



Marist New York Poll: The State of New York in an Election Year, February 2026

For Release: Thursday, February 26, 2026

Hochul Approval Rating Highest in More Than 4 Years... Leads Blakeman by 17 Points

New York Governor Kathy Hochul enjoys her highest job approval rating since 2021. Perceptions of Hochul as being a good leader for New York and as creating positive change in Albany have improved. While perceptions of the state are far from upbeat, there have been modest increases in the proportions of New York voters who perceive the Empire State as being on track, and fewer perceive the state economy and their own personal finances as deteriorating. In this election year, Hochul leads her Republican rival in the gubernatorial contest by 17 points among registered voters statewide. However, on the national stage, voters give Senator Chuck Schumer his lowest job rating since taking office more than 25 years ago; Senator Kirsten Gillibrand's score is at its lowest point in more than 15 years.

- 46% of New York residents approve of the job Governor Hochul is doing in office, up from 39% in April of 2025. This is Hochul's highest job approval rating since October of 2021 when 49% approved of how she was performing in her post. 40% currently disapprove of her job performance, down from 46%. 15% are unsure. New Yorkers, though, are nearly more than twice as likely to strongly disapprove of Governor Hochul's job performance (29%) than to strongly approve (16%) of it.
- While there is little change among Republicans statewide, more Democrats (68% up from 59% last time) and non-enrolled voters (37% up from 24%) now approve of how Hochul is doing in office. Regardless of region in the state, Hochul enjoys an uptick in her approval rating.
- Four in ten New Yorkers rate the governor's job performance as either excellent (11%) or good (29%), up from 35% last April. 51%, though, rate how Hochul is doing as fair (18%) or poor (33%), down from 56%.
- A majority of New York residents (54%) consider Governor Hochul to be a good leader for the state, up from 46% in April.

- More New Yorkers now see the governor as changing things in Albany for the better. 46% of New Yorkers, compared with 39% in November of 2023, are of this opinion. 52%, down slightly from 56% previously, do not see Hochul as creating positive change in Albany.
- New Yorkers divide about whether or not Hochul represents all regions of the state. 51% believe Hochul represents all New Yorkers. However, 48% disagree. One percent is unsure. In October of 2021, 50% reported that Hochul represented all New Yorkers while 40% said she did not. 11%, at that time, were unsure.

Nearly Half with Favorable Opinion of Hochul

A plurality of New Yorkers (48%) has a favorable opinion of Governor Hochul, down from 55% in October of 2021. 39% have an unfavorable impression of the governor, up from 30%. 13% have either never heard of Hochul or are unsure how to rate her, comparable to the score (14%) she received in 2021.

More New York Voters with Positive Impression of the Statewide Direction

While a majority of registered voters in New York (56%) still think New York is headed in the wrong direction, fewer hold this opinion (59% in April of 2025). In fact, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of voters who think the Empire State is moving in the right direction (44% up from 40%). This marks the largest proportion of New Yorkers who think the state is on track since February of 2021. 47% thought New York was moving in the right direction at that time.

Quality of Life in New York Underwater

A slim majority of New York residents (51%) say the quality of life in New York has gotten worse, down slightly from 55% last year. 13%, notched up from 10%, believe it has gotten better. 35% say it has stayed the same, including 16% who think the status quo is a good thing, 2% who did not specify, and 17% who believe the status quo is a bad thing. Of note, the proportion who says the status quo is a bad thing has increased slightly from 12% last April.

A Majority of New York Voters Say the State Economy Has Gotten Worse, But...

55% of New York registered voters say the state economy is getting worse, down from 64% last April. More than one in ten (12%), up slightly from 9%, think the economy is getting better. Nearly one in three (32%) report the state economy is staying about the same, inched up from 27%.

Fewer voters also perceive their personal family finances as taking a hit. 26% expect their personal family finances to get worse in the coming year, down from 36% who had this impression in April. 25% think their financial picture will improve. This is comparable to the 26% who had this view last year. A plurality (49%) expect their personal finances to stay about the same, up from 38% previously.

Most New Yorkers Think the Cost of Living Statewide is Out of Hand

More than eight in ten New Yorkers (86%) say the cost of living for the average family in New York State is not very affordable or not affordable at all. This has inched up from 82% in 2025. 14%, down from 18% previously, think the cost of living in New York is very affordable or affordable.

One in Three New Yorkers Plan to Move Out of NY

While 66% of New York residents say they plan to stay in New York, 33% expect to move out of New York within the next five years.

Digging deeper, those who plan to move out of state indicate the following reasons:

- Cost of living: 40%
- Quality of life: 21%
- Taxes: 15%
- Politics: 10%
- Weather: 7%
- Jobs: 4%
- Retirement: 4%

Hochul Leads Blakeman by 17 Points in Gubernatorial Race

An early look at this year's gubernatorial contest shows Hochul (50%) with a double-digit lead against her Republican challenger Bruce Blakeman (33%) among registered voters statewide. Two percent say they would support another candidate if the election were held today, and 15% are undecided.

More than eight in ten Democrats (82%) support Hochul while 75% of Republicans support Blakeman. A notable 12% of registered Republicans, though, say they would back Hochul. Among non-enrolled voters, Hochul receives the support of 38%. 30% are for Blakeman, 2% would support another candidate, and 29% are undecided. Regionally, Hochul receives majority support in New York City (62%) and in the city's suburbs (52%). Upstate, Hochul receives 42% to 40% for Blakeman. 15% are undecided.

Blakeman Not Well-Known Statewide

Nearly one in four New Yorkers (24%) have a favorable opinion of Blakeman. The same proportion (24%) have an unfavorable view of him. A majority (52%) have either never heard of Blakeman or are unsure how to rate him.

Schumer Approval Rating at Lowest Point in His Senate Career

Senator Chuck Schumer's job approval rating has reached an all-time low. Slightly more than one in four registered voters statewide (27%) think Schumer is either doing an excellent (8%) or good (19%) job in office. Nearly two-in-three voters (65%) say he is doing either a fair (24%) or poor job (41%). Schumer's approval score is down from 34% last year and is his lowest ever since being tracked in 1999.

While there has been a slight increase among the proportion of Democrats who have a negative view of Schumer's job performance (50% from 46% previously), the largest shift has occurred among Republicans. 84% say Schumer is doing either a fair or poor job in office compared with 69% previously. Among non-enrolled voters, 65% now say he is doing either a fair or poor job compared with 62% last year.

Gillibrand Approval Rating Lowest in More Than 15 Years

Slightly more than three in ten registered voters statewide think Senator Kirsten Gillibrand is doing either an excellent (9%) or good (22%) job in office. A slim majority (51%) say Gillibrand's job performance is fair (26%) or poor (25%). 18% are unsure. The proportion of New York voters who think Gillibrand is doing well in her post is down from 36% last April and is at its lowest point since September of 2010. At that time, 27% gave Gillibrand above average marks.

Methodology

This Marist Poll New York State survey of 1,552 adults was conducted February 16th through February 19th, 2026, by the Marist Poll. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in York State were contacted through a multi-mode design: By phone using live interviewers, by text, or online. Results for all adults (n= 1,552) are statistically significant within ± 3.2 percentage points. Results for registered voters (n=1,442) are statistically significant within ± 3.3 percentage points. For full methodology and tables, click on the Survey Data button below.

Contact:

Lee M. Miringoff
Barbara L. Carvalho
Mary E. Griffith
Marist University
845.575.5050