believe the candidates for governor have spent more time attacking each other rather than talking about the issues. 29% think the campaigns have focused more on the issues, and 13% are unsure.

**Question Wording:** In general, do you feel that the candidates for governor have spent more time talking about their positions on the issues or attacking each other?

Registered Voters	Talking Issues	Attacking Each Other	Unsure
October 2005	29%	58%	13%

- Despite a close contest, voters see Corzine as odds on favorite:** Regardless of the candidate they support, a majority of registered voters believe Jon Corzine is likely to win in November.

**Question Wording:** Regardless of whom you are planning to vote for, who do you think will win the election for governor:

Registered Voters	Forrester	Corzine	Unsure
October 2005	21%	57%	22%

- **Few money troubles here:** Most registered voters are not especially bothered by the amount of money Doug Forrester and Jon Corzine are spending on their respective campaigns. Only 38% of New Jersey voters say the amount of personal wealth expended on each campaign for governor is a concern, although this includes nearly half of Republican voters.

**Question Wording:** Does the large amount of their own money Doug Forrester and Jon Corzine are spending on their campaigns bother you a great deal, a good amount, not very much, or not at all?

Registered Voters	Great Deal/Good Amount	A Great Deal	A Good Amount	Not Very Much	Not at All	Unsure
October 2005	38%	20%	18%	24%	35%	3%
<b>Party</b>						
Democrat	34%	19%	15%	26%	37%	3%
Republican	48%	26%	22%	23%	28%	1%
Independent	37%	17%	20%	23%	37%	3%

- **State of the state...many voters say not good:** 59% of registered voters believe New Jersey is headed in the wrong direction, including a majority of Democrats, Republicans, and independents. 35% of registered voters think the state is headed in the right direction.

**Question Wording:** In general, thinking about the way things are going in New Jersey, do you feel things are going in the right direction or that things are going in the wrong direction?

Registered Voters	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	Unsure
October 2005	35%	59%	6%
<b>Party</b>			
Democrat	41%	51%	8%
Republican	27%	71%	2%
Independent	35%	59%	6%

- **Reducing property taxes is voters' top priority for next governor:** 29% of New Jersey voters place property taxes at the top of the list of priorities for the next governor including 28% of Democrats, 33% of Republicans, and 25% of independents. 14% of registered voters say cleaning up government corruption should top the list, and 12% think the next governor should address the cost of living in the state. Other priorities voters would like to see on the governor's agenda include education, health care, economic development, jobs, security from terrorism, housing, crime, and the environment.

**Question Wording:** Do you think the top priority for the next governor should be:

Registered Voters	October 2005	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Property taxes	29%	28%	33%	25%
Government corruption	14%	9%	23%	11%
Cost of living	12%	12%	8%	17%
Education	9%	12%	5%	12%
Health care	9%	12%	7%	7%
Economic development	7%	8%	4%	8%
Jobs	6%	5%	7%	5%
Security from terrorism	6%	7%	7%	6%
Housing	3%	2%	1%	4%
Crime	3%	3%	3%	3%
Environment	2%	2%	2%	2%

- **Who's to blame for government corruption in the state...the Democrats:** 43% of registered voters in New Jersey believe the Democratic Party is more to blame for government corruption in the state compared with 22% who believe the Republican Party is at fault. 21% of voters believe both political parties share the blame.

**Question Wording:** Which party is more to blame for government corruption in New Jersey:

Registered Voters	Republican Party	Democratic Party	Neither	Both	Unsure
October 2005	22%	43%	3%	21%	11%
<b>Party</b>					
Democrat	31%	29%	3%	22%	15%
Republican	8%	65%	3%	19%	5%
Independent	24%	42%	2%	22%	10%

- **President Bush not popular in the state:** President Bush's job approval rating, his combined excellent and good scores, is 34% among registered voters in New Jersey. Democrats give President Bush a positive score of only 15%, and he receives an approval rating of 31% among independent voters. 60% of Republicans think the president is doing either an excellent or good job.

**Question Wording:** Would you rate the job President George Bush is doing in office as excellent, good, fair, or poor?

<b>Registered Voters</b>	<b>Excellent/ Good</b>	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
October 2005	<b>34%</b>	8%	26%	25%	41%
<b>Party</b>					
Democrat	<b>15%</b>	2%	13%	19%	66%
Republican	<b>60%</b>	15%	45%	21%	19%
Independent	<b>31%</b>	9%	22%	34%	35%

**How the survey was conducted:**

This survey was conducted on October 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005. 600 registered voters in New Jersey were interviewed in proportion to the enrollment in each county and adjusted for turnout in comparable statewide elections. The results are statistically significant at  $\pm 4\%$ . There are 321 likely voters and the results for this sub-sample are statistically significant at  $\pm 5.5\%$ . The margin of error increases for cross-tabulations.