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"Christie's relationship with Obama helps him most with Democrats and Independents, with 30 percent of Democrats and 27 percent of Independents being more likely to vote for Christie," Douglas said.

Part of Christie's success can be attributed to 60 percent of those surveyed believing New Jersey is going in the right direction, while 26 percent feel that it is off on the wrong track.

However, in a separate poll by Stockton, 79 percent of New Jerseyans say property taxes have gone up in the last three years.

With nearly one in four likely voters identifying property taxes as their top priority (23 percent) in the poll, the results suggest that voters are still concerned about an issue that has been the focus of governors and legislators for decades. Respondents pointed to jobs as the top issue (24 percent) facing New Jersey.

Of likely voters surveyed, 39 percent think property taxes have gone up "a lot" and 40 percent property taxes have gone up "a little." About 10 percent say they have stayed the same, 4 percent say they have decreased "a little" and less than 1 percent says they have decreased "a lot."

This poll was also conducted with 741 likely voters from June 8-13.

"Money matters most - taxes, the economy and jobs are the top issues New Jerseyans care about," Douglas said.

Taxes at 12 percent, the economy at 9 percent and K-12 education at 5 percent were the next issues identified. No other issue received more than 3 percent.

With control of the state Senate and Assembly at stake this November, those surveyed were closely split at about 36 percent for the Democratic legislative candidates and 35 percent for the Republicans; 7 percent said they would split their vote in the generic legislative matchup; and 19 percent were not sure or would support another candidate.

Only 30 percent have a favorable opinion of the New Jersey Legislature's job performance, while 62 percent have an unfavorable opinion.

"State legislators can take some solace from the fact that their overall job performance rating, while quite low, is higher than that of the United States Congress, which gets favorable ratings from only 10 percent of New Jerseyans," Douglas said.

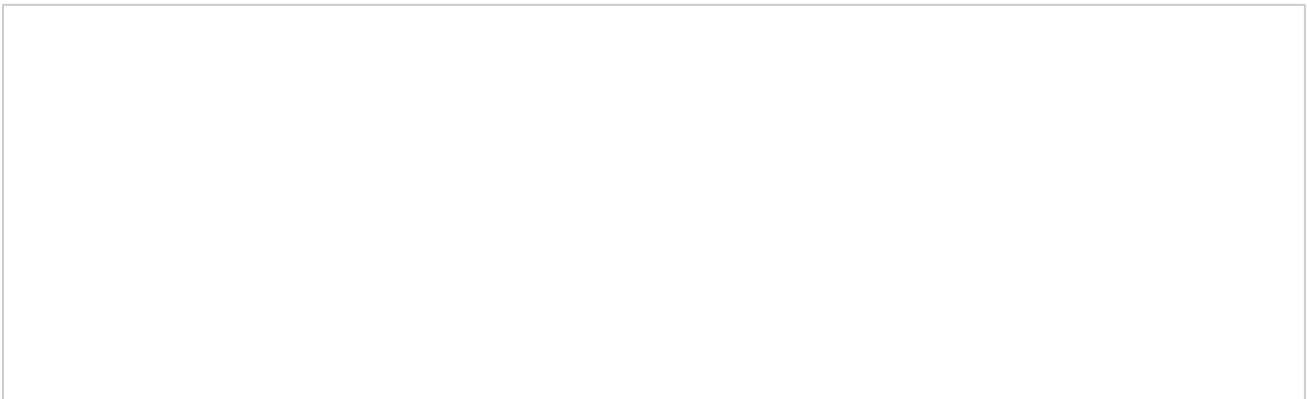
Likely voters were also asked about three possible ballot questions in the general election:

73 percent support raising the state's minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$8.25 an hour and providing cost of living increases, 21 percent oppose;

53 percent favor requiring the state to use \$200 million in existing tax revenues for open space preservation, 32 percent oppose; and

55 percent support the idea that the state should allow terminally ill patients to end their lives, 31 percent oppose.

The Stockton Polling Institute is part of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at the Richard Stockton College



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