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Hillary Clinton’s Re-election Prospects...and More

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This Marist College Institute for Public Opinion poll of New York State reports:

- **Hillary Clinton is the odds-on favorite in her re-election bid but faces a skeptical New York audience for a presidential run:** Many of New York State’s registered voters say they like Senator Clinton more now than they did just a couple of years ago, and a majority plan to vote to re-elect her to the U.S. Senate this November. But when asked about her potential presidential candidacy in 2008, New Yorkers divide over whether they want to see her enter the presidential sweepstakes. Only 41% want to see her on the presidential campaign hustings compared with 49% who do not. Although 59% believe she will run in 2008, most New Yorkers think she would face an uphill fight that she is not likely to win. 51% of voters also believe that Senator Clinton will be treated more harshly than her competitors in a campaign for the White House.
- 48% of New York voters like Hillary Clinton more now than they did two years ago including a majority of independent voters. 27% like her less, and 25% say their opinion of her has not really changed.

Question Wording: Do you like Hillary Clinton more or less than you did two years ago?

Registered Voters	More	Less	About the Same
January 2006	48%	27%	25%
Party			
Democrat	60%	16%	24%
Republican	33%	45%	22%
Non-enrolled	51%	23%	26%

- 54% of New York State’s registered voters say they would definitely vote to re-elect Hillary Clinton to the U.S. Senate in 2006 including most Democrats and a majority of independent voters. 32% would definitely vote against her including 60% of Republicans. 6% would like to wait and see who runs against her, and 8% are unsure.

Question Wording: Do you definitely plan to vote for Hillary Clinton for re-election as U.S. Senator or do you definitely plan to vote against her?

Registered Voters	Definitely Vote For	Definitely Vote Against	Depends Who Runs	Unsure
January 2006	54%	32%	6%	8%
September 2005	52%	32%	8%	8%
Party				
Democrat	79%	12%	4%	5%
Republican	25%	60%	6%	9%
Non-enrolled	52%	30%	9%	9%

- 49% of New York State’s registered voters do not want Hillary Clinton to make a presidential run in 2008 compared with 41% who would like to see her do so. 10% are unsure. Voters divide along partisan lines. A majority of Democrats would like to see a Hillary Clinton presidential candidacy, most Republicans would not, and independent voters evenly divide.

Question Wording: Do you want Hillary Clinton to run for president in 2008 or not?

Registered Voters	Yes, run	No, don't run	Unsure
January 2006	41%	49%	10%
September 2005	40%	52%	8%
Party			
Democrats	55%	36%	9%
Republicans	24%	68%	8%
Non-enrolled	45%	45%	10%

- 59% of New York State’s registered voters think Hillary Clinton will run for president in 2008.

Question Wording: Do you think Hillary Clinton will run for president in 2008 or not?

Registered Voters	Will run	Will Not run	Unsure
January 2006	59%	29%	12%
September 2005	54%	34%	12%
August 2005	55%	27%	18%
Party			
Democrat	56%	29%	15%
Republican	62%	30%	8%
Non-enrolled	59%	32%	9%

- Should Hilary Clinton decide to run for president in 2008, 62% of New York State’s registered voters do not think it is likely that she will be elected.

Question Wording: Do you think it is very likely, likely, not very likely, or not likely at all that Hillary Clinton will be elected president in 2008?

Registered Voters	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Not Likely At All	Unsure
January 2006	8%	25%	39%	23%	5%
Party					
Democrat	11%	30%	36%	18%	5%
Republican	5%	20%	41%	32%	2%
Non-enrolled	6%	25%	42%	21%	6%

- 51% of New York voters think Hillary Clinton will be treated more harshly than her opponents should she seek the presidency in 2008. This opinion is shared by 62% of Democrats, 50% of independent voters, and 40% of Republicans.

Question Wording: If Hillary Clinton runs for president in 2008, because of who she is, do you think she will be treated more harshly than the other candidates, be treated just like any other candidate, or will she be treated better than the other candidates?

Registered Voters	Treated More Harshly	Treated the Same	Treated Better
January 2006	51%	31%	18%
Party			
Democrat	62%	28%	10%
Republican	40%	33%	27%
Non-enrolled	50%	30%	20%

- Senator Clinton’s partisan pitch receives mixed reviews from voters:** Hillary Clinton’s controversial comment about the Republicans running the House of Representatives like a plantation was not well received by New York State’s registered voters. Although it is a majority, only 52% of Democrats agree with the senator’s characterization of the Republican leadership in Congress. Just 17% of Republicans and 37% of independent voters share that view. Her comment that the Bush administration will be remembered as one of the worst in history finds a somewhat more receptive audience, especially among Democrats. But independent voters divide over whether they agree with that view, and most Republicans disagree.

Question Wording: Do you agree or disagree with Hillary Clinton that the Republican leaders in Congress run the House of Representatives like a plantation?

Registered Voters	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
January 2006	37%	48%	15%
Party			
Democrat	52%	31%	17%
Republican	17%	70%	13%
Non-enrolled	37%	51%	12%

Question Wording: Do you agree or disagree with Hillary Clinton that the current Bush administration will go down in history as one of the worst that has ever governed our country?

Registered Voters	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
January 2006	50%	46%	4%
Party			
Democrat	73%	24%	3%
Republican	24%	73%	3%
Non-enrolled	47%	49%	4%

- Majority of New York voters approve of the job Hillary Clinton is doing as senator:** 54% of New York State’s registered voters rate the job Hillary Clinton is doing as senator as either excellent or good. Her job performance score is statistically unchanged from similar polls conducted over the past two years.

Question Wording: Would you rate the job Senator Hillary Clinton is doing in office as excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Registered Voters	Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure/ DK
January 2006	54%	18%	36%	24%	19%	3%
September 2005	54%	18%	36%	22%	20%	4%
August 2005	54%	19%	35%	23%	16%	7%
April 2005	56%	16%	40%	24%	16%	4%
October 2004	57%	18%	39%	21%	18%	4%
September 2004	53%	18%	35%	25%	20%	2%
April 2004	51%	13%	38%	27%	18%	4%
January 2004	55%	18%	37%	23%	17%	5%
September 2003	49%	17%	32%	26%	21%	4%
April 2003	47%	13%	34%	27%	22%	4%
December 2002	44%	10%	34%	28%	20%	8%
April 2002	47%	11%	36%	27%	20%	6%
December 2001	45%	11%	34%	23%	23%	9%
April 2001	35%	9%	26%	26%	22%	17%
February 2001	30%	10%	20%	22%	20%	28%
January 2006						
Party						
Democrat	74%	28%	46%	18%	6%	2%
Republican	33%	8%	25%	27%	38%	2%
Non-enrolled	49%	13%	36%	30%	19%	2%
Region						
Upstate	47%	14%	33%	27%	24%	2%
New York City	61%	24%	37%	23%	12%	4%
Suburbs	57%	18%	39%	20%	21%	2%
Gender						
Men	48%	15%	33%	24%	25%	3%
Women	59%	21%	38%	24%	15%	2%

- **New York voters place Senator Clinton left and center on the political spectrum:**

46% of New York State’s registered voters describe Hillary Clinton as politically liberal including 61% of Republicans. 38% see her as politically moderate, and 10% view her as conservative. 6% are unsure.

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

Registered Voters	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Unsure
January 2006	46%	38%	10%	6%

Registered Voters	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Unsure
Party				
Democrat	36%	47%	12%	5%
Republican	61%	28%	5%	6%
Non-enrolled	45%	40%	12%	3%

- Back to 2006...Hillary Clinton substantially outdistances a potential Republican challenger for the U.S. Senate:** In a hypothetical pairing for the 2006 U.S. Senate race in New York, Senator Clinton outscores former Yonkers Mayor John Spencer by a wide margin.

Question Wording: If the 2006 election for U.S. Senate in New York State were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

Registered Voters	John Spencer Republican	Hillary Clinton Democrat	Undecided
January 2006	33%	62%	5%
September 2005	31%	62%	7%

- New York Republicans are undecided about who their party should nominate to challenge Hillary Clinton for the U.S. Senate in November:** 53% of New York State's registered Republicans are undecided about who to support for their party's U.S. Senate nominee against Hillary Clinton. Only John Spencer and attorney Edward Cox, who has since dropped out of the race, received even double-digit support.

Question Wording: If September's Republican primary for U.S. Senate in New York State were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

Registered Republicans	Undecided	Edward Cox	John Spencer	Antonia Novella	William Brenner	Adam Brecht
January 2006	53%	14%	14%	9%	7%	3%

- President Giuliani? President Pataki?** 53% of New York State's registered voters would like to see Rudy Giuliani run for president in 2008. His support is fueled by 69% of Republicans and 52% of independent voters who think he should enter the campaign for the presidency. 41% of the state's voters would prefer he does not. 25% of registered voters want Governor Pataki to run for the presidency in 2008.

Question Wording: Do you want Rudy Giuliani/George Pataki to run for president in 2008 or not?

Registered Voters	Yes, run	No, don't run	Unsure
Rudy Giuliani			
January 2006	53%	41%	6%
September 2005	49%	46%	5%
Party			
Democrats	42%	55%	3%
Republicans	69%	25%	6%
Non-enrolled	52%	40%	8%
George Pataki			
January 2006	25%	69%	6%
September 2005	17%	79%	4%
Party			
Democrats	19%	77%	4%
Republicans	33%	60%	7%
Non-enrolled	28%	67%	5%

- President's job performance rating in New York still low:** Only 34% of New York voters rate the job President Bush is doing in office as either excellent or good. The president's job approval rating in the state is statistically unchanged from its lowest point of 33% last September in the aftermath of the devastation on the gulf coast.

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

Registered voters	Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure/ DK
January 2006	34%	11%	23%	21%	45%	<1%
September 2005	33%	10%	23%	22%	44%	1%
April 2005	43%	16%	27%	23%	34%	<1%
October 2004	39%	19%	20%	18%	42%	1%
September 2004	40%	19%	21%	21%	39%	<1%
April 2004	38%	14%	24%	22%	39%	1%
January 2004	52%	22%	30%	19%	28%	1%
September 2003	44%	17%	27%	22%	33%	1%
April 2003	58%	29%	29%	19%	22%	1%
December 2002	57%	24%	33%	23%	19%	1%
April 2002	72%	33%	39%	17%	10%	1%
December 2001	79%	43%	36%	15%	5%	1%
April 2001	40%	11%	29%	30%	23%	7%
Party						
Democrat	15%	5%	10%	23%	62%	<1%
Republican	58%	20%	38%	21%	21%	<1%
Non-enrolled	35%	10%	25%	22%	43%	<1%

Nature of the Sample: 854 NYS Registered Voters

The survey of 854 registered voters was conducted January 24th through January 26th, 2006. Registered voters were interviewed by telephone in proportion to the voter registration in each county in New York State and adjusted for turnout in statewide elections. Results are statistically significant at $\pm 3.5\%$. There are 357 registered Democrats and 261 registered Republicans. Results for these sub-samples are statistically significant at $\pm 5.5\%$ and $\pm 6\%$, respectively. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.