

MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested parties

FROM: Rick Shaftan, Neighborhood Research

RE: Survey, New Jersey: October 6-8

DATE: October 9, 2009

The data below is from a survey of 300 registered voters who said their chances of voting in the November election were "definite" or "very likely." Surveys were completed between October 6th through 8th from live operators from our facility in Franklin, New Jersey. The data is compared with 319 responses completed between August 12th and 21st and 347 responses between September 14th and 17th. The theoretical margin of error is +/- 5.7% at a 95% confidence level. 11 of these surveys were completed in Spanish.

The survey shows a tight race even though 40 percent of respondents are conservatives and, among respondents, Democrats hold just a 42-35 lead in party enrollment (it was 44-31 in September's survey). This could be a sampling error which would add an extra point or two to the Corzine numbers.

DATA

Ballot Test	Corzine (D)	Christie (R)	Daggett (I)	Undecided/Other
August-09	35%	37%	6%	22%
September-09	33%	37%	8%	22%
October-09	35%	36%	11%	18%

Corzine	Favorable	Unfavorable	Mixed	No Opinion
August-09	21%	46%	12%	21%
September-09	21%	48%	6%	25%
October-09	28%	46%	9%	16%

Christie	Favorable	Unfavorable	Mixed	No Opinion/NH
August-09	19%	26%	9%	46%
September-09	28%	26%	5%	41%
October-09	28%	31%	10%	31%

Daggett	Favorable	Unfavorable	Mixed	ID
August-09	3%	1%	0%	44%
September-09	8%	1%	1%	60%
October-09	17%	4%	4%	82%

Generic Ballot	Democrat	Republican	Undecided
August-09	35%	40%	25%
September-09	38%	42%	20%
October-09	36%	42%	22%

Ballot Test: Definite Voters	Corzine (D)	Christie (R)	Daggett (I)	Undecided/Other
August-09	36%	39%	6%	19%
September-09	33%	40%	7%	20%
October-09	36%	36%	11%	17%

Corzine: Definite Voters	Favorable	Unfavorable	Mixed	No Opinion
August-09	23%	47%	12%	18%
September-09	21%	50%	7%	22%
October-09	28%	46%	10%	15%

Christie: Definite Voters	Favorable	Unfavorable	Mixed	No Opinion/NH
August-09	20%	27%	9%	44%
September-09	31%	25%	5%	39%
October-09	27%	32%	11%	30%

Daggett: Definite Voters	Favorable	Unfavorable	Mixed	ID
August-09	2%	1%	0%	44%
September-09	8%	1%	1%	60%
October-09	17%	3%	5%	82%

Generic Ballot: Definite Voters	Democrat	Republican	Undecided
August-09	34%	40%	26%
September-09	37%	44%	19%
October-09	36%	44%	20%

SUMMARY

Chris Christie's lead with all respondents has narrowed back to 36-35 from 37-33 in September and 37-35 in August. Daggett has gone from 6 percent in August to 8 percent in September to 11 percent today.

The shift has been most pronounced among definite voters, where Christie, who had a 39-36 lead in August and 40-33 in September, is now in a dead heat at 36-36.

Corzine's favorables have increased to 28% from 21% in both August and September while his unfavorables are 46%, the same as August and down from 48% in September. The numbers are virtually identical with definite voters.

Christie's favorables remain at 28%, the same as September (up from 19% in August). His unfavorables, however, are now 31% from 26% in August and September. These numbers are more

pronounced with definite voters, where Christie's favorables have fallen to 27% from 31% (20% in August) while his unfavorables are now 32%, from 25% in September and 27% in August.

Daggett's favorables have gone from 3% in August to 8% in September to 17% today. His total unfavorable and mixed has gone from 1% in August to 2% last month and 8% today.

Christie and Corzine for the first time have equal favorables. With definite voters, Corzine actually has higher favorables than Christie.

THE DAGGETT VOTE IS REAL, AT LEAST FOR NOW

Corzine's voters seem slightly more motivated than Christie's at this point. 94% of Corzine favorables are voting for him and among those voting for Corzine, the Governor is a strong 77-2 favorable. On the other hand, 89% of Christie favorables are supporting him and those voting for him are favorable by a lesser 69-3 margin.

60% of Daggett favorables are voting for him, which is a very high figure for a Third Party candidate and a number that shows Daggett could be a credible force if he can raise more money, and remain a viable alternative for voters.

Among those people voting for Daggett, the Independent is an amazing 91-0 favorable. This is significant because the Daggett vote is not a "protest" vote against the other two candidates but a positive affirmation of their candidate. (For an individual to be counted as favorable, they must be able to say what in particular they like about the person in question.)

Whether this continues as the Daggett campaign struggles for money and media attention in the final days remains to be seen.

GENERIC LEGISLATIVE BALLOT

The generic ballot for legislature continues to improve ever so slightly. The GOP lead with definite voters has expanded from 40-34 in August to 44-37 in September to 44-36 today. Christie leads 72-5 with 7 for Daggett with definite generic Republicans while Corzine is up 77-0 with definite generic Democrats. Those with no party preference but who are definitely voting back Corzine 29-23 over Christie, with 21 percent for Daggett.

NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY

Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon, Somerset and Morris County respondents made up 18 percent of the sample and Christie continues to struggle and underperform in this region of the state that should be a lock for him. Christie is up just 37-30 with 17 for Daggett, from 38-25-10 last month

Christie is a 32-30 net positive in this region, up from 25-35 net negative last month. Corzine has moved to 24-56 from 17-50. Christie's biggest problem here, and one he may overcome by election day, is Chris Daggett, who has strong numbers and, if he can remain viable, has the potential of siphoning off large numbers of potential Christie voters.

Daggett is now 30-6 favorable in this region, up from 12-1 last month. He now has 91% name ID in Northwestern New Jersey.

In solidly Republican Districts 16, 23, 24 and 25, Christie is up by only 33-28 with 20 for Daggett. In this region, Corzine is 25-55, from 18-58 while Christie is 28-30, from 18-38. Daggett's 33-8 is up from 12-2 last month.

The Christie campaign needs to energize and reinforce the GOP base in this region in order to deliver the margins needed to offset Democratic numbers in other parts of the state.

METRO NEW YORK CITY

The four county region of Bergen, Passaic, Hudson and Essex accounted for 31 percent of the sample and Corzine continues to hold a solid lead here. He tops Christie 46-27, 12 for Daggett in these counties, a change from 46-30-6 in September and 49-23-1 in August.

Corzine is a 40-36 favorable, up from 29-36 in September. Christie is a 17-38 net negative in this region, down significantly from 21-26 last month. Daggett is 16-2 from 6-1 in September.

Democrats lead 46-33 in the generic legislative ballot.

Christie's performance in this region is clearly below average.

CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

Union, Middlesex and Mercer Counties were 19 percent of the total and Christie continues to lead here with a 43-38 edge in this normally Democratic region. Last month, Christie led 30-27 here. Daggett remained stable at 9 percent both months in this area (he was at 8 percent in August here).

Corzine is 29-48 net negative in this region -- much improved from his 16-54 September rating, Christie is 30-29 (29-18 in September) and Daggett 16-4 (5-0 last month).

Christie's above average numbers here, coupled with the strong 46-36 GOP generic ballot lead for Assembly, indicates that districts 14, 18, 19 and 22 are potentially in play and could go Republican with a quick late attack blitz. The message isn't "If Christie wins I'm going to help him" but "If Corzine wins, I'm going to stop him" and it will work as long as the possibility of a Corzine victory is real.

Democratic legislators in this region were stronger when Christie held a double-digit lead.

MONMOUTH/OCEAN

Christie holds a whopping 49-19 lead in Monmouth and Ocean Counties compared to 50-25 last month. Daggett has actually dropped from 12 percent to 7 percent in that time.

Corzine is a 16-58 negative with these respondents -- very similar to 13-60 last month. Christie continues to have his strongest statewide numbers here (41-26 favorable, versus 42-22 last month). Daggett's personal numbers have dropped from 13-0 to 11-9.

Republicans hold a 54-30 generic ballot lead in this area and Democrats chances of unseating any of the region's GOP incumbents are slim. Monmouth and Ocean represented 14 percent of the sample.

SOUTH JERSEY

Christie holds a 32-30 lead (from 39-35 last month) in this region of the state, which accounted for 18 percent of those surveyed. 11 percent, up from 3 percent, were for Daggett.

Corzine's negatives have been lower in this region than other parts of the state and he is 22-41 negative today, from 25-38 last month. Christie is 28-28 (from 26-28 last month) and Daggett is 13-2 (from 4-0).

There has been little movement in this region in the last month, other than increased Daggett strength.

Republicans hold a healthy 48-33 generic ballot lead here and possibilities of upsets -- not just in District 1 but also Districts 3, 4 and even 6 should not be ruled out. A point or two more onto the generic GOP number statewide will be enough to push some or even all of these districts over the edge to the GOP.

DEMOGRAPHIC SPLITS.

A gender gap has developed in the race as Christie goes from a 41-32-8 lead with men to a 39-26-14 Christie edge. At the same time, Corzine has opened up a 42-33-9 lead with women from 34-34-7.

Corzine is 25-50, from 20-51, with men and 31-42 with women, up from 23-45. Christie is a 28-28 split with men, from 32-25 net positive and a 28-34 negative, from 25-27, with women. Daggett is 17-5 (from 10-1) with men and 17-3 (from 6-1) with women.

Christie holds a 34-33 lead with seniors, 37% of the sample. This is tighter than the 37-35 in September. Daggett now polls 15% of seniors, up from 10% in September.

HAS CORZINE TURNED IT AROUND?

Last month we saw the end of the line down the road for the Governor, a poorly defined incumbent with an aimless message and soggy base. This month, his favorables are up 7 points but more significantly, his open-ended favorable responses are much more positive and defined than in September with strong answers like "fixing New Jersey" replacing "trying hard" type of responses.

Christie's seven-point lead with definite voters has disappeared as Daggett continues to pull GOP votes in Northwest New Jersey. Corzine clearly has the momentum. The question is where do undecided voters, who tend to shift heavily against incumbents in the final ten days, go. Corzine is 7-41 net negative with undecided voters, Christie is 7-20 and Daggett 9-2.

Corzine's liberal base, which was soggy for him earlier in the campaign, has come home and this is a problem for Christie. Corzine's lead with the left has expanded from 51-13 in August to 66-8 in September and 73-12 today. Daggett has moved from 8 in August to 13 in September and back down to 6 now with liberal voters.

Corzine remains stable with moderates, but Christie has dropped significantly with these voters, going from 33 percent in August and 34 percent in September to only 20 percent of the moderate voter now. Daggett, meanwhile, has soared from low single digits in the last two surveys to 14 percent today, with moderate voters.

Among conservatives, Christie leads 63-12 with 13 for Daggett. There has been little movement in this race among conservatives even as Corzine sews up his liberal base -- except undecideds moving to Daggett and not Christie.

Christie's lead with conservatives was 62-14 in August and 64-11 last month. Daggett has gone from 6 to 8 to 14 percent in the three months.

Corzine's favorable/unfavorable ratings have been virtually constant with conservatives (8-69 in August, 8-66 in September and 8-72 in October) but with liberals, the change is nothing less than dramatic.

Amazingly, the most liberal governor in America was a 30-35 net negative with fellow liberals in August, improving to 41-25 last month and a more than respectable 65-16 today.

With moderates, Corzine is now virtually even at 33-35 net negative versus 27-37 in August and 22-44 in September.

Overall, 17 percent of respondents are liberals, 34 percent moderate and 40 percent conservative. The conservative percentage has increased from 32 percent in August to 35 percent in September to today's 40 percent figure -- the highest we have recorded in nearly twenty years of polling New Jersey.

The 40 percent conservative number is what keeps Christie competitive even as Corzine solidifies his liberal base.

CAN THE GOP WIN THE ASSEMBLY?

With continued GOP generic ballot leads in Assembly contests, including regions where targeted races exist, it's very possible that the climate can shift where a whole slew of districts flip over.

Assemblymembers have extremely low name ID and far fewer can name anything they like about them. These candidates are solely at the mercy of their party label that for Democratic incumbents right now is not a plus. Democrats, who have a money advantage over their pauper Republican foes, will try to keep contests off issues and on personalities.

Candidate personal strengths and weaknesses are mostly irrelevant here as most voters will be casting their ballots solely on party preference.

To win the Assembly, Republicans need to point to specific Democratic policies that they oppose and laws passed in previous years to repeal (e.g., taxes). The GOP Assembly takeover in 1991 was predicated on the pledge to repeal (over time) the Florio Taxes. To win in 2009, a similar message must be put forth.

The GOP could potentially pick up as many as 18 seats this cycle even with in a number of cases second-tier candidates with virtually no money or previous political experience. Democrats are still forced to run under the wings of a Governor who is, even in the strongest districts, a net unfavorable. Tying these legislators to the unpopular Governor -- even if he ends up winning -- will lead to GOP wins, especially if it appears that Corzine MIGHT be reelected.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Corzine has gotten off the canvas. The remaining question is whether he can close the sale.
2. Corzine's negative attacks on Christie have finally start to have an impact, but the effect is not anywhere near as great as conventional wisdom would have people believe.
3. Christie's negatives are just as likely to come from a vague stand on the issues or his own negative ads against Christie (actually RGA ads mostly) than Democrats attacks.

4. Daggett continues to soar in Northwestern New Jersey and represents a real threat to the Christie campaign, whether that continues depends on a number of factors.
5. Daggett needs money now to offset the expected Christie offensive, and it probably isn't there for him. If the race remains close, the "a vote for Daggett is a vote for Corzine" message will resonate.
6. Looking at key words in open-ended 30 percent of Corzine's favorables said "done" or "doing" only 5 percent said "trying" -- a big change from last month.
7. 37% of Corzine unfavorables mention taxes when asked what they dislike about him. This would normally be an excellent issue for Republicans, except that they have no plan to cut taxes either.
8. A third of Christie favorables either mention Corzine or Change as a reason they support him -- a mirror image of Obama and 2008. 10% mention that he is a Republican, 7% say he is conservative and 7% say he is honest.
9. Christie's negatives are less defined and more personal. Few key words stand out, and Corzine's inability to close the sale on Christie keeps Christie alive.
10. Daggett's tax plan, and not his TV ads, is a major reason for his boost in favorables.

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