RUTGERS–NEW BRUNSWICK
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Sherrill Leads by Nine Points Among Likely Voters in 2025 Race for New Jersey Governor

Key voting blocs take familiar sides, but independents are split, according to Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (August 21, 2025) – With less than three months until Election Day, congresswoman and Democratic nominee for governor Mikie Sherrill has a nine-point lead over former state assemblyman and Republican nominee Jack Ciattarelli among likely voters in New Jersey, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll.

Forty-four percent say they would vote for Sherrill if the election were being held today, while 35% say they would vote for Ciattarelli, 3% say they would vote for neither or someone else and 17% are unsure. When leaners are included—that is, respondents who first declined to choose but selected a candidate on a follow-up prompt – 47% back Sherrill, and 37% back Ciattarelli; 3% choose neither or someone else, and 12% remain undecided.

"As summer winds down and the campaigns enter the final months, the race for governor has tightened," said Ashley Koning, an assistant research professor and director of the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. "Sherrill still has the edge, but the important thing to take away here is that the race is competitive and will continue to be in flux, in large part because there are still a notable number of undecideds."

Koning added, "We are also at a turning point in New Jersey politics. Likely voters are always an unknown population, but especially given today's political climate, shifting turnout dynamics in the state, and the race's history-making potential, we simply do not know who will definitively turn out come Election Day. The only thing for certain is that all eyes are on New Jersey this cycle."

Partisans take their respective sides, with 85% of Democrats saying they would vote for Sherill

and 81% of Republicans saying they would vote for Ciattarelli. Independents are nearly split down the middle, however – 33% for Sherrill versus 32% for Ciattarelli, with 29% unsure.

"Independents are always a key voting bloc here in New Jersey," said Koning. "Despite recent Republican registration gains, Ciattarelli still needs a substantial share of independents to win in November. Likewise, Sherrill must hold her edge with independents across key areas to cushion against any softness in base turnout."

There are notable differences in other key demographics. While both men and women say they would vote for Sherill at about the same rate, women are 11 points less likely than men to say they would vote for Ciattarelli and are nine points more likely to be undecided.

White voters are divided between the two candidates (38% Sherrill to 44% Ciattarelli), but Sherrill leads by double digits among Black voters (69% to 4%), Hispanic voters (56% to 22%), and Asian voters (47% to 18%). About one in five Black voters and Hispanic voters and one-third of Asian voters remain uncertain, however.

Sherrill has a wide lead among those ages 18 to 34 (48% to 21%), but her lead narrows among those 35 to 49 years old (47% to 29%), as well as among those who are 65 years or older (48% to 38%). Her lead disappears among voters ages 50 to 64 (36% to 41%).

Socioeconomic factors impact vote choice. Sherill does better with voters who have at least a college degree (53% to 26%), while Ciattarelli does better with those who have some college or less (34% to 45%). Sherrill's lead over Ciattarelli is largest among voters in households making $150,000 or more annually (58% to 28%). Voters in less affluent households are more divided: 37% to 44% among those in households making between $100,000 and $150,000, 39% to 32% among those making $50,000 or less, and 43% to 35% among those making $50,000-100,000).

Geographically, Sherill's biggest margin over Ciattarelli comes from voters in urban areas (46% to 23%) and suburban areas (49% to 30%). Voters in other regions of the state are nearly split between the two candidates: 41% to 41% among exurbanites, 39% to 41% among those living in the southern part of the state or near Philadelphia, and 43% to 39% among shore dwellers.

Results are from a statewide poll of 1,650 likely voters contacted through the probability-based Rutgers-Eagleton/SSRS Garden State Panel from July 31 to August 11. The sample has a margin of error of +/- 3.7 percentage points.

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ABOUT THE EAGLETON CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEREST POLLING

Home of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP) was established in 1971 and is the oldest and one of the most respected university-based statewide polling operations in the United States. Now in its 52nd year and with the publication of over 200 polls, ECPIP's mission is to provide scientifically sound, nonpartisan information about

public opinion. To read more about ECPIP and view all of our press releases, published research and data archive, please visit our website: eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. You can also visit our Facebook and Bluesky.

ABOUT THE EAGLETON INSTITUTE OF POLITICS

The Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling is a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. The Eagleton Institute studies how American politics and government work and change, analyzes how the democracy might improve and promotes political participation and civic engagement. The Institute explores state and national politics through research, education and public service, linking the study of politics with its day-to-day practice. To learn more about Eagleton programs and expertise, visit eagleton.rutgers.edu.

ABOUT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEW BRUNSWICK

Rutgers University-New Brunswick is where Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, began more than 250 years ago. Ranked among the world's top 60 universities, Rutgers's flagship university is a leading public research institution and a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities. It is home to internationally acclaimed faculty and has 12 degree-granting schools and a Division I Athletics program. It is the Big Ten Conference's most diverse university. Through its community of teachers, scholars, artists, scientists and healers, Rutgers is equipped as never before to transform lives.

QUESTIONS AND TABLES START ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Questions and Tables

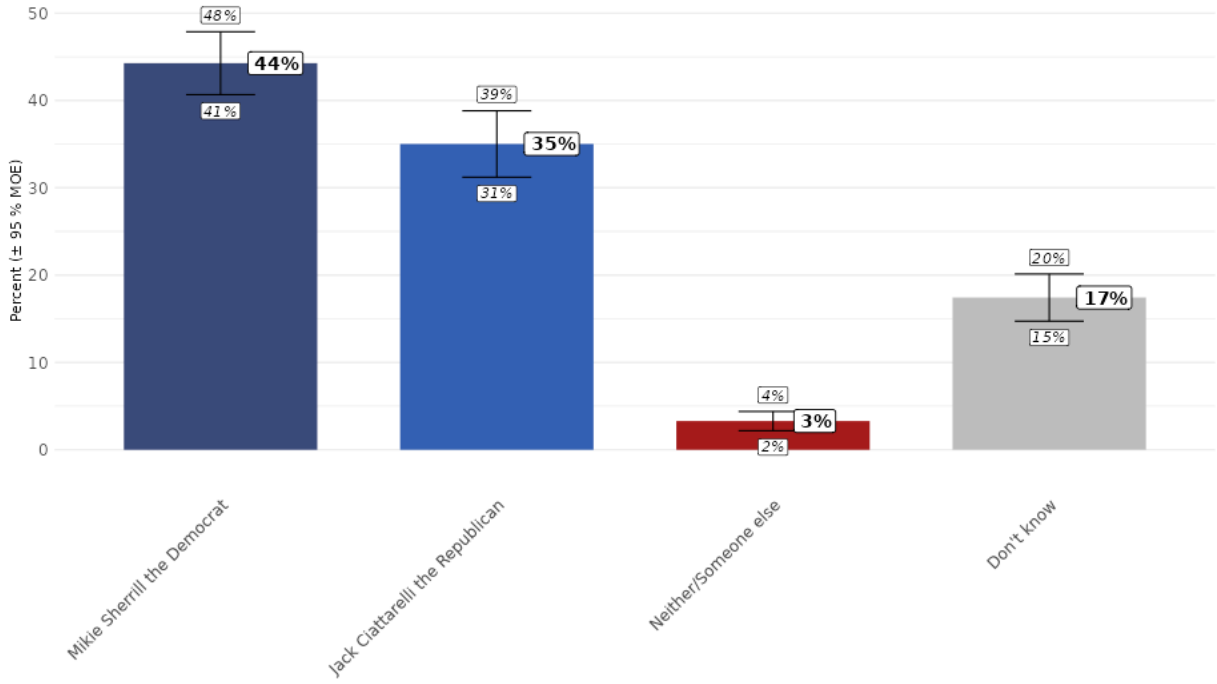
The questions covered in this release are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are New Jersey adults who self-reported being registered to vote unless otherwise noted; all percentages are of weighted results. Interpret groups with samples sizes under 100 with extreme caution.

GUB1. There will be an election for governor of New Jersey in November. If the election for governor were being held today, would you vote for…?
[ROTATE: Mikie Sherrill the Democrat], [Jack Ciattarelli the Republican], Neither/Someone else, Don't know

Mikie Sherrill the Democrat	44%
Jack Ciattarelli the Republican	35%
Neither/Someone else	3%
Don't know	17%
Unweighted N=	1641

	Party ID			**Gender**		**Race or Ethnicity**				**Age**			
	Dem	**Ind**	**Rep**	**Man**	**Woman**	**White**	**Black**	**Hisp**	**Asian**	**18-34**	**35-49**	**50-64**	**65+**
Sherrill	85%	33%	3%	44%	45%	38%	69%	56%	47%	48%	47%	36%	48%
Ciattarelli	4%	32%	81%	41%	30%	44%	4%	22%	18%	21%	29%	41%	38%
Neither/Else	1%	6%	2%	3%	4%	3%	7%	3%	2%	5%	6%	3%	1%
Don't know	10%	29%	13%	13%	22%	15%	21%	19%	33%	25%	18%	19%	13%
Unwt N=	697	606	336	675	956	1109	158	200	120	261	402	468	510

	Income				Region					Education	
	<$50K	**$50K-<$100K**	**$100K-<$150K**	**$150K+**	**Urban**	**Suburb**	**Exurban**	**Phil/ South**	**Shore**	**Some college or less**	**4-year college degree +**
Sherrill	39%	43%	37%	58%	46%	49%	41%	39%	43%	34%	53%
Ciattarelli	32%	35%	44%	28%	23%	30%	41%	41%	39%	45%	26%
Neither/Else	4%	5%	2%	3%	4%	4%	3%	2%	4%	4%	3%
Don't know	25%	17%	17%	11%	26%	17%	15%	18%	14%	17%	18%
Unwt N=	328	441	317	398	174	413	404	408	242	621	1018



GUB2. If you had to choose between one of the following candidates at this moment, would you lean toward…?
[ROTATE: Mikie Sherrill the Democrat], [Jack Ciattarelli the Republican], Neither/Someone else, Don't know
Note: Crosstabs are suppressed for this question due to low n-size impacting statistical reliability.

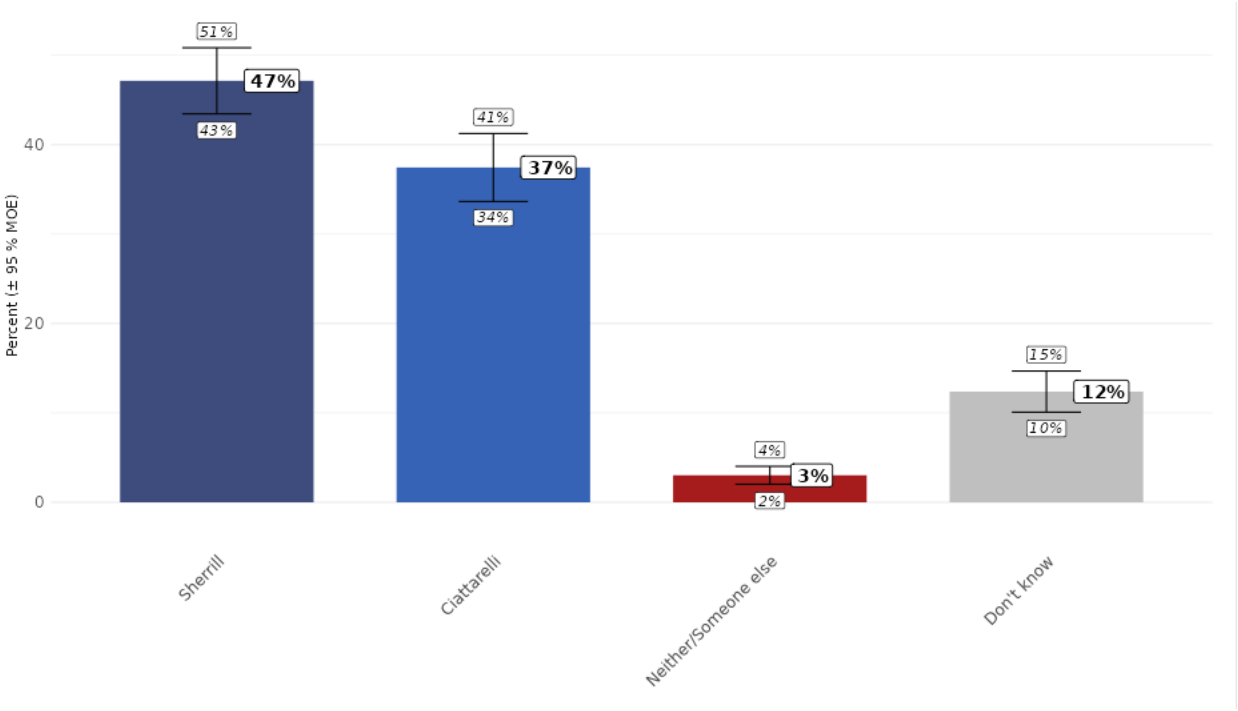
Mikie Sherrill the Democrat	14%
Jack Ciattarelli the Republican	12%
Neither/Someone else	15%
Don't know	60%
Unweighted N=	419

[COMBINED GUB1 + GUB2: VOTE CHOICE + LEANERS]

Mikie Sherrill the Democrat	47%
Jack Ciattarelli the Republican	37%
Neither/Someone else	3%
Don't know	12%
Unweighted N=	1641

	Party ID			**Gender**		**Race or Ethnicity**				**Age**			
	Dem	**Ind**	**Rep**	**Man**	**Woman**	**White**	**Black**	**Hisp**	**Asian**	**18-34**	**35-49**	**50-64**	**65+**
Sherrill	89%	36%	4%	46%	48%	40%	75%	58%	57%	53%	51%	38%	50%
Ciattarelli	4%	35%	87%	43%	33%	46%	4%	26%	20%	21%	31%	45%	40%
Neither/Else	2%	5%	2%	2%	4%	3%	7%	4%	1%	6%	4%	3%	1%
Don't know	6%	24%	6%	9%	15%	11%	14%	12%	22%	20%	14%	13%	8%
Unwt N=	697	606	336	675	956	1109	158	200	120	261	402	468	510

	Income				**Region**					**Education**	
	<$50K	**$50K-<$100K**	**$100K-<$150K**	**$150K+**	**Urban**	**Suburb**	**Exurban**	**Phil/ South**	**Shore**	**Some college or less**	**4-year college degree +**
Sherrill	43%	48%	39%	59%	53%	51%	44%	41%	45%	36%	57%
Ciattarelli	33%	36%	47%	32%	27%	33%	44%	42%	40%	47%	29%
Neither/Else	6%	4%	3%	2%	5%	2%	3%	1%	5%	4%	2%
Don't know	18%	13%	11%	7%	15%	13%	9%	15%	10%	12%	13%
Unwt N=	328	441	317	398	174	413	404	408	242	621	1018


51%
47%
43%
41%
37%
34%
4%
3%
2%
15%
12%
10%
40
20
0
Percent (± 95 % MOE)
Sherrill
Ciattarelli
Neither/Someone else
Don't know

Methodology

The Rutgers–Eagleton Poll was fielded July 31–August 11, 2025, using the Rutgers–Eagleton/Garden State Panel with a random sample of 1,802 New Jersey adults (18+), including oversamples of Black individuals, Hispanic individuals, and Asian individuals. This release focuses on a likely-voter subsample of 1,605 adults. Likely voter status was modeled at the respondent level: Each self-identified voter received an individual turnout probability based on past voting history, voter-file verification, and new-registrant status. That probability was then incorporated into the post-stratification weights described below.

The Rutgers-Eagleton/SSRS Garden State Panel is a probability-based panel of New Jersey adults aged 18 or older. Members are recruited randomly based on statewide representative ABS (Address Based Sample) design. ABS sample is drawn from the Delivery Sequence File (DSF) maintained by the U.S. Postal Service. Population coverage of the DSF is in the 98%-99% range. During the recruitment process, full demographic information on panelists is collected. The Rutgers/SSRS Garden State Panel is a multi-mode panel. For this poll, only Internet households were invited to participate via web; non-internet households were not included. Sample drawn was stratified by county, age, gender, race and ethnicity, and education to ensure adequate representation of each demographic group. Only panelists who complete surveys by web in English were eligible for selection for this study.

Data were weighted to represent the residential adult population of New Jersey **who are registered to vote**. Weighting was done by applying a base weight, making an adjustment to account for sampling only panelists who prefer to be contacted via web, and calibrating sample demographic distributions to match target population benchmarks.

With the base weight applied, the data were calibrated to balance the demographic profile of the sample to target population parameters for registered voters.

Data were calibrated by raking sample distributions to target population distributions using iterative proportional fitting. This procedure balances each calibration variable to target benchmarks individually and iteratively. The entire set of calibration variables is cycled through until the weights converge across all dimensions.

Data were weighted to distributions of sex, age, detailed education, sex by education, age by education, race/ethnicity, NJ region, home tenure, number of adults per household, civic engagement, internet use frequency and 2024 presidential recalled vote. Missing data in the raking variables were imputed using hot decking. Hot deck imputation replaces the missing values of a respondent randomly with another similar respondent's values without missing data.[1]

The following table shows the data sources used for calibration totals.

[1] Hot decking was done using an SPSS macro detailed in 'Goodbye, Listwise Deletion: Presenting Hot Deck Imputation as an Easy and Effective Tool for Handing Missing Data' (Myers, 2011).

Table 1. Calibration Variable Sources

Calibration Variables	Sources
• Sex • Age • Education • Race • Hispanic nativity • Number of adults in household • Home tenure	2024 Current Population Survey[2]
• Region	U.S. Census Bureau. "Age and Sex." American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, 2023[3]
• Civic engagement • Internet frequency	Modeled from SSRS Opinion Panel
• 2024 Presidential recalled vote	National Election Pool

Weights were trimmed at the 2nd and 98th percentiles to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on survey-derived estimates.

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. SSRS calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for the likely voter subsample is 2.37.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. The survey's margin of error is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample — the one around 50%. In this poll, the simple sampling error for 1,605 New Jersey likely voters is +/-2.4 percentage points at a 95% confidence interval. Sampling error should also be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. The design effect is 2.37, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 3.7 percentage points. Thus, if 50% of New Jersey voters in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95% sure that the true figure is between 46.3% and 53.7% (50 +/- 3.7) if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error is only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Sampling error does not consider other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as selection bias, non-response bias, question wording, context effects, or reporting accuracy, which may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

[2] Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles, J. Robert Warren, Daniel Backman, Annie Chen, Grace Cooper, Stephanie Richards, Megan Schouweiler and Michael Westberry. IPUMS CPS: Version 11.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2023.

[3] Regional registered voter distribution was derived by applying the GP weighted registered voter incidence for each region to the region's adult population and reproportioning.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by SSRS through the Rutgers-Eagleton/SSRS Garden State Panel. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP). Ashley Koning and Jessica Roman led analysis and preparation of this release, with assistance from David Martin and Kyle Morgan. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process. Full questionnaires are available on request and can also be accessed through our archives at eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. For more information, please contact poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu.

Weighted Demographics
1650 New Jersey Likely Voters
Overall Margin of Error = +/- 3.7 percentage points

Please note: Totals may equal slightly more or less than 100% due to rounding.

		deff	MOE
Democrat	38%	2.32	+/- 5.6%
Independent	35%	2.41	+/- 6.2%
Republican	28%	2.17	+/- 7.9%
Man	49%	2.28	+/- 5.7%
Woman	51%	2.34	+/- 4.8%
White	71%	2.29	+/- 4.4%
Black	11%	2.05	+/- 11.1%
Hispanic	8%	3.22	+/- 12.4%
Asian	8%	2.19	+/- 13.2%
18-34	13%	2.59	+/- 9.8%
35-49	20%	2.38	+/- 7.5%
50-64	30%	2.25	+/- 6.8%
65+	37%	2.27	+/- 6.5%

		deff	MOE
Urban	10%	2.40	+/- 11.4%
Suburb	33%	2.07	+/- 6.9%
Exurban	18%	2.27	+/- 7.3%
Phil/South	19%	2.46	+/- 7.6%
Shore	19%	2.18	+/- 9.3%
<50K	17%	2.88	+/- 9.2%
50K-<100K	28%	2.32	+/- 7.1%
100K-<150K	27%	2.26	+/- 8.2%
150K+	28%	2.10	+/- 7.1%
Some college or Less	45%	2.45	+/- 6.1%
4-Yr College Degree or More	55%	2.17	+/- 4.5%