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Siena College Poll:

Cuomo Favorability Hits 70% after State of State Address

Gov Overwhelmingly More Trusted than 'Unfavorable' Legislature

President Obama's Favorability Sees Uptick to Highest Level Since Feb.

Most Think Race Relations in NYS are Good – Majority of Black New Yorkers Do Not; Voter Reaction to Tucson Shooting Mixed

Loudonville, NY. Coming off his first State of the State address, Governor Andrew Cuomo's favorability rating rose to 70 percent for the first time in more than a year, and when it comes to who the voters trust to do the right thing for New York, more than two-thirds of voters say Cuomo, while fewer than one in five say the Legislature, according to a new Siena (College) Research Institute poll of registered voters released today.

President Barack Obama's favorability rating, 61-36 percent, is up from 55-42 percent last month, and is the best it has been since February 2010. Half of voters now say they are prepared to re-elect Obama President next year. As we commemorate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 55 percent of all New York voters believe race relations in the state are excellent or good, compared to 43 percent who say they are only fair or poor, although 63 percent of black voters say that race relations are fair or poor. And voters have mixed – but sharply divergent among demographic groups – feelings about the tragic events in Tucson a week ago.

“After two weeks as Governor, Cuomo's honeymoon is in full swing, as he gets strong marks from voters by every measure. For the first time in more than a year, 70 percent of voters have a favorable view of Cuomo, while only 17 percent view him unfavorably, the lowest since August 2009. He is viewed favorably by 78 percent of Democrats and 60 percent of Republicans; 73 percent of downstaters and 65 percent of upstaters; and even 53 percent of conservatives,” said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg. “A plurality of voters, 44 percent, says he's doing an excellent or good job as governor, compared to 28 percent who say he's doing a fair or poor job.

“Who do voters trust to do the right thing between the Governor and the Legislature? It's not even close. Cuomo beats the Legislature 68-17 percent, winning a majority of every demographic group,” Greenberg said. “Of course, this could be the result of Cuomo's 70 percent favorability rating, while less than half that number, 33 percent, view the State Senate favorably and an even smaller 29 percent have a favorable view of the Assembly.”

“Voters see Cuomo in the political center when it comes to pinning an ideological label on him. Currently, a majority of 55 percent say he is a ‘moderate,’ 25 percent call him a ‘liberal,’ and 10 percent say ‘conservative.’ A majority of Democrats, Republicans and independents all see him as a moderate,” Greenberg said.

When asked about Cuomo’s decision to return five percent of his salary and reduce the salaries of his top aides by five percent, 69 percent of voters said it was a ‘good example that will help him negotiate other’ budget reductions, compared to 29 percent who said it was ‘grandstanding’ with ‘no meaningful budget impact.’

“Symbolism matters. By a better than two-to-one margin, voters agree with Cuomo’s decision to reduce his and his staff’s pay by five percent. They call it a good example, not grandstanding. At least two-thirds of voters from every region and party concur,” Greenberg said. “And nearly half of voters – including a majority of Democrats, women and downstaters – believe that in one year Cuomo will have succeeded in making Albany considerably less dysfunctional and getting Republicans and Democrats to work better together. However, a nearly equal number, 46 percent, think that Albany will still be way too dysfunctional, despite Cuomo’s good intentions.”

Obama Sees Jump in Favorability and Re-elect Numbers Since Last Month

“Voters’ attitude about President Obama took a significant leap over the last month, providing him with the best favorability rating he’s had among New York voters in nearly a year,” Greenberg said. “Credit the tax deal coming out of the lame duck Congressional session, the change in personnel at the White House, the shift in rhetoric coming from the President, or some other factor, but whatever the reason, voters gave Obama a six-point favorability boost and lowered his unfavorable rating by six points since December.

“Currently 50 percent of voters are prepared to re-elect the President, while 40 percent would prefer ‘someone else.’ This is a marked turnaround from last month’s 43-47 percent ‘re-elect’ number,” Greenberg said.

Small Uptick in Perception of Race Relations in Last 3 Years – Wide Disparity Between Blacks and Whites

“As we celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in 2011, New Yorkers think race relations in the state are slightly better than they were last year,” Greenberg said. “Overall 55 percent of voters say race relations in New York are either good or excellent, up from 51 percent last year and 48 percent in 2008, while 43 percent describe them as fair or poor, down from 46 percent last year and 49 percent in 2008.

“However, there continues to be widely disparate views by race. While white voters have a positive view on the state of race relations in New York by a 60-40 percent margin, black voters have a negative view by an even larger 63-36 percent margin, virtually unchanged from last year,” Greenberg said. “A majority of voters from every region and party have a positive view of race relations.”

Different Groups of Voters Have Different Reactions to the Tucson Shootings

Voters were given three choices to best describe how they feel about the recent tragic events in Tucson. A narrow plurality, 43 percent, said “the laws to prevent guns from getting in the wrong hands need to be strengthened”; 39 percent, said “unfortunately, depraved acts of violence by individuals cannot always be prevented,” and 17 percent said “political discourse in the country – from both sides of the aisle – needs to be toned down.”

“Asked not to assess blame for the deplorable Tucson shootings, but rather asked among three choices for how the shootings made them feel, voters are nearly evenly divided between wanting stronger gun control laws and recognizing that acts of violence cannot always be prevented,” Greenberg said. “There are, however, largely divergent points of view by different groups of voters.

“Strengthening gun laws was the clear top choice of Democrats, women, liberals, moderates, New York City, black, and Jewish voters and voters 55 years-old and older. Some acts of violence cannot be prevented was the strong top choice of Republicans, men, conservatives, and upstaters. The need to tone down the political discourse was identified by less than one-quarter of voters of every demographic group,” Greenberg said.

While Still ‘Under Water,’ Major Improvement in Voters’ View of Direction of State and Nation

“In a significant bump in optimism, 36 percent of voters think the state is on the right track and 50 percent say the state is headed in the wrong direction. While this is still negative, it is a major improvement from last month’s 29-60 percent rating and the most optimistic this measurement of voters has been since January 2009, the last time right track was above 35 percent and wrong direction was 50 percent or less,” Greenberg said.

“Similarly, the mood of voters about the direction of the country also improved, with 36 percent saying the country is on the right track and 54 percent saying it’s headed in the wrong direction, up from 30-59 percent last month,” Greenberg said. “At the state level, improvement was largely among suburban and upstate voters, while at the national level, it was mostly among suburban voters.

“Voters viewing Cuomo favorably see the direction of the state as positive by a 46-40 percent margin, while those unfavorable to Cuomo say the direction of the state is overwhelmingly negative, 15-80 percent. Nationally, those favorable toward Obama see the country moving in a positive direction by a 52-36 percent margin, and those unfavorable toward Obama have a very negative view of the country’s direction, 11-84 percent,” Greenberg said.

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This SRI survey was conducted January 10-13, 2011 by telephone calls to 776 New York State registered voters. It has a margin of error of ± 3.5 percentage points. Data was statistically adjusted by age, party, gender, and region to ensure representativeness. Sampling was conducted via random digit dialing weighted to reflect known population patterns. 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, please call Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.



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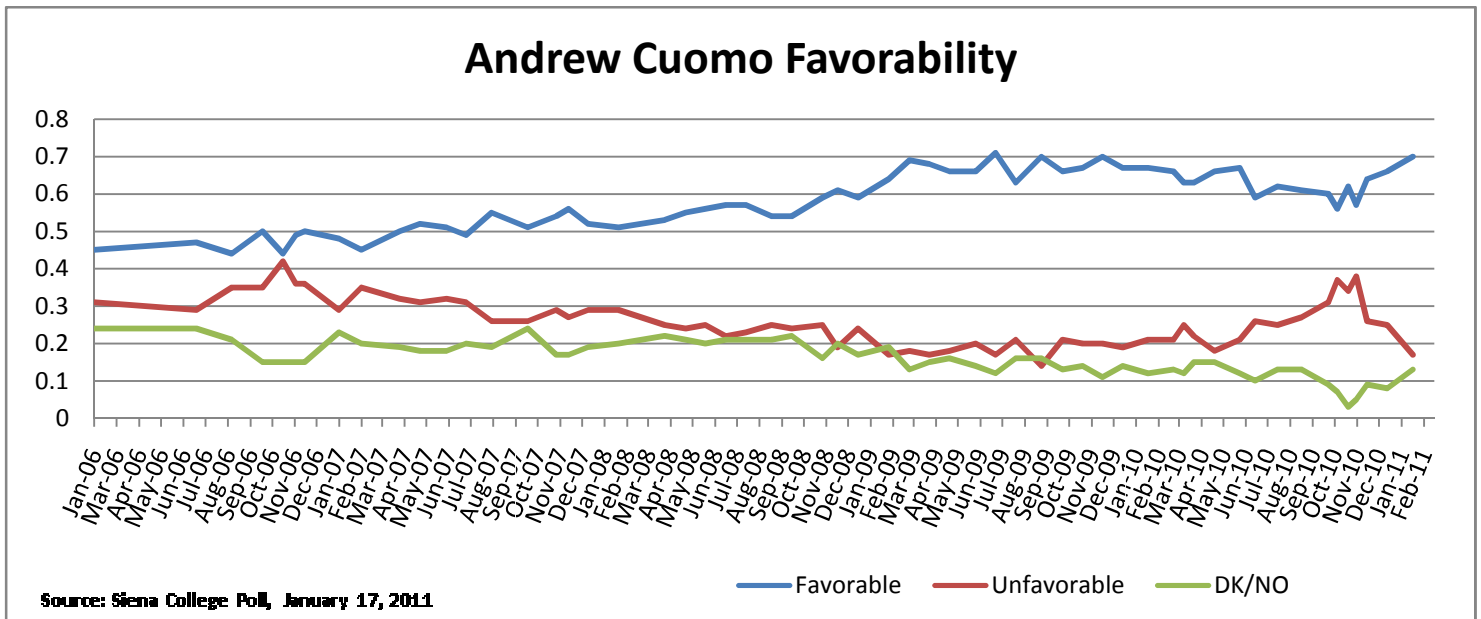
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Siena College Poll Trends – January 2011

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2011	70	17	13
December 2010	66	25	8
November 2010	64	26	9
October 31, 2010*	57	38	5
October 20, 2010*	62	34	3
October 5, 2010*	56	37	7
September 2010	60	31	9
August 2010	61	27	13
July 2010	62	25	13
June 2010	59	26	15
May 2010	67	21	12
April 2010	66	18	15
March 22, 2010	63	22	15
March 8, 2010	63	25	12
February 2010	66	21	13
January 2010	67	21	12
HIGHEST EVER	71 (6/09)	42 (10/06)	24 (1/06, 2/06, 9/07)
LOWEST EVER	44 (8/06, 10/06)	14 (8/09)	3 (10/20/10)

* Likely voters



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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2011	26	14	60
November 2010	27	19	54
October 31, 2010*	29	27	44
October 20, 2010*	25	23	52
September 2010	21	16	63
May 2010	10	6	84
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)

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2011	28	21	51
November 2010	30	26	44
October 31, 2010*	26	36	37
October 20, 2010*	30	26	44
September 2010	21	16	63
August 2010	22	17	61
July 2010	21	15	64
June 2010	19	16	64
May 2010	25	12	63
April 2010	20	12	69
March 22, 2010	19	15	66
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)

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2011	33	56	11
July 2010	25	66	8
January 2010	30	61	9
HIGHEST EVER	43 (2/09)	74 (7/09)	13 (2/09)
LOWEST EVER	20 (7/09)	43 (2/09)	6 (7/09)

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2011	29	57	14
July 2010	25	61	13
January 2010	29	59	12
HIGHEST EVER	40 (2/09)	61 (7/10)	18 (2/09)
LOWEST EVER	25 (7/10)	42 (2/09)	12 (1/10)

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2011	61	36	3
December 2010	55	42	3
November 2010	58	37	5
October 31, 2010*	51	46	3
October 20, 2010*	56	41	3
September 2010	60	36	4
July 2010	60	37	3
April 2010	59	35	6
February 2010	61	35	4
January 2010	64	32	4
HIGHEST EVER	81 (1/09)	46 (10/31/10)	40 (11/06)
LOWEST EVER	48 (11/06)	10 (1/09)	3 (1/11, etc.)

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I know it's a long way off, but if Barack Obama runs for re-election as President in 2012, would you vote to re-elect him or would you prefer someone else?

DATE	RE-ELECT	PREFER SOMEONE ELSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2011	50	40	10
December 2010	43	47	10
HIGHEST EVER	50 (1/11)	47 (12/10)	10 (1/11, 12/10)
LOWEST EVER	43 (12/10)	40 (1/11)	10 (1/11, 12/10)

As we look to next week's commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, how would you describe the state of race relations in New York State? Would you say they are excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2011	7	48	33	10	2
January 2010	6	45	38	8	2
January 2008	3	45	36	13	3
HIGHEST EVER	7 (1/11)	48 (1/11)	38 (1/10)	13 (1/08)	3 (1/08)
LOWEST EVER	3 (1/08)	45 (1/10, 1/08)	33 (1/11)	8 (1/10)	2 (1/11, 1/10)

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
January 2011	36	54	10
December 2010	30	59	11
November 2010	39	51	10
July 2010	41	52	8
April 2010	45	47	9
March 22, 2010	36	54	11
HIGHEST EVER	62 (5/09)	69 (10/08)	17 (9/08)
LOWEST EVER	19 (10/08)	24 (12/09)	7 (5/09)

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
January 2011	36	50	14
December 2010	29	60	11
November 2010	32	54	15
October 31, 2010*	14	76	10
October 20, 2010*	14	75	12
October 5, 2010*	16	72	11
September 2010	21	68	11
August 2010	21	67	12
July 2010	20	71	9
June 2010	18	65	17
May 2010	16	72	12
April 2010	20	68	11
March 22, 2010	18	70	12
February 2010	25	63	12
January 2010	27	61	12
HIGHEST EVER	52 (11/06)	76 (10/31/10)	30 (1/07)
LOWEST EVER	14 (10/31 & 20/10)	26 (1/07)	9 (7/10)

Poll Trend Notes: 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 January 2010.

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

All surveys are of registered voters except for the polls of October 2010, September and October 2008, and September and October 2006, which are polls of likely voters (and are denoted with an " * ").