



WNBC/Marist Poll

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New York State Campaign 2006 Controversies Plague Race for AG and Comptroller But Little Change in Wide Leads for Democrats

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All references must be sourced WNBC/Marist Poll

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This WNBC/Marist Poll of New York State reports:

- **The Republican candidate for New York State Attorney General Jeanine Pirro badly trails her opponent former HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo...But despite current controversies, the margin has not widened:** Democrat Andrew Cuomo still leads Republican Jeanine Pirro by 23 percentage points among registered voters in the race to become New York State’s next attorney general. Despite the publicity surrounding a federal investigation of Pirro, the gap between the two candidates has not widened since a similar poll conducted about three weeks ago. Cuomo currently receives the support of 54% of New York State’s registered voters compared with 31% for Pirro. 15% of registered voters are undecided.

Question Wording: If November’s election for attorney general of New York State were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

Registered Voters	Jeanine Pirro Republican	Andrew Cuomo Democrat	Undecided
September 28, 2006	31%	54%	15%
September 8, 2006	33%	56%	11%
August 2006	39%	54%	7%
July 2006	37%	51%	12%

- **Most voters have heard or read about the controversy surrounding Jeanine Pirro but only about one in three says it bothers them:** 72% of registered voters in New York State say they have heard or read something about the federal investigation into Jeanine Pirro’s discussion to secretly bug her husband’s boat to determine if he was having an affair. Among voters who have heard about the investigation, only 35% are troubled by it. 61% say they are not bothered by it.

Question Wording: Have you heard or read anything about a federal investigation into whether Jeanine Pirro, Republican candidate for New York State attorney general, did anything illegal by discussing with former New York City Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik the secret bugging of her husband's boat to determine if he was having an affair?

Registered Voters	Aware of Controversy	Not Aware	Unsure
September 28, 2006	72%	27%	1%

Question Wording: Does it bother you a great deal, a good amount, not very much, or not at all, that Jeanine Pirro as a Republican candidate for New York State attorney general is involved in something like this?

September 28, 2006	A Great Deal/Good Amount	A Great Deal	A Good Amount	Not Very Much	Not At All	Unsure
Voters aware of controversy	35%	23%	12%	20%	41%	4%
Registered Voters	35%	22%	13%	19%	38%	8%

- **Among voters who are aware of the controversy, many think Jeanine Pirro did something unethical:** 42% of registered voters in New York State who say they have heard or read something about the federal investigation of Jeanine Pirro believe she did something unethical. 30% believe she has done nothing wrong, and 11% think she has done something illegal. 17% are unsure.

Question Wording: Do you think Jeanine Pirro did nothing wrong, did something unethical but not illegal, or do you think she did something illegal?

September 28, 2006	Did Nothing Wrong	Did Something Unethical	Did Something Illegal	Unsure
Voters aware of controversy	30%	42%	11%	17%
Registered voters	26%	38%	9%	27%

- **A majority of voters do not agree with Jeanine Pirro that the investigation should be private and most do not think she has been treated unfairly:** 55% of registered voters think the investigation into possible misconduct by Jeanine Pirro is something the public should know about. 41% believe it is a private matter. In addition, most voters, 66%, do not think she is being singled out unfairly, but think she is being treated like any other candidate.

Question Wording: Overall, do you think the investigation into Jeanine Pirro's possible criminal misconduct should be kept a private matter or do you think it is something the public should know about?

Registered Voters	Kept a Private Matter	Something Public Should Know About	Unsure
September 28, 2006	41%	55%	4%

Question Wording: Do you think Jeanine Pirro is being singled out unfairly or do you think she is being treated like any other candidate would be under these circumstances?

Registered Voters	Singled Out Unfairly	Treated Like Other Candidates	Unsure
September 28, 2006	26%	66%	8%

- **Most voters think Jeanine Pirro should stay in the race for attorney general:** 74% of registered voters in New York State think Jeanine Pirro should continue to run for New York State's attorney general and should not drop out of the race.

Question Wording: Do you think Jeanine Pirro should continue her campaign for New York State attorney general or do you think she should drop out of the race?

Registered Voters	Continue Campaign	Drop Out of Race	Unsure
September 28, 2006	74%	18%	8%

- **Comptroller Alan Hevesi maintains a strong lead against his Republican opponent despite the problems which have dogged him:** Alan Hevesi outdistances his Republican opponent Christopher Callaghan by 30 percentage points even though, as comptroller, he has admitted to failing to reimburse New York State for using a public employee as a personal driver for his wife.

Question Wording: If the November election for comptroller of New York were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

Registered Voters	Christopher Callaghan Republican	Alan Hevesi Democrat	Undecided
September 28, 2006	27%	57%	16%
September 8, 2006	28%	57%	15%
August 2006	27%	60%	13%
July 2006	28%	57%	15%

- Most voters have not heard or read about the ethics issue facing Alan Hevesi and only about one third of those aware of the controversy are troubled by it:** Only 39% of registered voters in New York State say they have heard or read something about the misuse of staff time by Comptroller Hevesi. 36% of voters who are aware of the issue say they are bothered it, and 50% say they are not. 14% are unsure how they feel about it.

Question Wording: Question Wording: Have you heard or read anything about a complaint filed by the Republican candidate for New York State comptroller Christopher Callaghan that his Democratic opponent and current state comptroller Alan Hevesi misused public funds by using a member of his staff as a driver for his wife?

Registered Voters	Aware of Controversy	Not Aware	Unsure
September 28, 2006	39%	60%	1%

Question Wording: Does it bother you a great deal, a good amount, not very much, or not at all, that Alan Hevesi as New York State comptroller is involved in something like this?

	A Great Deal/Good Amount	A Great Deal	A Good Amount	Not Very Much	Not At All	Unsure
September 28, 2006						
Voters aware of controversy	36%	24%	12%	24%	26%	14%
Registered Voters	37%	24%	13%	25%	26%	12%

- Among voters who are aware of the controversy, about one-third think Alan Hevesi did something unethical but another third are unsure:** 32% of voters who say they have heard or read something about the problems Alan Hevesi has had as comptroller think he did something unethical, but 32% are unsure how to characterize what happened. 16% believe he did nothing wrong, and 20% think he did something illegal.

Question Wording: Do you think Alan Hevesi did nothing wrong, did something unethical but not illegal, or do you think he did something illegal?

September 28, 2006	Did Nothing Wrong	Did Something Unethical	Did Something Illegal	Unsure
Voters aware of controversy	16%	32%	20%	32%
Registered voters	18%	30%	22%	30%

Nature of the Sample: 402 New York State Registered Voters

This survey of 402 New York State registered voters was conducted on September 28th, 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 $\pm 5\%$. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.