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ALERT TOP STORY

## Stockton poll finds third of NJ voters still doubt 2020 election results

Michelle Brunetti Post

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**G** ALLOWAY TOWNSHIP — One-third of New Jersey voters remain skeptical about the fairness of President Joe Biden’s election victory in 2020, according to a poll released Thursday by the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University.

The top issues cited by voters in this year’s election are the economy or inflation (33%), followed by border security (13%), abortion rights (12%), foreign policy and preserving democracy (tied at 5%).

About 24% of New Jersey voters disagreed strongly and 9% disagreed somewhat that the 2020 election for president was fair and secure.

“The poll goes to show that years after Jan. 6 and the election turmoil of 2020, election distrust is pretty much baked in among a certain group of voters,” said Alyssa Maurice, the center’s director of research. “Despite the lack of evidence of widespread fraud, this skepticism is not budging.”

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Election distrust persists in this year’s race between Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris and Republican former President Donald Trump. Almost one-third (31%) said they have little (18%) to no confidence (13%) that votes will be accurately cast and counted in November.

The differences between parties are startling, with 96% of Democrats having faith in 2020 election fairness compared with 25% of Republicans.

Republicans are only slightly more confident that this year's election will be run fairly, with 38% expressing faith in that compared with 96% of Democrats.



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But majorities agree, at least somewhat, that the 2020 election was fair (63%) and are at least somewhat confident that the result will be accurate this year (68%).

Respondents' feelings on the topic have not changed much in the past three years. A March 2021 Stockton poll found that 34% of New Jerseyans disagreed, to some extent, that the 2020 election was fair.

The poll of 630 registered voters has a margin of error of +/- 3.9 percentage points.

Of participants, 218 were Democrats, 157 Republicans, 182 independents and 73 were something else, not sure or refused to answer.

There is also doubt about the aftermath of the election, with 36% of voters having little to no confidence that there will be a smooth and peaceful transition of leadership when a new president is sworn into office.

Only 22% are very confident in a smooth transition of power, while 36% are at least somewhat confident and 6% are unsure.

Voters' trust in other democratic institutions, like a free press, is also low with 45% saying they are very (12%) or somewhat (34%) confident that journalists will report news related to the election fairly and accurately.

Republicans and Democrats were equally concerned about misinformation and political violence at rates ranging from 87% to 95% but differed drastically on trust in the media.

Almost 80% of Democrats were confident that journalists will report news related to the election accurately and fairly, compared with 15% of Republicans.

A majority (62%) of voters are very concerned about the spread of misinformation this election season, and 28% are at least somewhat concerned. Less than 10% are not too worried about it.

When looking at presidential candidates, Harris had the highest favorability rating at 50%, with 48% having an unfavorable impression of her.

Trump's favorability rating is 43%, compared with 54% having an unfavorable impression of him. Trump's favorability among New Jersey voters has improved since an October 2020 Stockton poll. According to that poll before the last presidential election, his rating was 37% favorable and 60% unfavorable.

Vice presidential candidate Tim Walz prevailed over J.D. Vance in favorability ratings with 44% viewing him positively and 36% saying they have an unfavorable impression.

Vance was viewed favorably by 34% of voters and unfavorably by 50%. Data was collected for this survey before the vice presidential debate Tuesday.

Most voters were unfamiliar with both candidates for the U.S. Senate race in New Jersey. The vast majority (81%) were unfamiliar or unsure about Republican Cape May hotelier Curtis Bashaw, while a slimmer majority (55%) were unfamiliar with U.S. Rep. Andy Kim, D-3rd.

To see all **poll results**, visit **[stockton.edu/hughes-center/polling](http://stockton.edu/hughes-center/polling)**.

### Send us debate Q's

The Press of Atlantic City and the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University are co-sponsoring a 2nd Congressional District debate Oct. 24.

The one-hour debate between Republican incumbent Jeff Van Drew and Democratic challenger Joe Salerno will be held at 6 p.m. on the Galloway campus.

The debate will not have a live audience, but it will be livestreamed on the **Hughes Center's YouTube page** and on **The Press' website**.

Members of the public can submit questions for the candidates by going to the Hughes Center's website or emailing The Press at **[newstips@pressofac.com](mailto:newstips@pressofac.com)** and using the subject line "CD2 questions."

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