

Voters' Assessment of the Economy Colored by Partisanship

For Immediate Release

High Resolution Images Available [Here](#)

Galloway, N.J. – New Jersey voters differ widely on how they view the economy and the economic policies they want the president and Congress to pursue, according to a Hughes Center poll.

When voters were asked to choose which of the major party's proposed policies they think would be the best approach for Congress and the president to take in dealing with the U.S. economy, the highest rate said raising taxes on the wealthy (28%), followed by reducing the federal deficit and national debt (14%) and implementing a federal ban on price gouging food and groceries (14%).

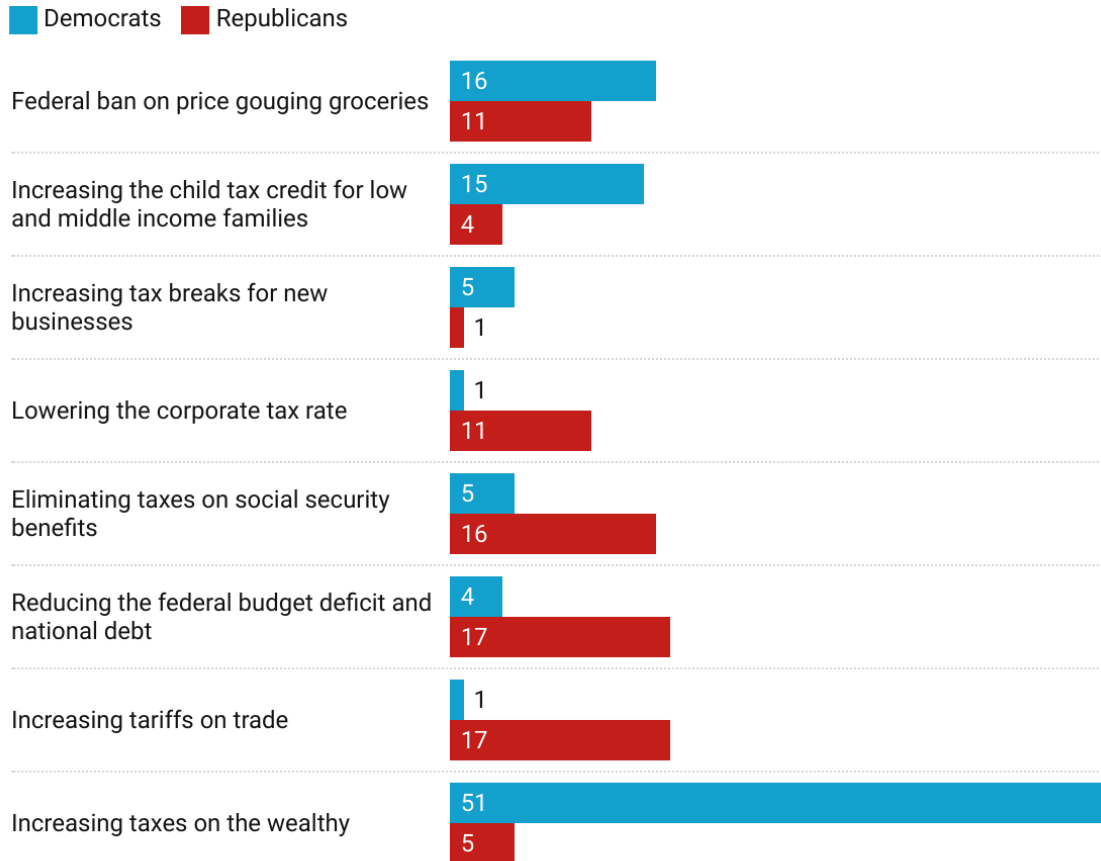
However, the top three approaches differed by party affiliation with a majority of Democrats citing increased taxes on the wealthy (51%), followed by a ban on price gouging groceries (16%) and increasing the child tax credit for low and middle-income families (15%). There was less of a consensus on the best approach among Republicans who were split evenly between reducing the federal deficit and national debt (17%), increasing tariffs on trade (17%), and eliminating taxes on social security benefits (16%).

Independents preferred a mix of liberal and conservative economic policies. The top three approaches cited by Independents included raising taxes on the wealthy (24%), lowering the deficit and debt (23%) and banning price gouging on groceries (16%).

When evaluating the economy, the highest rate of voters identified inflation or the cost of everyday goods (65%) as the economic indicator they value most, followed by wages or personal income (12%) and the unemployment rate or the availability of jobs (8%). When broken down by party, this ranking held true for Democrats and Independents but differed for Republicans who placed the most value on inflation almost universally.

SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC POLICIES BY PARTY

If you had to choose, which of these do you think would be the best approach for Congress and the president to take in dealing with the U.S. economy?



Source: Stockton Poll, Oct. 10-14, 2024

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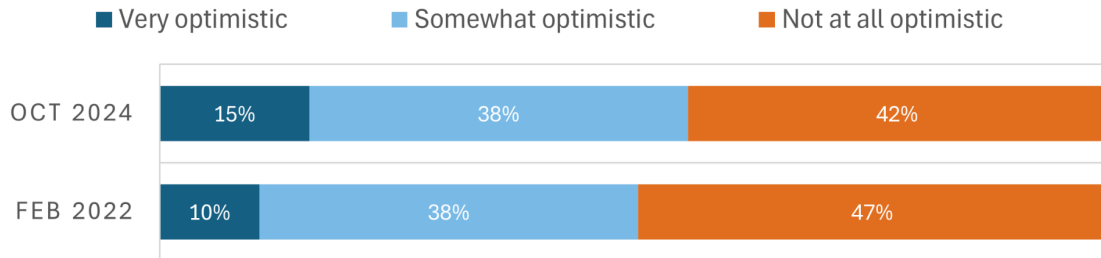
In terms of personal finances, 43% of voters rated their own financial situation as excellent (10%) or good (33%), while 56% said it was fair (38%) or poor (18%). The cost of everyday goods (45%), housing costs (19%), and healthcare costs (10%) were the top three financial struggles cited by voters.

“Despite concerns about inflation, voters have a fairly positive outlook on the future of the state economy,” said Alyssa Maurice, director of research for the Hughes Center.

Most voters (54%) are feeling at least somewhat optimistic about the direction of the New Jersey economy. The rate of optimism is only slightly higher than it was in a Feb. 2022 Stockton poll when this question was last asked.

ECONOMIC OPTIMISM

Please rate how you view the future of New Jersey's economy. Are you very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, or not at all optimistic about the direction of the economy?



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Views toward the economy varied by partisan affiliation, however. More than half of Democrats rated their financial situation positively versus one-third of Republicans. Economic outlook also fell along partisan lines with 79% of Democrats feeling optimistic about the future of the economy, while only one in four Republicans felt the same. Independents landed in the middle with 56% feeling optimistic.

RATING OF PERSONAL FINANCES

% who say their financial situation today is excellent or good

Democrats	Republicans	Independents
55%	32%	43%

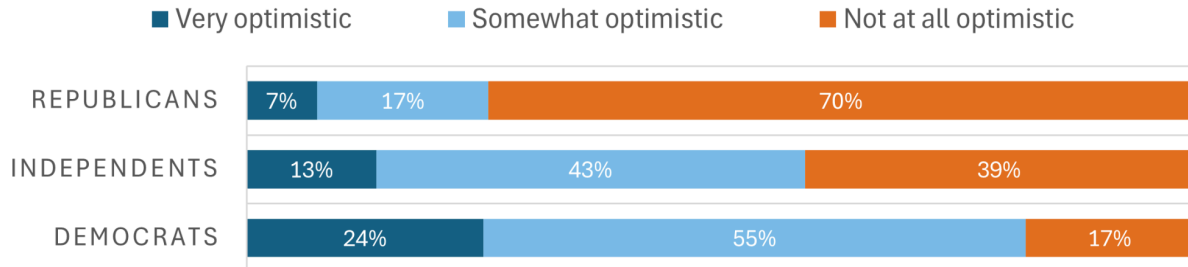
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“There are several performance indicators that voters may consider when they’re evaluating the economy and their own financial picture, but the party that controls the White House is one of them,” Maurice said. “Whether consciously or not, voters tend to view the economy through partisan-colored glasses.”

PARTISAN DIVIDE ON THE ECONOMY

Please rate how you view the future of New Jersey's economy. Are you very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, or not at all optimistic about the direction of the economy?



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The poll of 616 registered voters was released by the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University and has a margin of error of +/- 3.9 percentage points.

You can find the full poll results [here](#).

Methodology

The poll of New Jersey registered voters was conducted by the Stockton Polling Institute of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy from Oct. 10-14, 2024. Stockton University students texted cell phones with invitations to take the survey online and Opinion Services supplemented the dialing portion of the fieldwork, which consisted of cell and landline telephone calls. Overall, 91% of interviews were conducted on cell phones and 9% on landline phones. In terms of mode, 65% were reached via dialing and 35% were reached via text-to-web. A random sample of 616 New Jersey registered voters were interviewed. Both cell and landline samples consisted of random digit dialing (RDD) and voter list sample from MSG. Data are weighted based on U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2023 data for the citizen voting age population in New Jersey on variables of age, race, education level, and sex. The poll's margin of error is +/- 3.9 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. MOE is higher for subsets. Sampling error does not account for other potential sources of bias in polls such as measurement error or non-response.

About the Hughes Center

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University serves as a catalyst for research, analysis and innovative policy solutions on the economic, social and cultural issues facing New Jersey, and promotes the civic life of New Jersey through engagement, education and research. The center is named for the late William J. Hughes, whose distinguished career includes service in the U.S. House of Representatives, Ambassador to Panama and as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Stockton. The Hughes Center can be found on YouTube [@StocktonHughesCenter](#), and can be followed on Facebook [@StocktonHughesCenter](#) and X [@hughescenter](#).