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Contact:

Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858

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Siena New York Poll:

Gov's Primary Lead over Cuomo Drops from 23 to 2 Points

Voters Support Income Tax on Those Making \$250K or More to Replace Budget Cuts or New Taxes Proposed by Governor Paterson
Obama, Soaring with Public, Brings Confidence on Economy

Loudonville, NY. Governor David Paterson's lead over Attorney General Andrew Cuomo in a potential 2010 gubernatorial primary fell from 23 points in December to just two points today. For the first time since May, Cuomo has a better favorable/unfavorable rating than Paterson, according to a new Siena (College) Research Institute poll of registered voters. The Siena poll shows voters' optimism and confidence in President Barack Obama. And nearly two-thirds of voters favor increasing the state's personal income tax on those earning more than \$250,000 to either eliminate proposed new taxes or reduce proposed health and education budget cuts. Most voters oppose the so-called fat tax, iTunes tax and tax on movie and sporting event tickets.

"Whether because of the prolonged Senate selection situation or on-going budget issues, voters are less inclined to support Governor Paterson for election today than they were only one month ago," said Steven Greenberg, spokesman for the Siena New York Poll. "While the Governor's favorability rating remains strong, it is now lower than the Attorney General's, who has his highest favorability rating ever.

"For the first time since he's been Governor, more people are inclined to support 'someone else' than they are to elect Paterson as Governor in 2010. And while Paterson has a two point lead over former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani in a hypothetical matchup for Governor, down from 13 points last month, Cuomo has a nine point lead over Giuliani, also down from 13 points in December," Greenberg said.

Paterson leads Giuliani 44-42 percent, down from 51-38 percent in December. Cuomo leads Giuliani 48-39 percent, down slightly from 50-37 percent last month. Both Paterson and Cuomo would easily defeat former Congressman and 2000 U.S. Senate candidate Rick Lazio, Paterson by 30 points and Cuomo by 44 points.

Paterson has a 60-23 percent favorable rating, down slightly from 63-22 percent last month. Cuomo has a 64-17 percent favorable rating (up from 59-24 percent last month), his highest ever in a Siena Poll. Giuliani's favorable rating is up to 59-33 percent, from last month's 50-43 percent. Lazio's rating is 19-18 percent.

Paterson’s 51-45 percent job performance rating fell from 55-40 percent last month. Currently, 32 percent of voters, including only 40 percent of Democrats, say they are prepared to elect him in 2010, while 36 percent would prefer someone else. Last month it was 36 percent for electing him and 31 percent for someone else.

“Politicians love to say, ‘polls go up and polls go down.’ Governor Paterson has taken a significant hit with voters in the last month and the question is whether this is a blip or the start of a trend. As he heads into what is likely to be a contentious budget battle, the Governor has his work cut out for him,” Greenberg said.

Voters oppose the so-called fat tax, iTunes tax and the tax on entertainment tickets. They support expanding the bottle bill and added taxes on alcohol and cigars. Voters are split on whether to eliminate the sales tax exemption on clothing costing less than \$110.

When given three choices, 45 percent of voters say the state should increase the

Views on Several Paterson Budget Proposals		
Statement	Support (Strongly)	Oppose (Strongly)
An 18 percent tax on non-diet soda and fruit drinks with less than 70 percent natural fruit juice	37% (22%)	56% (46%)
A new tax on entertainment items, such as movie and sporting event tickets	37% (19%)	58% (41%)
Eliminating the current sales tax exemption for clothing items less than \$110	46% (29%)	45% (34%)
Expanding the bottle bill law to include bottled water and other non-carbonated beverages	50% (36%)	37% (28%)
A new tax on downloading music and videos from iTunes and other on-line services	34% (18%)	54% (41%)
Increasing the tax on beer, wine and cigars	65% (43%)	30% (22%)

personal income tax (PIT) on those making more than \$250,000 to “reduce the Governor’s proposed cuts to health and education,” 20 percent want to increase the PIT to “eliminate all of the other taxes the Governor proposed,” and 22 percent say “don’t increase the PIT and keep the Governor’s proposed taxes and cuts.”

“Nearly two-thirds of voters support increasing the income tax on those making a quarter million or more, with almost half the voters saying the money should be used to reduce health and education cuts,” Greenberg said. “Interestingly, a majority of voters (52-45 percent) are confident that the Governor and Legislature will successfully solve New York’s budget crisis, despite two-thirds rating New York’s fiscal condition as poor.”

President Obama’s favorability rating hit a new high, 81-10 percent, including a three-to-one majority of Republicans, 62-21 percent. Nearly three-quarters of voters (74 percent) rated his Inaugural address as either excellent (40 percent) or good (34 percent). And 63 percent of voters are more confident that the economy will improve under President Obama, while eight percent are less confident and 26 percent remain unchanged.

“The President enjoys the overwhelming support and confidence of New York voters,” Greenberg said. “And in a stunning turnaround, 61 percent of voters now think the country is headed in the right direction, compared to only 19 percent who felt that way just a week before Election Day. The overwhelming majority of Democrats, a strong majority of independent voters, and even a plurality of Republicans hold that view.”

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Siena New York Poll Trends – January 2009

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about David Paterson?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	60	23	16
December 2008	63	22	16
November 2008	64	19	17
October 27, 2008	62	19	18
September 2008	59	13	28
August 2008	59	16	26
July 2008	57	15	28
June 2008	57	17	25
May 2008	48	17	35
April 2008	48	18	34
March 24, 2008	58	10	31
January 2007	17	8	76
HIGHEST EVER	64 (11/08)	23 (1/09)	76 (1/07)

How would you rate the job that David Paterson is doing as Governor – excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	8	43	35	10	4
December 2008	9	46	32	8	4
November 2008	9	46	34	7	4
October 27, 2008	7	48	35	5	5
September 2008	7	44	33	4	12
August 2008	7	45	30	5	12
July 2008	7	41	34	5	13
June 2008	6	38	31	6	19
May 2008	5	35	28	4	29
April 2008	4	30	30	4	32
HIGHEST EVER	9 (12/08)	48 (10/08)	35 (1/09)	10 (1/09)	32 (4/08)

If David Paterson runs for Governor in 2010, would you vote to elect him or would you prefer someone else?

DATE	ELECT	PREFER SOMEONE ELSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	32	36	32
December 2008	36	31	33
November 2008	42	32	26
October 27, 2008	40	29	31
September 2008	35	25	39
August 2008	35	26	40
July 2008	34	27	40
June 2008	30	30	40
May 2008	29	25	47
HIGHEST EVER	42 (11/08)	36 (1/09)	47 (5/08)

Siena New York Poll Trends – January 2009

Page 2

(DEMS ONLY): Looking ahead to 2010 and the next election for Governor. If the Democratic primary for governor were held today and the candidates were David Paterson or Andrew Cuomo, who would you vote for? (CANDIDATE CHOICES WERE ROTATED) (NOTE: In April 2008, Tom Suozzi was included as a choice)

DATE	PATERSON	CUOMO	SUOZZI	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	35	33	NA	33
December 2008	49	26	NA	25
November 2008	53	25	NA	22
July 2008	51	21	NA	28
June 2008	43	31	NA	26
May 2008	42	29	NA	29
April 2008	35	30	7	28
HIGHEST EVER	53 (11/08)	33 (1/09)	7 (4/08)	33 (1/09)

If the 2010 election for governor were held today and the candidates were David Paterson on the Democratic line and Rudy Giuliani on the Republican line, who would you vote for? (CANDIDATE CHOICES WERE ROTATED)

DATE	PATERSON	GIULIANI	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	44	42	14
December 2008	51	38	11
November 2008	49	43	8
October 27, 2008	51	40	9
September 2008	50	40	10
August 2008	48	38	15
July 2008	47	40	13
HIGHEST EVER	51 (10/08, 12/08)	43 (11/08)	15 (8/08)

If the 2010 election for governor were held today and the candidates were Andrew Cuomo on the Democratic line and Rudy Giuliani on the Republican line, who would you vote for? (CANDIDATE CHOICES WERE ROTATED)

DATE	CUOMO	GIULIANI	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	48	39	13
December 2008	50	37	13
November 2008	44	46	10
July 2008	47	42	11
HIGHEST EVER	50 (12/08)	46 (11/08)	11 (7/08)

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Rudy Giuliani?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	59	33	8
December 2008	50	43	7
November 2008	57	39	4
August 2008	51	42	7
July 2008	51	39	10
January 2008	44	48	8
December 2007	48	46	6
November 2007	49	41	11
September 2007	53	39	9
July 2007	53	40	7
June 2007	50	42	8
May 2007	51	43	6
April 2007	56	38	6
March 2007	60	33	8
February 2007	59	34	7
January 2007	63	29	9
HIGHEST EVER	63 (4/05, 10/06, 1/07)	48 (1/08)	11 (2/05, 11/07)
LOWEST EVER	44 (1/08)	26 (4/05)	4 (11/08)

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Siena New York Poll Trends – January 2009

Page 3

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	64	17	19
December 2008	59	24	17
November 2008	61	19	20
October 27, 2008	59	25	16
September 2008	54	24	22
August 2008	54	25	21
July 2008	57	23	21
June 2008	57	22	21
May 2008	56	25	20
April 2008	55	24	21
March 24, 2008	53	25	22
January 2008	51	29	20
December 2007	52	29	19
November 2007	56	27	17
October 2007	54	29	17
September 2007	51	26	24
July 2007	55	26	19
June 2007	49	31	20
May 2007	51	32	18
April 2007	52	31	18
March 2007	50	32	19
February 2007	45	35	20
January 2007	48	29	23
HIGHEST EVER	64 (1/09)	42 (10/06)	24 (1/06, 2/06, 9/07)
LOWEST EVER	44 (8/06, 10/06)	17 (1/08)	16 (10/08)

How confident are you that the Governor and State Legislature will be successful in solving New York's budget crisis?

DATE	VERY CONFIDENT	SOMEWHAT CONFIDENT	NOT VERY CONFIDENT	NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	5	47	31	14	2
December 2008	8	39	33	17	3
HIGHEST EVER	8 (12/08)	47 (1/09)	33 (12/08)	17 (12/08)	3 (12/08)

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about George Bush?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	28	68	4
November 2008	22	75	3
September 2008	29	65	6
May 2008	23	73	4
April 2007	29	65	6
January 2007	26	67	8
HIGHEST EVER	36 (9/06)	75 (11/08)	8 (1/07)
LOWEST EVER	22 (11/08)	61 (9/06)	2 (9/06, 11/08)

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 2009	61	24	15
December 2008	41	48	11
November 2008	44	44	13
October 27, 2008	19	69	12
September 2008	28	56	17
September 2007	23	64	13
HIGHEST EVER	61 (1/09)	69 (10/08)	17 (9/08)

Siena New York Poll Trends – January 2009

Page 4

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	81	10	9
December 2008	76	16	7
November 2008	70	23	8
October 27, 2008	67	28	5
October 2, 2008	64	29	7
September 2008	56	32	12
August 2008	54	34	12
July 2008	57	32	12
June 2008	58	30	13
May 2008	55	34	11
April 2008	54	34	12
March 24, 2008	56	32	13
March 3, 2008	56	31	13
February 2008	60	30	10
January 2008	57	28	15
December 2007	55	30	15
September 2007	56	24	20
June 2007	53	24	23
May 2007	58	22	20
April 2007	55	23	22
March 2007	52	20	28
February 2007	52	21	28
January 2007	50	17	34
HIGHEST EVER	81 (1/09)	34 (4/08, 5/08, 8/08)	40 (11/06)
LOWEST EVER	48 (11/06)	10 (1/09)	5 (10/27/08)

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2009	69	29	3
December 2008	66	30	4
November 2008	61	35	4
October 27, 2008	65	33	2
September 2008	56	39	5
August 2008	51	43	6
July 2008	55	38	7
June 2008	56	38	6
May 2008	52	43	5
April 2008	48	46	6
March 24, 2008	52	43	5
March 3, 2008	54	39	7
February 2008	53	43	4
January 2008	60	35	5
December 2007	51	44	5
November 2007	55	39	6
October 2007	53	41	6
September 2007	57	37	7
July 2007	59	35	6
June 2007	54	39	7
May 2007	56	39	5
April 2007	50	42	7
March 2007	56	37	8
February 2007	56	40	5
January 2007	60	33	7
HIGHEST EVER	69 (1/09)	46 (4/08)	8 (3/05, 6/06, 3/07)
LOWEST EVER	48 (4/08)	29 (1/09, 11/06)	2 (10/08)

Siena New York Poll Trends – January 2009

Page 5

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
January 2009	0	7	26	65	1
December 2008	1	7	33	59	1
November 2008	0	7	31	62	1
October 27, 2008	0	12	43	43	2
September 2008	1	14	41	41	4
August 2008	0	13	37	48	1
HIGHEST EVER	1 (12/08)	14 (9/08)	43 (10/08)	65 (1/09)	4 (9/08)

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 2009	39	42	19
December 2008	37	44	19
November 2008	39	43	18
October 27, 2008	39	41	19
October 2, 2008	35	40	25
September 2008	35	37	28
August 2008	34	44	22
July 2008	36	39	25
June 2008	30	46	23
May 2008	32	43	26
April 2008	33	48	20
March 24, 2008	34	41	26
February 2008	33	43	24
January 2008	39	38	23
December 2007	35	45	21
November 2007	32	45	23
October 2007	42	36	22
September 2007	44	30	26
July 2007	37	38	25
June 2007	45	28	27
May 2007	46	29	25
April 2007	47	29	24
March 2007	37	37	26
February 2007	49	26	25
January 2007	45	26	30
HIGHEST EVER	52 (11/15/06)	52 (5/06)	30 (1/07)
LOWEST EVER	26 (3/05)	26 (1/07)	18 (11/15/06, 11/08)

Poll Trend Notes: Trends reflect questions asked at least twice since the first Siena New York poll in February 2005. Results listed here include all times questions have been asked since January 2007

“Highest Ever” is provided at the bottom of each question. “Lowest Ever” is presented at the bottom of each question that was asked prior to 2007.

All surveys are of registered voters except for the polls of September 2008, October 2008, September 2006, and October 2006, which are polls of likely registered voters.