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Siena College Poll:

Cuomo's Favorability Rating – Still Two-to-One Positive – Hits Lowest Level Since He's Been Governor
Support for New Gun Law Remains Strong; Majority Oppose Repeal of the Law; Voters Divided on Whether Law Was Rushed Through
Voters: Increase Minimum Wage; Enact Public Campaign Financing and Gov's Reproductive Health Act; Decriminalize Small Amounts of Pot

Loudonville, NY. Governor Andrew Cuomo continues to maintain a better than two-to-one favorability rating (64-30 percent), although it is down from 67-29 percent last month and 72-21 percent in December 2012, and is now at its lowest level since he's been governor, according to a new Siena College Research Institute poll of New York voters released today. By a 61-35 percent margin (down from 65-30 percent last month), voters support the state's new gun law, and by a 56-40 percent margin voters oppose repealing the law. Voters strongly support increasing the minimum wage, creating a system of public campaign financing for the state, enacting the governor's reproductive health act, and decriminalizing the public possession of up to 15 grams of marijuana.

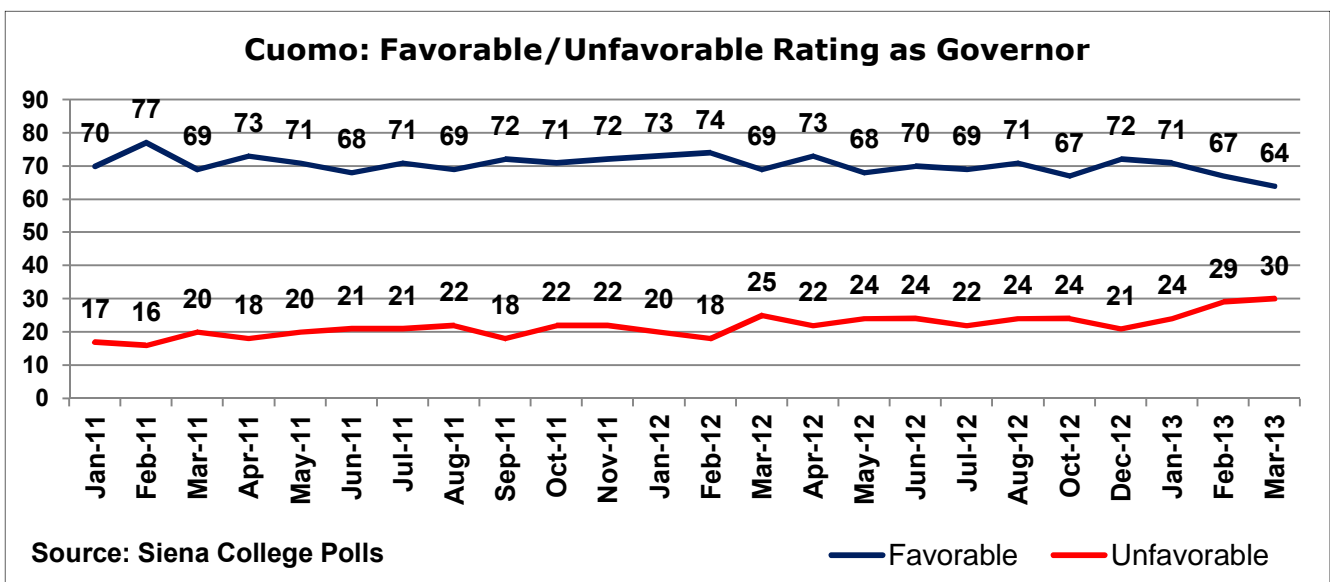
“With a better than two-to-one favorability rating that would be the envy of most elected officials or politicians, Andrew Cuomo continues to be very popular with New York voters. However, for the third consecutive month, Cuomo has seen a small drop in his favorability rating, and is now viewed favorably by fewer voters than at any time since he's been governor,” said Siena pollster Steven Greenberg. “Similarly, the governor's job performance rating and his re-elect number have also fallen by high single digits over the last couple of months.”

Fifty-four percent of voters say Cuomo is doing an excellent or good job as governor and 44 percent say he's doing only a fair or poor job (down from 58-41 percent last month and 60-38 percent in January and December). Currently, 54 percent of voters are prepared to re-elect Cuomo next year, compared to 37 percent who would prefer someone else (down from 56-36 percent last month and 62-29 percent in December).

“Although the gun law has certainly created a stir across the state, particularly upstate, the majority of voters are with the governor on guns. And they are strongly with him on a number of other prominent issues,” Greenberg said. “So, is it the gun law creating this mini-trend of three consecutive months of lower poll numbers? Or is it, to some degree, that nearly half of voters see recent decisions by the governor as being politically motivated?”

“In a new Siena College Poll question, voters were asked if they thought the governor makes decisions based on what he thinks is best for New Yorkers or best for his political future. Voters are nearly evenly divided, with 49 percent saying what’s best for New Yorkers and 47 percent saying what’s best for his political future,” Greenberg said. “Not surprisingly, Democrats strongly say he’s doing what’s best for the people, while Republicans strongly say ó and independent also agree ó that Cuomo’s decisions are based more on his political ambitions.

“Interestingly, the small drop this month in Cuomo’s favorability, job performance and re-elect ratings can’t be blamed on Republicans. His ratings on all three questions are actually up with Republicans in March compared to February,” Greenberg said. “The fall this month is due to some slippage among Democrats and independents. He also slipped among New York City and upstate voters, while gaining a little ground with suburban voters.”



Voters Continue to Support New Gun Law; Do Not Want to See it Repealed

“More than six in ten voters support the new gun law, including three-quarters of Democrats, a majority of independents and more than two-thirds of downstaters, while slightly more than one-third of voters oppose the law, including a majority of Republicans and upstaters. Over the last month, upstate opposition has grown significantly, while Republican opposition decreased slightly,” Greenberg said. “A majority of voters, including two-thirds of Democrats and nearly two-thirds of downstaters, do not want the law repealed. However, 12 percent of the law’s supporters say they now want it repealed and nine percent of the opponents do *not* want it repealed.

“Voters are now virtually evenly divided on whether or not the law was ‘rushed through’ or was the ‘right thing to do.’ Forty-nine percent say it was passed quickly but was the right thing to do, down from 56 percent who felt that way last month, while 48 percent said it was rushed through without adequate consideration, up from last month’s 42 percent. With more time to consider what happened, some voters have become displeased with the process that led to the gun law’s passage,” Greenberg said.

Voters Strongly Support Minimum Wage Increase, Public Campaign Financing, ‘Stop & Frisk’ Reform

More than three-quarters of voters support increasing the minimum wage in New York to \$9.00 per hour, down slightly from when Siena asked the question at \$8.50 and \$8.75 per hour, with overwhelming support from Democrats and independents and majority support from Republicans, Greenberg said. Support for public campaign financing remains strong – 61-33 percent – with two-thirds of Democrats, 60 percent of independents and a plurality of Republicans behind it.

Roughly two-thirds of Democrats and independents favor what’s been called stop and frisk reform – making the possession of less than 15 grams of marijuana in public view a violation, rather than a misdemeanor – as do half of Republicans, Greenberg said. Overall, voters support it by a strong 63-34 percent margin.

Overwhelming Support for Gov’s Reproductive Health Act; Two-thirds Call Themselves Pro-Choice

By an overwhelming 80-16 percent margin, voters support the Governor’s reproductive health act, aimed at protecting reproductive freedom for women, ensuring a woman’s right to make private health care decisions regarding pregnancy. At least two-thirds of voters from every party, region and demographic group support it, with the exception of self-identified conservatives who support it 64-29 percent, Greenberg said. When asked to describe themselves as generally –pro-life or –pro-choice on the issue of abortion, 66 percent of New York voters describe themselves as pro-choice – including more than two-thirds of Democrats and independents and a majority of Republicans – compared to 27 percent who describe themselves as pro-life.

Voters Views on Obama and the Direction of the Country Take Major Drop

While still viewed favorably by a majority, President Obama’s favorability rating dropped significantly this month to 56-41 percent, down from 66-32 percent last month, Greenberg said. Voters say the country is headed in the wrong direction by a nearly two-to-one margin, with only 32 percent saying the country is on the right track and 60 percent saying it’s headed in the wrong direction, down from a near even 46-49 percent in January.

Fracking and Casino Amendment Divide Voters Close to Evenly

By a narrow 43-39 percent margin, voters oppose fracking moving forward, little changed from last month’s 40-40 percent tie. It is opposed by a plurality of Democrats, independents, New York City voters, and a near-majority of upstaters. It’s supported by a strong majority of Republicans and a plurality of downstate suburban voters, Greenberg said. A narrow plurality of voters, 46-43 percent, supports a constitutional amendment to allow casinos in New York, down from 48-42 percent last month and 52 percent support in January and December. Geographically, New York City voters are most opposed and Upstate voters are most supportive.

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This Siena College Poll was conducted March 3-7, 2013 by telephone calls to 803 New York State registered voters. It has an overall margin of error of ± 3.5 percentage points. Data was statistically adjusted by age, party, region and gender to ensure representativeness. Sampling was conducted via random digit dialing to landline and cell phones weighted to reflect known population patterns. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in New York State. 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 and frequencies: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.



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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	64	30	6
February 2013	67	29	4
January 2013	71	24	5
December 2012	72	21	7
October 2012	67	24	9
August 2012	71	24	5
July 2012	69	22	9
HIGHEST EVER	77 (2/11)	42 (10/06)	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 2013	12	42	31	13	1
February 2013	16	42	28	13	1
January 2013	16	44	28	10	1
December 2012	15	45	30	8	2
October 2012	15	43	32	8	3
August 2012	16	44	33	7	1
July 2012	13	45	33	8	1
HIGHEST EVER	17 (1/12)	47 (4/12, etc.)	36 (9/11, 5/11)	13 (3/13, 2/13)	28 (1/11)
LOWEST EVER	8 (3/11)	34 (1/11)	24 (1/11)	4 (2/11, 1/11)	1 (many)

Q. 11 I know it's a long way off, but if Andrew Cuomo runs for re-election as Governor in 2014, as things stand now, would you vote to re-elect him or would you prefer someone else?

DATE	RE-ELECT CUOMO	PREFER SOMEONE ELSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	54	37	9
February 2013	56	36	8
January 2013	60	32	8
December 2012	62	29	9
HIGHEST EVER	62 (12/12)	37 (3/13)	9 (3/13, 12/12)
LOWEST EVER	54 (3/13)	29 (12/12)	8 (2/13, 1/13)

Q. 13 Based on what you've seen of him as Governor so far, would you describe Andrew Cuomo as a liberal, a moderate or a conservative?

DATE	LIBERAL	MODERATE	CONSERVATIVE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	35	47	10	8
July 2012	27	54	10	8
HIGHEST EVER	35 (3/13, 7/11)	60 (3/11)	15 (4/11, 2/11)	10 (4/11, 1/11)
LOWEST EVER	21 (2/11)	47 (3/13)	8 (7/11)	7 (2/11)

Q. 14 Governor Cuomo made openness and transparency of state government an important issue when campaigning for Governor. Do you think the Governor has made the workings of state government in Albany more open and transparent than it had been, less open and transparent than it had been, or do you think there has been no change in the level of openness and transparency in state government?

DATE	MORE OPEN	LESS OPEN	NO CHANGE IN OPENNESS	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	30	10	53	7
HIGHEST EVER	40 (4/12)	10 (3/13)	58 (9/11)	9 (4/12, 9/11)
LOWEST EVER	30 (3/13, 9/11)	4 (9/11)	46 (4/12)	7 (3/13)

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Q. 5 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Eric Schneiderman?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	19	17	65
December 2012	21	15	63
August 2012	21	14	64
HIGHEST EVER	29 (10/31/10)	27 (10/31/10)	86 (11/09)
LOWEST EVER	8 (11/09)	6 (5/10, 11/09)	44 (10/31/10)

Q. 6 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Thomas DiNapoli?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	22	15	63
December 2012	26	18	56
August 2012	24	17	59
HIGHEST EVER	30 (11/10, 10/20/10)	36 (10/31/10)	80 (6/07)
LOWEST EVER	7 (6/07, 5/07)	10 (12/09, 11/08)	37 (10/31/10)

Q. 7 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Charles Schumer?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	59	28	12
December 2012	65	24	11
August 2012	65	26	10
HIGHEST EVER	70 (7/05)	32 (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. 8 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Kirsten Gillibrand?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	56	22	22
December 2012	61	18	22
October 2012	56	22	23
August 2012	50	26	25
July 2012	49	24	28
HIGHEST EVER	61 (12/12)	34 (10/31/10)	56 (1/09)
LOWEST EVER	26 (3/09)	14 (1/09)	14 (10/31/10)

Q. 9 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Hillary Clinton?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	73	25	3
December 2012	75	23	2
HIGHEST EVER	75 (12/12)	46 (4/08)	8 (3/05, 6/06, 3/07)
LOWEST EVER	48 (4/08)	23 (12/12)	2 (12/12, 10/08)

Q. 10 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Michael Bloomberg?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	51	42	7
December 2012	55	35	10
HIGHEST EVER	67 (3/08)	42 (3/13)	21 (9/08)
LOWEST EVER	51 (3/13)	16 (9/08)	7 (3/13)

Q. 17 New York's Governor and Legislature recently enacted the toughest gun control law in the country. Do you support or oppose the state's new gun law?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	61	35	4
February 2013	65	30	5
HIGHEST EVER	65 (2/13)	35 (3/13)	5 (2/13)
LOWEST EVER	61 (3/13)	30 (2/13)	4 (3/13)

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Q. 18 Some have said that the state's new gun law was passed in haste, without enough time for careful review or to gauge whether or not there was public support for the new law. They point to the fact that the Governor and Legislature have already admitted that corrections to the new law need to be enacted. Supporters say the law was long overdue and was needed. Which of the following two statements comes closest to your opinion: The law was rushed through without adequately considering public opinion and the effect the law would have, OR the law was needed and while passed quickly was the right thing to do. (Choices were rotated.)

DATE	RUSHED THROUGH	RIGHT THING TO DO	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	48	49	2
February 2013	42	56	2
HIGHEST EVER	48 (3/13)	56 (2/13)	2 (3/13, 2/13)
LOWEST EVER	42 (2/13)	49 (3/13)	2 (3/13, 2/13)

Q. 22 The State Department of Environmental Conservation is expected to soon issue a decision on whether or not to allow hydrofracking ó that is the proposed method to recover natural gas from parts of upstate New York ó to move forward. How much have you heard or read about it ó a great deal, some, not very much, or nothing at all?

DATE	A GREAT DEAL	SOME	NOT VERY MUCH	NOTHING	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	32	32	21	15	0
February 2013	26	34	22	18	0
January 2013	31	33	18	17	0
December 2012	27	36	20	17	0
October 2012	27	39	21	12	0
August 2012	28	35	22	15	1
HIGHEST EVER	33 (5/12)	39 (10/12)	22 (2/13, 8/12)	20 (5/12)	1 (8/12)
LOWEST EVER	27 (12/12, etc.)	32 (3/13)	14 (5/12)	12 (10/12)	0 (many)

Q. 23 Do you support or oppose the Department of Environmental Conservation allowing hydrofracking to move forward in parts of upstate New York?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	39	43	18
February 2013	40	40	20
January 2013	40	44	16
December 2012	42	36	22
October 2012	42	36	23
August 2012	39	38	23
HIGHEST EVER	42 (12/12, 10/12)	44 (1/13)	27 (5/12)
LOWEST EVER	37 (5/12)	36 (12/12, 10/12, 5/12)	16 (1/13)

Q. 20 Do you support or oppose passing an amendment to the state constitution to allow non-Indian, Las Vegas style casinos to be built in New York?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	46	43	11
February 2013	48	42	10
January 2013	52	43	5
August 2012	52	38	9
HIGHEST EVER	53 (1/12)	49 (3/12)	11 (3/13)
LOWEST EVER	46 (3/13)	38 (8/12)	3 (3/12)

Q. 21 While the proposed constitutional amendment would allow for seven casinos to be built in New York, Governor Cuomo has proposed that initially only three casinos ó all in upstate New York ó be built. Do you support or oppose the Governor's proposal to initially build only three casinos, all upstate?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	50	43	8
February 2013	51	42	7
January 2013	57	40	3
HIGHEST EVER	57 (1/13)	43 (3/13)	8 (3/13)
LOWEST EVER	50 (3/13)	40 (1/13)	3 (1/13)

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Q. 24 Do you support or oppose increasing the minimum wage in New York from the current \$7.25 per hour to \$9.00 per hour? (NOTE: In January 2013, the wording of the question was increasing the minimum wage to \$8.75 per hour; in previous polls, the wording was increasing the minimum wage to \$8.50 per hour.)

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	77	22	1
January 2013	83	15	2
August 2012	80	17	2
HIGHEST EVER	83 (1/13)	22 (3/13)	5 (6/12, 5/12)
LOWEST EVER	77 (8/13, 6/12)	15 (1/13)	1 (3/13)

Q. 25 Do you support or oppose creating a system of public campaign financing in New York that would limit the size of political contributions to candidates and use state money to match smaller contributions made to candidates for state offices?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	61	33	6
January 2013	59	36	5
August 2012	55	31	14
HIGHEST EVER	61 (3/13)	36 (1/13)	14 (8/12)
LOWEST EVER	55 (8/12)	31 (8/12)	5 (1/13)

Q. 26 Do you support or oppose decriminalizing the possession of 15 grams or less of marijuana in public view, reducing it from a misdemeanor to a violation subject to a fine?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	63	34	3
January 2013	62	35	2
HIGHEST EVER	63 (3/13)	35 (1/13)	3 (3/13)
LOWEST EVER	62 (1/13)	34 (3/13)	2 (1/13)

Q. 4 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Barack Obama?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
March 2013	56	41	3
February 2013	66	32	2
January 2013	66	33	1
December 2012	62	36	2
October 2012	61	37	2
August 2012	64	35	1
July 2012	59	38	3
HIGHEST EVER	81 (1/09)	46 (10/31/10)	40 (11/06)
LOWEST EVER	48 (11/06)	10 (1/09)	1 (1/13, 8/12)

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 2013	32	60	8
January 2013	46	49	5
December 2012	50	43	8
October 2012	48	45	7
August 2012	46	48	6
July 2012	44	52	5
HIGHEST EVER	62 (5/09)	74 (8/11)	17 (9/08)
LOWEST EVER	19 (10/08)	24 (12/09)	5 (1/13)

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Q. 16 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
March 2013	1	16	47	35	2
February 2013	0	19	44	35	2
January 2013	1	18	47	32	2
December 2012	2	18	42	35	2
October 2012	0	19	47	31	2
August 2012	1	19	49	31	1
July 2012	0	19	44	36	1
HIGHEST EVER	2 (12/12, 5/12)	19 (2/13, etc.)	49 (8/12)	67 (3/22/10)	4 (9/08)
LOWEST EVER	0 (many)	6 (3/22/10, etc.)	25 (3/22/10)	31 (10/12, 8/12)	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
March 2013	50	42	8
February 2013	55	35	9
January 2013	57	33	10
December 2012	55	32	13
October 2012	53	35	11
August 2012	56	33	10
July 2012	53	36	11
HIGHEST EVER	57 (1/13)	76 (10/31/10)	30 (1/07)
LOWEST EVER	14 (10/10)	26 (1/07)	8 (3/13)

Poll Trend Notes: All surveys are of registered voters except for the polls of August and October 2012, October 2010, September and October 2008, and September and 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 2012.

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