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For Immediate Release:

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Tuesday, May 3, 2016

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Siena College Poll:

Passing New Laws to Address Corruption in State Government is Voters' Top End of Session Priority

Voters: Overwhelmingly Support Stripping Pensions of Legislators & All State Employees Convicted of Crimes Related to Their Public Jobs; Divided on Limiting Legislators' Outside Income to 15% of Salary; Strongly Pessimistic that Anti-Corruption Legislation Passes by June

Schumer: Huge Lead Over Long; Clinton Maintains Big Lead Over Trump

Loudonville, NY. Ninety-seven percent of New Yorkers say it is important for the Governor and Legislature to pass new laws to address corruption in state government before session ends in June, including 82 percent saying it's very important, and a plurality of 30 percent who say it's the single most important issue that must be acted on before session ends, according to a new Siena College poll of New York State registered voters released today.

More than three-quarters of voters support stripping pensions from state legislators convicted of crimes related to their public service regardless of when the legislator was first elected and an identical number, 77 percent, say such a pension forfeiture law should apply to all state employees, not just elected officials. Voters are closely divided on the issue of whether to limit legislators' outside income to 15 percent of their salary, as proposed by Governor Andrew Cuomo, and a majority continues to support a full time legislature that bans outside income, while a majority also opposes increasing legislators' pay even if they are full time legislators. Yet, by a two-to-one margin, voters are pessimistic that significant anti-corruption legislation will be enacted this session.

As the former Assembly Speaker and Senate Majority Leader are about to be sentenced after their corruption convictions, corruption is very much *the* issue for New Yorkers right now. By a 93-4 percent margin, voters say corruption in Albany is a serious problem. Nearly two-thirds say corruption among state legislators from their area is a serious problem, said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg. A near unanimous 97 percent say it is important for the Governor and Legislature to pass laws addressing corruption before session ends.

Corruption even beats out education, affordable housing and combatting the heroin epidemic as the single most important issue, Greenberg said. The problem is clear but voters don't agree on all solutions and they are decidedly pessimistic that Cuomo and the Legislature will address the corruption issue before the end of session.

“Stripping pensions from legislators – as well as any state employee – convicted of a crime related to their public jobs is an issue that has the overwhelming support of New Yorkers. More than two-thirds of Democrats and voters from New York City, as well as at least 81 percent of Republicans, independents and voters from the downstate suburbs and upstate support a law to strip convicted legislators of their pension, even if they were elected prior to that law being passed,” Greenberg said. “And at least 72 percent of voters from every region and party support applying the pension forfeiture law to all state employees.

“While there’s overwhelming support for the Governor’s proposal on pension forfeiture, there’s mixed support for his proposal to limit legislators’ outside income to 15 percent of their salary,” Greenberg said. “That proposal is supported by 45 percent of New Yorkers and opposed by 48 percent. Interestingly, the close division is true among Democrats, Republicans, independents and voters from every region of the state.

“By a 56-37 percent margin – down slightly from 60-34 percent in February – voters support making the Legislature full time and banning outside income. Democrats and independents strongly support that, while Republicans are more divided between that idea and keeping the Legislature part time,” Greenberg said. “If the Legislature was full time with outside employment banned, voters would still oppose, 56-41 percent, legislators getting a raise. Republicans and independents strongly oppose a raise, while Democrats are closely divided.”

Corruption is Top Issue for Governor & Legislature to Address Before Session Ends

Important for Governor & Legislature to Act on Each Issue Before End of Session			
Issue	Question 22	Questions 16 – 21	
	Single Most Important	Important (Very)	Not Important (Not at all)
Passing new laws to address corruption in state government	30%	97% (82%)	3% (1%)
Education issues, such as Common Core and testing	23%	88% (68%)	10% (4%)
Creating more affordable housing in New York State	21%	89% (61%)	11% (4%)
Combatting heroin addiction	13%	92% (70%)	8% (3%)
Increasing screening for cancers such as breast & prostate	9%	90% (67%)	9% (3%)
Determining whether mayoral control of NYC schools continues	2%	72% (38%)	21% (8%)
Siena College Poll – May 3, 2016			

Popular Schumer Has Huge Lead Over Unknown Long

Chuck Schumer has a 57-32 percent favorability rating, down a little from 60-29 percent in February. Wendy Long has a 13-10 percent favorability rating, with 78 percent not knowing enough about her to have an opinion. She had a 17-16 percent favorability rating with 67 percent not knowing enough about her in October 2012, shortly before losing to Kirsten Gillibrand in that year’s race for United States Senator. Currently, 52 percent say they are prepared to re-elect Schumer, while 38 percent would prefer “someone else,” largely unchanged from February. In a head-to-head matchup, Schumer leads Long by 40 points, 64-24 percent.

“After losing to Gillibrand 72-26 percent in 2012, Long is taking on another steeply uphill battle. With Schumer poised to become the Senate Democratic leader should he win re-election to a fourth term, he faces a candidate with experience in a statewide race but with little name recognition and no proven ability to raise money to mount a credible campaign,” Greenberg said.

“While Long leads Schumer with Republicans by 20 points, his lead among Democrats is 79 points and he has a 23-point lead with independents. Schumer, who prides himself on annually visiting all 62 New York counties, leads by 65 points in New York City, 27 point in the downstate suburbs and 23 points upstate,” Greenberg said.

Clinton Continues to Hold Large Lead Over Trump

Hillary Clinton has a negative 48-50 percent favorability rating, down slightly from 48-48 percent in March, while Donald Trump has a negative 26-70 percent favorability rating, down a little from 29-67 percent in March. Clinton leads Trump 56-30 percent, little changed from a 57-34 percent lead in March.

“The battle for New York ó between the native New York businessman and the former Senator from her adopted home state of New York ó continues to be a one-sided race,” Greenberg said. “With a two-to-one Democratic enrollment edge, Clinton has a nearly two-to-one edge over Trump. Her 67-point lead with Democrats and 14-point lead with independents trumps his 49-point lead with Republicans. While it’s not easy to win an election when half the electorate views you unfavorably, it’s still easier than when two-thirds view you unfavorably.”

Cuomo Standing with Voters Edges Up....Slightly

Cuomo has a 54-41 percent favorability rating, up a little from 52-43 percent in February and his job performance rating is a negative 43-56 percent, up slightly from negative 42-58 percent in February.

“Cuomo has seen a slight uptick in his favorability and job performance ratings ó now both at their best level since April 2015 ó although this poll was completed prior to news breaking that the Administration was facing Federal subpoenas,” Greenberg said. “Interestingly, his favorability rating was down a little in New York City but up in both the downstate suburbs and upstate, while on a partisan basis he improved more with Republicans ó although still very much under water with them ó than he did with Democrats or independents.”

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This Siena College Poll was conducted April 24-27, 2016 by telephone calls conducted in English to 802 New York State registered voters. Respondent sampling was initiated by asking for the youngest male in the household. It has an overall margin of error of ± 4.1 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample of landline (from ASDE Survey Sampler, Inc.) and cell phone (from Survey Sampling International) telephone numbers from within New York State weighted to reflect known population patterns. Data was statistically adjusted by age, party, region and gender to ensure representativeness. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in NYS. SRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Steve Greenberg at (518) 469-9858. For survey cross-tabs: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.



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Siena College Poll Trends – May 2016

Q. 3 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Andrew Cuomo?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	54	41	5
February 2016	52	43	5
December 2015	51	38	11
October 2015	50	42	8
September 2015	50	42	8
July 2015	49	44	7
HIGHEST EVER	77 (2/11)	44 (7/15, 5/15)	24 (1/06, 2/06, 9/07)
LOWEST EVER	44 (8/06, 10/06)	14 (8/09)	3 (10/20/10)

Q. 15 How would you rate the job that Andrew Cuomo is doing as Governor? Would you rate it excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	7	36	37	19	2
February 2016	8	34	34	24	0
December 2015	7	32	38	21	2
October 2015	9	32	35	23	1
September 2015	6	33	36	23	1
July 2015	7	32	40	20	1
HIGHEST EVER	17 (1/12)	47 (4/12, etc.)	40 (7/15, 12/14)	25 (10/14)	28 (1/11)
LOWEST EVER	6 (9/15, 3/15)	32 (12/15, etc.)	24 (1/11)	4 (2/11, 1/11)	0 (2/16, 5/15, 10/14)

Q. 4 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about the New York State Assembly?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	39	47	14
February 2016	37	49	15
December 2015	33	49	18
October 2015	36	44	19
July 2015	37	49	14
HIGHEST EVER	45 (1/13)	61 (7/10)	20 (12/14)
LOWEST EVER	25 (7/10)	40 (12/12)	10 (5/15)

Q. 6 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Carl Heastie?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	10	16	74
December 2015	12	14	74
October 2015	11	20	70
September 2015	8	15	78
July 2015	12	15	74
HIGHEST EVER	14 (2/15)	20 (10/15)	78 (9/15)
LOWEST EVER	8 (9/15)	14 (12/15, 2/15)	69 (4/15)

Q. 5 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about the New York State Senate?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	42	48	9
February 2016	38	49	13
December 2015	38	47	16
October 2015	42	42	16
July 2015	38	50	12
HIGHEST EVER	46 (1/14, 5/12)	74 (7/09)	16 (12/15, 10/15)
LOWEST EVER	20 (7/09)	41 (12/12)	6 (7/09)

Siena College Poll Trends – May 2016

Q. 7 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about John Flanagan?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	14	16	70
December 2015	12	14	74
October 2015	14	16	69
September 2015	13	14	73
July 2015	12	13	75
HIGHEST EVER	17 (5/15)	16 (5/16, 10/15)	75 (7/15)
LOWEST EVER	12 (12/15, 7/15)	13 (7/15)	69 (10/15, 5/15)

Q. 23 How serious a problem would you say corruption is in state government in Albany? Would you say it's very serious, somewhat serious, not very serious, or not at all serious?

DATE	VERY SERIOUS	SOMEWHAT SERIOUS	NOT VERY SERIOUS	NOT AT ALL SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	58	35	3	1	3
February 2016	53	36	7	1	4
December 2015	52	37	5	2	4
July 2015	51	39	6	1	3
HIGHEST EVER	58 (5/16)	41 (2/15)	8 (8/14)	2 (12/15, etc.)	5 (8/14)
LOWEST EVER	47 (8/14)	35 (5/16)	3 (5/16)	1 (Several)	2 (5/15, 2/15)

Q. 24 How serious a problem would you say corruption is among state legislators from your areas? Would you say it's very serious, somewhat serious, not very serious, or not at all serious?

DATE	VERY SERIOUS	SOMEWHAT SERIOUS	NOT VERY SERIOUS	NOT AT ALL SERIOUS	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	26	39	22	6	7
February 2016	26	39	20	10	5
HIGHEST EVER	26 (5/16, 2/16)	41 (5/15)	27 (4/15)	11 (3/15)	8 (4/15)
LOWEST EVER	21 (5/15, etc.)	34 (3/15)	20 (2/16)	6 (5/16)	4 (5/15)

Q. 25 Currently, state legislators are part time and can have other jobs. Some have suggested that one way to reduce corruption in state government is to make the job of state legislator full time and ban outside employment. Do you support keeping the current system of part time legislators, OR do you support making legislators full time with a ban on outside employment? (CHOICES WERE ROTATED.)

DATE	CURRENT/PART TIME	FULL TIME	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	37	56	7
February 2016	34	60	6
HIGHEST EVER	37 (5/16)	60 (2/16)	7 (5/16)
LOWEST EVER	34 (2/16)	56 (5/16)	6 (2/16, 2/15)

Q. 29 If the State Legislature were to become full time with outside employment banned, would you support or oppose giving state legislators a pay raise from their current base salary of \$79,500?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	41	56	3
February 2016	42	55	2
HIGHEST EVER	42 (2/16)	57 (2/15)	3 (5/16, 2/15)
LOWEST EVER	40 (2/15)	55 (2/16)	2 (2/16)

Q. 30 Will the recent corruption scandals make you more likely to re-elect your state legislators next year, less likely to re-elect your state legislators next year, or will the scandals have no effect on your vote for state legislators next year?

DATE	MORE LIKELY TO RE-ELECT	LESS LIKELY TO RE-ELECT	NO EFFECT ON VOTE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	10	47	39	4
February 2016	8	49	40	4
December 2015	10	46	37	7
July 2015	11	49	34	6
July 2014*	11	37	49	3
HIGHEST EVER	11 (7/15, 5/15)	49 (2/16, 7/15)	49 (5/15)	7 (12/15)
LOWEST EVER	8 (2/16)	37 (5/15)	34 (7/15)	3 (5/15)

Siena College Poll Trends – May 2016

Q. 8 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Chuck Schumer?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	57	32	11
February 2016	60	29	10
December 2015	57	28	15
October 2015	58	30	13
September 2015	61	29	10
July 2015	62	27	12
HIGHEST EVER	70 (7/05)	32 (5/16, 10/31/10, 9/10, 6/10)	17 (2/05)
LOWEST EVER	54 (6/10)	20 (2/05, 11/06)	4 (10/31/10)

Q. 7 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Wendy Long?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	13	10	78
October 2012	17	16	67
HIGHEST EVER	17 (10/12)	16 (10/12)	82 (4/12)
LOWEST EVER	8 (4/12)	9 (5/12)	67 (10/12)

Q. 12 If Chuck Schumer runs for re-election as United States Senator in 2016, would you vote to re-elect him or would you prefer someone else?

DATE	RE-ELECT	SOMEONE ELSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	52	38	10
February 2016	53	37	10
December 2015	51	37	12
October 2015	49	38	13
September 2015	49	37	13
HIGHEST EVER	53 (2/16)	38 (5/16, 10/15)	13 (10/15, 9/15)
LOWEST EVER	49 (10/15, 9/15)	37 (2/16, 12/15, 9/15)	10 (5/16, 2/16)

Q. 10 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Hillary Clinton?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	48	50	2
March 2016	48	48	4
February 2016	50	47	3
September 2015	46	51	3
July 2015	56	40	4
HIGHEST EVER	75 (12/12)	51 (9/15)	8 (3/05, 6/06, 3/07)
LOWEST EVER	46 (9/15)	23 (12/12)	2 (many)

Q. 11 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Donald Trump?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	26	70	4
March 2016	29	67	4
February 2016	25	71	4
September 2015	33	65	2
July 2015	25	71	4
HIGHEST EVER	38 (1/14)	71 (2/16, 7/15)	10 (10/13)
LOWEST EVER	25 (2/16, 7/15)	57 (1/14)	2 (9/15)

Q.14 If the election for President were held today and the candidates were Hillary Clinton on the Democratic line and Donald Trump on the Republican line, would you vote for Trump or Clinton? (CANDIDATES WERE ROTATED)

DATE	CLINTON	TRUMP	OTHER/NO VOTE/NO OPINION
May 2016	56	30	15
March 2016	57	34	10
February 2016	57	32	11
September 2015	55	36	10
HIGHEST EVER	57 (3/16, 2/16)	36 (9/15)	15 (5/16)
LOWEST EVER	55 (9/15)	30 (5/16)	10 (3/16, 9/15)

Siena College Poll Trends – May 2016

Q. 32 The last New York State Constitutional Convention was held in 1967. Since then, New Yorkers have twice voted against having a constitutional convention in both 1977 and 1997. In 2017, New Yorkers will again have an opportunity to vote on whether or not there should be a State Constitutional Convention. How much have you heard about that vote in 2017 on whether or not to have a constitutional convention. Would you say you have heard a great deal, some, not very much, or nothing at all?

DATE	GREAT DEAL	SOME	NOT VERY MUCH	NOTHING	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	2	5	20	72	1
October 2015	2	5	20	71	1
July 2015	2	4	19	75	0
HIGHEST EVER	2 (several)	5 (5/16, 10/15)	20 (5/16, 10/15)	75 (7/15)	1 (5/16, 10/15)
LOWEST EVER	2 (several)	4 (7/15)	19 (7/15)	71 (10/15)	0 (7/15)

Q. 33 Do you support or oppose having a New York State Constitutional Convention in which delegates propose changes to the State Constitution for voters to approve or reject?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	69	19	12
October 2015	60	25	15
July 2015	69	15	16
June 2010	58	26	16
August 2009	63	25	12
HIGHEST EVER	69 (5/16, 7/15)	26 (6/10)	16 (7/15, 6/10)
LOWEST EVER	58 (6/10)	15 (7/15)	12 (5/16, 8/09)

Q. 2 How would you describe the fiscal condition of New York State right now? Would you describe it as excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	2	25	44	26	4
July 2015	2	27	42	26	3
HIGHEST EVER	3 (12/14, 8/13)	29 (7/14)	49 (8/12)	67 (3/22/10)	4 (5/16, etc.)
LOWEST EVER	0 (many)	6 (3/22/10, etc.)	25 (3/22/10)	25 (2/15, 9/14, 7/14)	0 (4/11, etc.)

Q. 1 Is New York State on the right track, or is it headed in the wrong direction?

DATE	RIGHT TRACK	WRONG DIRECTION	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2016	43	46	10
February 2016	47	43	10
December 2015	42	43	15
October 2015	46	39	15
September 2015	41	49	10
July 2015	40	45	15
HIGHEST EVER	57 (1/13)	76 (10/31/10)	30 (1/07)
LOWEST EVER	14 (10/10)	26 (1/07)	7 (5/13)

Poll Trend Notes: * All surveys are of registered voters except for the polls of July thru October 2014, August/October 2012, October 2010, September/October 2008, and September/October 2006, which are polls of likely voters.

Trends reflect questions asked at least twice since the first Siena College Poll in February 2005.

Results listed here include all times questions have been asked since July 2015.

“Highest Ever” and “Lowest Ever” are provided at the bottom of each question.

^ Inconsequential wording change.