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PDF version; crosstabs; website:

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Siena College Poll:

Majority: Separate Ethics from Budget & Separate Education Too

Overwhelming Support for: Keeping State Emails Longer than 90 Days;
Including Minority Leaders in Budget Negotiations; Turning Gov's
Upstate Economic Development Competition into Money for All Regions

***Nearly Three-Quarters of Voters Want Minimum Wage Increase;
Strong Support for Assembly's Plan over Governor's Plan***

Loudonville, NY. By a 54-41 percent margin, voters say Governor Andrew Cuomo's proposed ethics reform package should be addressed separate and apart from the budget, rather than be included in the budget. Similarly, voters say 56-40 percent the Governor's proposed education policy changes should be addressed separate and apart from the budget, according to a new Siena College poll of New York State registered voters released today.

While most voters have not heard much about the Cuomo Administration's email policy, 80 percent say state emails should be saved significantly longer than 90 days. Eighty-five percent, would like to see Senate Minority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb included in budget negotiations.

More than three-quarters of voters say the Governor should shelve his regional competition for economic development money and divide the money among all seven upstate regions. Only 26 percent support the Senate's desire to not increase the minimum wage, while 72 percent say it should be increased to at least \$10.50 per hour.

Corruption in Albany continues to be overwhelmingly seen by voters as a serious problem, however, they do not believe ethics reform should be included in the budget. A majority from every party – including Republicans by nearly two-to-one – say ethics should be addressed separate from the budget, said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg. Education policy changes, too, should be addressed outside of the budget, say a majority of Democrats, independents and downstate suburbanites, as well as about two-thirds of Republicans and upstaters. Only New York City voters, 51-44 percent, say education policy changes should be included in the budget.

Despite how serious a problem they say corruption is in state government, by 62-29 percent voters say an on time budget is more important than Cuomo's ethics package, up significantly from 53-37 percent last month. Strong majorities from every party and region agree, Greenberg said. If ethics is included in the budget – and a majority think it will be – voters are evenly divided on whether it will reduce corruption or have no real effect.

“Small majorities of Democrats and downstaters think that if it was included in the budget, the Governor’s ethics package will reduce corruption. However, small majorities of Republicans, independents and upstaters think it will have little or no effect,” Greenberg said.

Governor Has Influence over Education Policy, Voters Say; They Side with Teachers’ Unions over Cuomo

“Despite repeatedly saying he does not, more than three-quarters of voters think the Governor has influence over education policy, including 40 percent who think he has a great deal of influence,” Greenberg said. “At least 73 percent of voters from every party and region think he has at least some influence on education policy.

“By a 50-41 percent margin, voters side with the teachers’ unions – who say increasing and providing fair funding to school districts is what’s needed to improve education – over Cuomo, who is pushing to change the teacher evaluation system to improve education. Republicans and independents are closely divided, while Democrats clearly side with the teachers’ unions. New York City and upstate voters agree more with the teachers and downstate suburbanites agree more with the Governor,” Greenberg said.

Few Voters Know Much About Cuomo Admin. Email Policy; Want Emails Kept More than 90 Days

“Fewer than three in ten voters say they’ve heard or read at least some about the Cuomo Administration’s email retention policy, while 41 percent say they’ve heard nothing about it,” Greenberg said. “By an overwhelming margin, 80-16 percent, voters say state emails should be retained significantly longer than 90 days, including more than three-quarters of voters from every region, party, gender, race, religion, age.”

Minority Leaders Should Be Included in Budget Negotiations

“The three men in a room – or four as it has been the last few years – should make room for two more, another man and the first woman in the room. Voters say 85-11 percent that the minority leaders of both houses of the Legislature should be included in the private budget negotiating sessions,” Greenberg said. “More than 80 percent of every demographic group supports including the minority leaders in budget negotiations.”

End the Competition: Upstate Economic Revitalization Fund Should be Divided Among Regions

“More than three-quarters of voters, 77 percent – including at least three-quarters of every party, region, gender, race, and age – say that the \$1.5 billion upstate economic revitalization fund should be divided among all the upstate regions. Only 16 percent believe the Governor’s proposed competition with three winners each receiving \$500 million is the right way to go,” Greenberg said.

Voters Overwhelmingly Support Increasing Minimum Wage; Most Want it Increased More than Gov

“Nearly three-quarters of New Yorkers want to see the minimum wage hiked to \$10.50 per hour, compared to only 26 percent who side with the Senate in keeping it at \$9.00 per hour,” Greenberg said. “While 20 percent say the Governor is right and it should be increased to \$10.50, 52 percent of all voters say they side with the Assembly in raising it to \$10.50 now and increasing it even more in future years.”

öRepublicans are nearly evenly divided, with 47 percent supporting the Senate's position of holding the minimum wage at \$9.00 and 51 percent supporting an increase to \$10.50, including 34 percent who say it should increase more in future years,ö Greenberg said. öEighty-four percent of Democrats and 70 percent of independents want the minimum wage increased to \$10.50, with more than half of each saying it should be increased even more.

öSupport is strong for increasing the minimum wage, however, voters are closely divided on whether downstate should have a higher minimum wage than upstate, with a small majority of 51 percent saying no and 46 percent supporting the differential minimum wage,ö Greenberg said. öNew York City voters support the higher minimum wage for downstate, downstate suburbanites are closely divided and upstaters oppose almost two-to-one.ö

For Second Month in a Row, Cuomo Ratings Slip a Little

Cuomo's favorability rating is 57-39 percent, down slightly from 59-37 percent last month, and he has a negative 43-56 percent job performance rating, from a negative 44-55 percent last month.

öBob Dylan might title it "The Budget Battle, Ethics Reform, Fighting the Teachers Unions Blues.ö Over the last month, Cuomo's standing with Democrats took a net nine-point hit on his favorability rating and a net 10-point hit on his job performance rating,ö Greenberg said. öWhile equal numbers of voters view the job Cuomo is doing as Governor as good and fair, three times as many voters say he's doing a poor job compared to those who say he's doing an excellent job. Thanks to downstaters, he still has a net 18-point positive favorability rating.ö

Direction of State and Nation Down this Month; New York Still (Barely) Positive; USA Still Negative

öBy a 46-42 percent margin, voters say the state is on the right track, down from 49-41 percent last month. A majority of downstaters continue to say the state is on the right track, while a majority of upstaters say the state is headed in the wrong direction,ö Greenberg said. öA majority, 52 percent, say the nation is headed in the wrong direction, compared to 40 percent who say it's on the right track, down slightly from 42-51 percent last month.ö

Clinton Takes a Hit on Her Favorability Rating

öHillary Clinton is still viewed favorably by most New Yorkers, 59-38 percent, however, it's down from 62-35 percent last month, and 65-32 percent at this time last year,ö Greenberg said. öClinton has taken a lot of heat over the last month for her email policy while Secretary of State. Among Democrats, 77 percent continue to view her favorably, down from 85 percent last month, however, 76 percent of Republicans view her unfavorably, up from 63 percent last month.ö

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This Siena College Poll was conducted March 15-19, 2015 by telephone calls conducted in English to 800 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 ± 3.5 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample provided by Survey Sampling International of landline and cell phone 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](tel:5184699858). For survey cross-tabs: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.



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Siena College Poll Trends – March 2015

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	57	39	4
February 2015	59	37	4
January 2015	60	35	5
December 2014	58	37	4
October 2014*	54	43	3
September 2014*	55	40	5
August 2014*	57	36	7
July 2014*	61	35	4
June 2014	63	31	6
HIGHEST EVER	77 (2/11)	43 (10/14)	24 (1/06, 2/06, 9/07)
LOWEST EVER	44 (8/06, 10/06)	14 (8/09)	3 (10/20/10)

Q. 12 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
March 2015	6	37	37	19	1
February 2015	9	35	38	17	1
January 2015	11	36	35	16	1
December 2014	7	35	40	17	1
October 2014*	9	34	32	25	0
September 2014*	7	35	35	21	1
August 2014*	9	35	38	17	1
July 2014*	9	41	31	18	1
June 2014	8	41	34	16	1
HIGHEST EVER	17 (1/12)	47 (4/12, etc.)	39 (11/13)	25 (10/14)	28 (1/11)
LOWEST EVER	6 (3/15)	34 (10/14, 1/11)	24 (1/11)	4 (2/11, 1/11)	0 (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
March 2015	41	46	14
February 2015	43	45	12
January 2015	42	41	17
December 2014	39	41	20
September 2014*	40	44	16
July 2014*	39	43	17
HIGHEST EVER	45 (1/13)	61 (7/10)	20 (12/14)
LOWEST EVER	25 (7/10)	40 (12/12)	12 (4/13, 1/10)

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	11	15	74
February 2015	14	14	73
HIGHEST EVER	14 (2/15)	15 (3/15)	74 (3/15)
LOWEST EVER	11 (3/15)	14 (2/15)	73 (2/15)

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	44	46	10
February 2015	45	44	11
January 2015	45	44	11
December 2014	41	44	14
September 2014*	40	46	14
July 2014*	41	45	14
HIGHEST EVER	46 (1/14, 5/12)	74 (7/09)	14 (12/14, 7/14, 12/12, 6/11)
LOWEST EVER	20 (7/09)	41 (12/12)	6 (7/09)

Q. 7 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Dean Skelos?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	13	22	65
February 2015	16	20	64
January 2015	13	18	68
March 2014	19	21	61
HIGHEST EVER	19 (3/14)	24 (4/13)	82 (11/08)
LOWEST EVER	9 (12/10)	8 (7/08)	61 (3/14, 4/13)

Q. 8 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Eric Schneiderman?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	35	19	46
December 2014	32	22	46
October 2014*	41	20	39
September 2014*	27	23	50
August 2014*	25	16	59
July 2014*	26	18	56
June 2014	23	16	61
HIGHEST EVER	41 (10/14)	27 (10/31/10)	86 (11/09)
LOWEST EVER	8 (11/09)	6 (5/10, 11/09)	39 (10/14)

Q. 9 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Thomas DiNapoli?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	29	18	53
December 2014	27	19	53
October 2014*	35	19	46
September 2014*	30	17	52
August 2014*	26	13	61
July 2014*	28	16	56
June 2014	26	12	62
HIGHEST EVER	35 (10/14)	36 (10/31/10)	80 (6/07)
LOWEST EVER	7 (6/07, 5/07)	10 (12/09, 11/08)	37 (10/31/10)

Q. 13 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
March 2015	49	38	7	2	4
February 2015	51	41	4	2	2
August 2014	47	39	8	1	5
HIGHEST EVER	51 (2/15)	41 (2/15)	8 (8/14)	2 (3/15, 2/15)	5 (8/14)
LOWEST EVER	47 (8/14)	38 (3/15)	4 (2/15)	1 (8/14)	2 (2/15)

Siena College Poll Trends – March 2015

Q. 14 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
March 2015	23	34	24	11	7
February 2015	21	39	24	9	7
HIGHEST EVER	23 (3/15)	39 (2/15)	24 (3/15, 2/15)	11 (3/15)	7 (3/15, 2/15)
LOWEST EVER	21 (2/15)	34 (3/15)	24 (3/15, 2/15)	9 (2/15)	7 (3/15, 2/15)

Q. 16 Do you think the Governor's ethics reform package would reduce corruption in state government, or would it have no real effect on state government corruption?

DATE	REDUCE CORRUPTION	NO REAL EFFECT	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	51	42	7
February 2015	51	44	5
HIGHEST EVER	51 (3/15, 2/15)	44 (2/15)	7 (3/15)
LOWEST EVER	51 (3/15, 2/15)	42 (3/15)	5 (2/15)

Q. 17 What do you think is more important about passing an on time state budget, or passing the Governor's ethics reform package, even if it means the state budget is not passed on time? (CHOICES WERE ROTATED)

DATE	ON TIME BUDGET	ETHICS REFORM PACKAGE	BOTH/NEITHER/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	62	29	10
February 2015	53	37	10
HIGHEST EVER	62 (3/15)	37 (2/15)	10 (3/15, 2/15)
LOWEST EVER	53 (2/15)	29 (3/15)	10 (3/15, 2/15)

Q. 10 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Barack Obama?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	57	41	3
February 2015	56	42	2
December 2014	54	43	3
September 2014*	50	46	4
July 2014*	53	45	1
HIGHEST EVER	81 (1/09)	46 (9/14, 10/31/10)	40 (11/06)
LOWEST EVER	48 (11/06)	10 (1/09)	1 (7/14, 1/13, 8/12)

Q. 11 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Hillary Clinton?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	59	38	3
February 2015	62	33	5
December 2014	63	32	5
March 2014	65	32	3
HIGHEST EVER	75 (12/12)	46 (4/08)	8 (3/05, 6/06, 3/07)
LOWEST EVER	48 (4/08)	23 (12/12)	2 (many)

Q. 2 Is the United States on the right track, or is it headed in the wrong direction?

DATE	RIGHT TRACK	WRONG DIRECTION	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2015	40	52	9
February 2015	42	51	8
January 2015	38	55	7
December 2014	34	57	9
October 2014*	33	60	7
September 2014*	36	55	9
July 2014*	38	56	7
HIGHEST EVER	62 (5/09)	74 (10/13, 8/11)	17 (9/08)
LOWEST EVER	19 (10/13, 10/08)	24 (12/09)	5 (1/13)

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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
March 2015	46	42	12
February 2015	49	41	10
January 2015	46	45	9
December 2014	41	45	14
October 2014*	46	46	8
September 2014*	48	43	10
August 2014*	47	40	13
July 2014*	49	40	10
June 2014	50	39	11
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 June 2014.

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

^ Inconsequential wording change.