



Blues for Mayor Bloomberg? Approval Rating Drops 7 Percentage Points

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Contact: Lee M. Miringoff
Barbara L. Carvalho
Mary E. Azzoli
Marist College, 845.575.5050

This Marist Poll reports:

- **Bloomberg Approval Rating Drops 7 Percentage Points...At Lowest Level in Nearly 4**

Years: Although a majority of registered voters in New York City -- 52% -- say Mayor Michael Bloomberg is doing either an excellent or good job in office, the mayor's job approval rating has dipped 7 percentage points bringing it to its lowest point since June 2005. Bloomberg has been losing ground in voters' eyes since early last fall. In Marist's November survey, 59% of the city's electorate thought the mayor was doing an above average job, a 9 percentage point drop from the previous month. In October, Mayor Bloomberg enjoyed a cushy 68% approval rating.

Question Wording: Would you rate the job Mayor Michael Bloomberg is doing in office as excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Registered Voters	Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
February 2009	52%	14%	38%	32%	15%	1%
November 2008	59%	21%	38%	28%	11%	2%
October 2008	68%	29%	39%	21%	11%	<1%
February 2008	66%	22%	44%	25%	6%	3%
July 2007	66%	21%	45%	22%	8%	4%
March 2006	65%	20%	45%	24%	10%	1%
November 4, 2005	63%	17%	46%	28%	9%	<1%
November 1, 2005	64%	19%	45%	28%	7%	1%
October 2005	65%	22%	43%	27%	7%	1%
September 2005	61%	15%	46%	30%	8%	1%
August 2005	53%	14%	39%	34%	12%	1%
July 2005	58%	15%	43%	27%	12%	3%
June 10, 2005	49%	11%	38%	35%	15%	1%
June 2, 2005	55%	12%	43%	32%	12%	1%

Registered Voters	Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
April 2005	48%	8%	40%	35%	16%	1%
March 2005	43%	8%	35%	34%	21%	2%
December 2004	46%	6%	40%	35%	18%	1%
September 2004	42%	7%	35%	35%	21%	2%
April 2004	40%	7%	33%	38%	19%	3%
March 2002	50%	8%	42%	29%	6%	15%

- **Turn It Around...Plurality of Voters Say NYC is Moving in the Wrong Direction:** 49% of New York City's electorate believes the Big Apple is headed in the wrong direction. Only 37% think the city is on the right track. In November, voters divided over the city's trajectory. At that time, 45% of voters said the city was headed in the right direction, and 47% thought it was moving down the wrong track.

Question Wording: In general, thinking about the way things are going in New York City, 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
February 2009	37%	49%	14%
November 2008	45%	47%	8%
March 2006	64%	30%	6%
November 4, 2005	69%	26%	5%
November 1, 2005	68%	23%	9%
October 2005	69%	23%	8%
September 2005	64%	28%	8%
August 2005	60%	31%	9%
July 2005	62%	29%	9%
June 2005	54%	37%	9%
December 2004	54%	41%	5%
September 2004	51%	43%	6%

- **Change Is In the Air...Is It Time for a New Mayor?** 55% of registered voters think it's time for someone else to lead New York City while 40% say Mayor Bloomberg deserves to be re-elected. Voters reported similar sentiments four years ago when Bloomberg ran for and won re-election. When the Marist Poll asked the identical question in March 2005, a majority of voters -- 56% -- reported it was time for Bloomberg to go. Just 39% said Bloomberg deserved to be re-elected at that time.

Question Wording: Overall, do you think Mayor Bloomberg deserves to be re-elected mayor, or is it time to elect someone else?

Registered Voters	Deserves Re-election	Time to Elect Someone Else	Unsure
February 2009	40%	55%	5%
March 2005	39%	56%	5%
December 2004	42%	53%	5%

- But...Bloomberg Retains Commanding Lead Over Democratic Rivals:** Just what are the odds Mayor Michael Bloomberg will win a third term? The answer: Pretty good if New York City’s mayoral election were held today. When pitted against Congressman Anthony Weiner, City Comptroller Bill Thompson, or City Council Member Tony Avella, Bloomberg leads Weiner 53% to 37%, outpaces Thompson 53% to 36% and defeats Avella 57% to 30%. Bloomberg’s lead has changed little since Marist’s November survey. At that time, Bloomberg was in front of Weiner 51% to 37%, he led Thompson 52% to 32%, and the mayor fended off Avella 54% to 28%.

Question Wording: If this year’s election for New York City mayor were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are Michael Bloomberg, an Independent or Comptroller Bill Thompson, the Democrat/Congressman Anthony Weiner, the Democrat/Tony Avella, the Democrat?

Registered Voters	Michael Bloomberg An Independent	Anthony Weiner The Democrat	Undecided
February 2009	53%	37%	10%
November 2008	51%	37%	12%
October 2008	56%	30%	14%

Registered Voters	Michael Bloomberg An Independent	Bill Thompson The Democrat	Undecided
February 2009	53%	36%	11%
November 2008	52%	32%	16%
October 2008	55%	30%	15%

Registered Voters	Michael Bloomberg An Independent	Tony Avella The Democrat	Undecided
February 2009	57%	30%	13%
November 2008	54%	28%	18%

- Voters Like Limits...On Terms, Anyway:** A plurality of New York City voters -- 46% -- believe the term limit extension approved by Mayor Bloomberg is bad for the city. This compares with 25% of the electorate that thinks it's a good thing. Attitudes toward the action have remained fairly consistent. Back in November, 30% of voters believed that allowing elected officials to seek a third term would benefit the five boroughs. 43%, on the other hand, reported the decision would prove a detriment to New York City.

Question Wording: The City Council approved and Mayor Bloomberg extended term limits for elected officials from two to three terms. This means current office holders including the City Council and the mayor may now run for re-election this year, something they would not have been able to do under the old law. Do you think the decision by the City Council and the mayor to extend the law was a good thing for the city, a bad thing, or it really doesn't make any difference?

Registered Voters	Good Thing	Bad Thing	No Difference
February 2009	25%	46%	29%
November 2008	30%	43%	27%

- Deal Breaker? 44% of Voters Less Likely to Support Bloomberg In Light of Term Limit Extension:** Mayor Bloomberg fought hard last fall to extend term limits, but did it create a political liability? Although 44% of registered voters in New York City say Mayor Bloomberg's decision to extend term limits will not influence their vote, the same proportion -- 44% -- reports they are less likely to support Bloomberg because of his decision. Just 12% believe Bloomberg's push for a third term will make them more likely to cast their ballot for him.

Question Wording: Overall, did Mayor Bloomberg's decision to change term limits from two to three terms make you more likely or less likely to support him for mayor this year? If this issue doesn't make any difference to your vote, please, say so.

Registered Voters	More Likely to Support	Less Likely to Support	No Difference
February 2009	12%	44%	44%
November 2008	19%	40%	41%

- Voters Indifferent to Bloomberg's Billions:** When it comes to the amount of money Mayor Bloomberg plans to spend on his re-election campaign, voters just don't care. 65% say the private funds Bloomberg intends to spend makes no difference to them. 35% report

it matters to them, including 12% who say it will make them more likely to vote for Bloomberg and 23% who believe it will make them less likely to vote for him.

Question Wording: Michael Bloomberg has spent millions of dollars of his own money on his past campaigns for mayor, and he says he will do so again to be re-elected this November. Does this make you more likely to vote for him, less likely, or does it not make any difference to your vote?

	More Likely	Less Likely	No Difference
Registered Voters	12%	23%	65%

- Bloomberg’s Evolving Image...What a Difference a Term Makes:** Compared with this time four years ago, voters have a better outlook toward Mayor Michael Bloomberg. 80% of New York City’s electorate believes Bloomberg is working hard as mayor, 68% say the mayor understands the problems facing New York City, and 67% perceive Bloomberg as being a good leader. Bloomberg doesn’t fare as well when thought of as a man of the people. 47% of voters say the mayor cares about the average Joe or Jane while half of the electorate thinks Bloomberg doesn’t connect well with people. All in all, though, Bloomberg is viewed better than he was in 2005. When Marist surveyed New York City voters on these characteristics four years ago, 70% saw the mayor as a hard worker, 56% thought he understood the problems of the city, and 50% viewed Bloomberg as a good leader. Just 36% thought of him as someone who cares about people like them.

Question Wording: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Mayor Michael Bloomberg:

Registered Voters	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
February 2009			
Is working hard as mayor	80%	18%	2%
Understands the problems facing New York City	68%	30%	2%
Is a good leader for New York	67%	31%	2%
Cares about people like you	47%	50%	3%
March 2005			
Is working hard as mayor	70%	29%	1%
Understands the problems facing New York City	56%	43%	1%
Is a good leader for New York	50%	47%	3%
Cares about people like you	36%	58%	6%

- Voters Divide Over Bloomberg’s Handling of the Economic Crisis...Little Change in Perception of Performance in Other Key Areas:** With the economy in the fore of many voters’ minds, the electorate splits in terms of how they view Mayor Bloomberg’s handling of the economic crisis. 46% disapprove of Bloomberg’s approach while 43% approve. Looking at other top issues facing the city, there has been little change in how voters view Bloomberg. The mayor receives high marks when it comes to security against terror attacks and crime. 73% and 71% of voters, respectively, approve of how Bloomberg performs on these issues. Voters aren’t as happy, however, with Bloomberg’s actions in other areas of city government. Half of voters approve of the way he is handling economic development, and 46% say his actions toward the city budget are on the mark. Looking at taxes, just 41% of registered voters approve of Bloomberg’s actions. He receives an identical score on public transportation. The mayor also receives subpar marks on public schools and unemployment. His approval ratings in these areas are 40% and 36%, respectively. Compared to Marist’s March 2005 poll, voters have similar views on how the mayor is handling these areas. However, Bloomberg receives points for his budgetary acumen. More voters today approve of the way he is handling the city’s budget today than they did in 2005.

Question Wording: Do you approve or disapprove of how Mayor Michael Bloomberg is handling each of the following:

Registered Voters	Approve	Disapprove	Unsure
February 2009			
Security against a terror attack	73%	18%	9%
Crime	71%	24%	5%
Economic development	50%	42%	8%
The city’s budget	46%	46%	8%
The economic crisis	43%	46%	11%
Taxes	41%	52%	7%
Public transportation	41%	54%	5%
The public schools	40%	52%	8%
Unemployment	36%	50%	14%
March 2005			
Security against a terror attack	70%	23%	7%
Crime	69%	27%	4%
Economic development	51%	42%	7%
The public schools	40%	53%	7%
The city’s budget	39%	51%	10%
Taxes	39%	53%	8%

Registered Voters	Approve	Disapprove	Unsure
Unemployment	37%	51%	12%
Public transportation	37%	57%	6%

- Middle Man...49% of Voters View Bloomberg as a Moderate:** When it comes to the mayor's political ideology, 49% of New York City voters see Mayor Bloomberg as a moderate. Another 25% view him as a conservative while 26% consider him a liberal. Marist asked New York City voters this same question four years ago. At that time, half of the electorate called Bloomberg a moderate, 32% said he was a conservative, and 18% reported they viewed him as a liberal.

Question Wording: Politically speaking, do you think Mayor Bloomberg is a liberal, moderate, or a conservative?

Registered Voters	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
February 2009	26%	49%	25%
March 2005	18%	50%	32%
December 2004	19%	45%	36%

- Budget Battle...Voters Support Raising Taxes to Balance City's Budget...Oppose Increased Sales and Clothing Taxes:** When asked to choose, more registered voters -- 48% -- say they would prefer Mayor Bloomberg raise taxes in order to balance the city's budget rather than cut government programs and services. 41% support the latter option. However, when it comes to increasing the city's sales tax, a majority of New York City voters -- 53% - - opposes Mayor Bloomberg's proposal while just 44% approve of the measure. What about the mayor's idea to once again require a sales tax on clothing? Nearly six in ten voters -- 57% -- disapprove compared with 40% who support the mayor's plan.

Question Wording: In order to balance the city budget, would you prefer the mayor:

	Cut Government Programs & Services	Raise Taxes	Unsure
Registered Voters	41%	48%	11%

Question Wording: Do you approve or disapprove of the mayor’s proposals to do each of the following:

Registered Voters	Approve	Disapprove	Unsure
Raise city’s sales tax to 8.75%	44%	53%	3%
Require sales tax on clothing	40%	57%	3%

- Is There a Better Man? Democratic Opponents Vie for Party’s Support:** Although a notable proportion of registered Democrats in New York City -- 23% -- do not know who the party’s most formidable opponent is to square off against Mayor Bloomberg, Congressman Anthony Weiner emerges as the frontrunner. Weiner garners the backing of 38% of New York City Democrats. Comptroller Bill Thompson is behind Weiner with 30% of voters’ support while just 9% of Democrats report they would back City Council Member Tony Avella.

Question Wording: If this year’s Democratic primary for mayor were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are Congressman Anthony Weiner, Comptroller Bill Thompson or City Council Member Tony Avella?

	Congressman Anthony Weiner	Comptroller Bill Thompson	Council Member Tony Avella	Undecided
Registered Democrats				
January 2009	38%	30%	9%	23%
November 2008	34%	26%	10%	30%

- Going Retro...Mark Green Seen as Frontrunner in Race for NYC’s Public Advocate:** 35% of New York City Democrats say, if the Democratic primary for New York City’s Public Advocate were held today, they would vote for the *former* New York City Public Advocate Mark Green. Assemblyman Adam Clayton Powell, IV receives 15% of Democrats’ support with Civil Rights Lawyer Norman Siegel attracting 14% of the party’s electorate. City Councilmen John Liu and Bill de Blasio each receive 6% while Councilman Eric Gioia takes just 2%. 22%, however, are unsure about who they would back.

Question Wording: If this year’s Democratic primary for New York City’s Public Advocate were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

	Registered Democrats
Former Public Advocate Mark Green	35%
Assemblyman Adam Clayton Powell, IV	15%
Civil Rights Lawyer Norman Siegel	14%
City Councilman John Liu	6%
City Councilman Bill de Blasio	6%
City Councilman Eric Gioia	2%
Unsure	22%

- What’s in a Name? \$400 Million and Voters’ Disgust:** The government has issued Citigroup \$45 billion in federal bailout funds. So, should Citigroup still be allowed to spend \$400 million for the naming rights of the Mets new baseball stadium? Voters overwhelmingly say, “No way!” 82% of registered voters in the Big Apple oppose the corporate sponsorship while just 13% say Citigroup should proceed as planned. 5% are unsure.

Question Wording: Given that Citigroup received 45 billion dollars in government bailout monies, do you think Citigroup should be allowed or should not be allowed to spend 400 million dollars for naming rights to the new Mets stadium?

	Should Be Allowed	Should Not Be Allowed	Unsure
Registered Voters	13%	82%	5%

Nature of the Sample: 827 New York City Registered Voters

This survey was conducted on February 16th and February 17th, 2009. 827 registered voters within New York City were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout New York City in proportion to the enrollment in each borough and adjusted for turnout in comparable elections. The results for the entire survey are statistically significant at ±3.5%. There are 546 registered Democrats. The results for this subsample are statistically significant at ±4.5%. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.