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Christie's Image Turns More Negative

*Most Don't Believe His Assertions on
Highway Controversy*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ON THIS REPORT:**

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Most Don't Believe His Assertions on Highway Controversy

Chris Christie's public image today is starkly different than it was a year ago. Last January, following Christie's visible role in Hurricane Sandy relief efforts, favorable opinions outnumbered unfavorable ones by more than two-to-one. Today, in the wake of a scandal involving highway lane closures that led to massive traffic jams in northern New Jersey, nearly as many offer an unfavorable assessment of Christie as a favorable one.

Christie's explanation of his role in the highway lane closure is drawing skepticism. Most of those who have heard about the controversy do not believe Christie's assertion that he was not aware of his aides' involvement in the lane closure.

The national survey by the Pew Research Center and [USA TODAY](#), conducted Jan. 15-19 among 1,504 adults finds that 38% have a favorable impression of Christie while 34% have an unfavorable view; 28% offer no opinion of the New Jersey governor. Unfavorable views of Christie have doubled since last January – from 17% to 34% – as more people now offer an opinion of Christie. Favorable views of Christie are largely unchanged from last January (38% now, 40% then).

Most Americans say they have heard either a lot (45%) or a little (28%) about Christie's aides ordering the closure of highway traffic lanes last year, which resulted in major traffic jams in northern New Jersey. Among those who have heard about the incident, 58% say they do not believe Christie when he said he had no knowledge of his aides'

Unfavorable Views of Christie Have Doubled Since Last January

Opinion of Chris Christie ...

	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	Change
	%	%	
Favorable	40	38	-2
Unfavorable	17	34	+17
Don't know	<u>42</u>	<u>28</u>	-14
	100	100	

Survey conducted Jan 15-19, 2014. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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Most Who Have Heard about Lane Closure Doubt that Christie Did Not Know of Aides' Involvement

<i>Believe Christie when he said he had no knowledge of aides' involvement in highway lane closure until it became public*</i>	Yes	No	DK
	%	%	%
Total	32	58	11=100
Republican	48	42	10=100
Democrat	21	67	12=100
Independent	32	60	8=100

Survey conducted Jan 15-19, 2014.

*Based on those who heard a lot/little about Christie's aides ordering closure of highway lanes (72% of the public).

Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER/USA TODAY

involvement until it became public; 32% say they believe Christie's assertion that he was unaware of his aides' role.

Majorities of Democrats (67%) and independents (60%) who heard at least a little about Christie's aides ordering the lane closure do not believe Christie's statement that he had no knowledge of his aides' involvement. About half of Republicans (48%) believe Christie's assertions while 42% do not. There are no significant partisan differences in awareness of Christie's aides ordering the lane closure.

[A survey last week](#), conducted a few days after a press conference in which Christie apologized for the lane closure, found that just 18% tracked news of the apology very closely. At that time, 60% said their opinion of Christie "in the past few days" had not changed.

Unfavorable Views of Christie Rise

Compared with last January, unfavorable opinions of Christie are higher across most demographic and partisan groups. The balance of opinion toward Christie is now negative among Democrats (32% favorable, 43% unfavorable), while independents' views are divided (37% favorable, 33% unfavorable). In January 2013, 37% of Democrats and independents viewed him favorably, while just 18% and 15%, respectively, had an unfavorable impression.

Changing Views of Chris Christie

	Jan 2013		Jan 2014		Change in unfav
	Fav	Unfav	Fav	Unfav	
	%	%	%	%	
Total	40	17	38	34	+17
Men	42	19	40	35	+16
Women	39	16	36	33	+17
18-29	28	18	29	32	+14
30-49	39	18	35	36	+18
50-64	47	18	40	37	+19
65+	47	14	50	29	+15
College grad+	55	20	41	42	+22
Some college	41	18	36	34	+16
HS or less	30	15	36	29	+14
Republican	49	20	49	27	+7
Democrat	37	18	32	43	+25
Independent	37	15	37	33	+18
Northeast	51	21	42	42	+21
Midwest	38	16	40	31	+15
South	40	16	37	33	+17
West	33	18	32	33	+15

Survey conducted Jan 15-19, 2014. Don't know responses not shown.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER/USA TODAY

However, Republicans still view Christie favorably by 49% to 27%. That is only modestly changed from last January, when an identical percentage (49%) viewed Christie favorably and 20% had a negative opinion.

In July, the Pew Research Center [conducted a special poll of Republicans and Republican leaners](#), which included favorability measures for Christie and some other leading GOP figures. Thus, it is possible to track changes in views of Christie among the GOP base across three points over the past year.

Notably, unfavorable opinions of Christie among Republicans and GOP leaners who agree with the Tea Party rose 13 points between January and July, from 22% to 35%. Since then, however, there has been virtually no change in opinions about Christie. Currently, 51% of Tea Party Republicans have a favorable impression of Christie while 36% view him unfavorably.

Opinions of Christie among non-Tea Party Republicans show little change from either July or January. Currently, 47% of non-Tea Party Republicans view Christie favorably while 25% view him unfavorably.

Views of Christie among GOP Base Little Changed Since July

Republicans, Republican leaners

	Jan 2013	July 2013	Jan 2014	July-Jan Change
	%	%	%	
Total				
Favorable	49	46	48	+2
Unfavorable	19	28	29	+1
Tea Party				
Favorable	54	48	51	-3
Unfavorable	22	35	36	+1
Non-Tea Party				
Favorable	47	47	47	0
Unfavorable	18	23	25	+2

Survey conducted Jan 15-19, 2014. Based on Republicans, Republican leaners (N=624). Don't know response not shown.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER/USA TODAY

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted January 15-19, 2014 among a national sample of 1,504 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (602 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 902 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 487 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2012 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2013 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,504	2.9 percentage points
Republican	354	6.0 percentage points
Democrat	477	5.2 percentage points
Independent	587	4.7 percentage points
Based on those who heard a lot/little about Christie's aides ordering closure of highway lanes		
Sample	1,171	3.3 percentage points
Republican	281	6.7 percentage points
Democrat	394	5.7 percentage points
Independent	439	5.4 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS/USA TODAY
JANUARY 2014 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
January 15-19, 2014
N=1,504

QUESTIONS 1-2 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED
QUESTIONS 3-4, 9-16 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE
NO QUESTIONS 5-8, 17

ASK ALL:

Q.18 Now I'd like your opinion of some people in the news. (First,) would you say your overall opinion of **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]** is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? How about **[NEXT NAME]? [IF NECESSARY: Just in general, is your overall opinion of [NAME] very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable?]** **[INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."]**

ITEMS a-c HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

	-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	Never heard of	Can't rate/Ref
	d. Chris Christie							
Jan 15-19, 2014 (U)	38	8	30	34	10	24	16	12
Jan 9-13, 2013	40	10	30	17	7	11	26	16

NO QUESTIONS 19, 22
QUESTIONS 20-21, 23-26 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE
QUESTIONS 27-31c PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

ASK ALL:

Q.32 How much, if anything, have you heard about New Jersey Governor Chris Christie's aides ordering the closure of highway lanes last year that caused major traffic jams? **[READ IN ORDER]**

(U)
Jan 15-19
2014
45 A lot
28 A little
27 Nothing at all
1 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

ASK IF HEARD A LOT OR A LITTLE (Q.32=1,2):

Q.33 Do you believe Chris Christie when he says he didn't have any knowledge of his aides' involvement in this incident until it became public, or do you not believe him?

BASED ON THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD A LOT OR A LITTLE [N=1,171]:

(U)
Jan 15-19
2014
32 Yes, believe Christie
58 No, do not believe Christie
11 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

QUESTIONS 34-38, 42, 45-50, 52 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE
NO QUESTIONS 39-41, 43, 51

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL.) No preference	(VOL.) Other party	(VOL.) DK/Ref	Lean Rep	Lean Dem
Jan 15-19, 2014	21	31	41	3	1	2	18	16
Dec 3-8, 2013	24	34	37	3	*	2	17	15
Oct 30-Nov 6, 2013	24	32	38	4	*	2	16	14
Oct 9-13, 2013	25	32	37	3	1	3	16	18
Sep 4-8, 2013	26	32	38	3	1	1	17	15
Jul 17-21, 2013	19	29	46	3	*	2	19	18
Jun 12-16, 2013	23	33	39	3	*	2	17	15
May 1-5, 2013	25	32	37	2	1	3	14	16
Mar 13-17, 2013	26	33	34	3	1	3	14	15
Feb 13-18, 2013	22	32	41	2	*	2	15	19
Jan 9-13, 2013	25	32	38	2	*	2	15	16
Yearly Totals								
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

QUESTIONS REPJOB, DEMJOB, 53-55 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS ONLY (PARTY=1 OR PARTYLN=1):

TEAPARTY3 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

BASED ON REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS [N=624]:

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No opinion either way</u>	<u>(VOL.) Haven't heard of</u>	<u>(VOL.) Refused</u>	<u>Not heard of/ DK</u>
Jan 15-19, 2014	35	12	52	1	*	--
Dec 3-8, 2013	32	9	57	1	1	--
Oct 30-Nov 6, 2013	40	9	48	2	1	--
Oct 9-13, 2013	41	11	45	2	1	--
Sep 4-8, 2013	35	9	54	1	1	--
Jul 17-21, 2013	37	10	50	2	1	--
Jun 12-16, 2013	44	9	46	1	2	--
May 23-26, 2013	41	7	48	1	3	--
May 1-5, 2013	28	8	61	2	1	--
Mar 13-17, 2013	43	7	47	1	1	--
Feb 13-18, 2013	36	9	52	1	3	--
Feb 14-17, 2013	43	9	45	1	2	--
Jan 9-13, 2013	35	10	51	2	2	--
Dec 5-9, 2012	37	11	51	1	*	--
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012 (RVs)	40	8	49	1	2	--
Oct 4-7, 2012	38	9	50	1	3	--
Sep 12-16, 2013	39	7	52	1	1	--
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	40	9	47	2	1	--
Jun 7-17, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	36	9	53	1	2	--
Apr 4-15, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
Mar 7-11, 2012	38	10	49	2	1	--
Feb 8-12, 2012	40	7	51	1	1	--
Jan 11-16, 2012	42	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 4-8, 2012	37	8	52	1	1	--
Dec 7-11, 2011	40	9	48	2	1	--
Nov 9-14, 2011	41	9	49	*	1	--
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	37	11	51	1	1	--
Aug 17-21, 2011	43	7	49	*	1	--
Jul 20-24, 2011	40	7	51	*	1	--
Jun 15-19, 2011	42	9	47	1	1	--
May 25-30, 2011	37	7	52	1	3	--
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	45	9	46	*	1	--
Mar 8-14, 2011	37	7	54	1	*	--
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	41	9	48	1	1	--
Feb 2-7, 2011 ¹	43	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 5-9, 2011	45	6	47	1	1	--
Dec 1-5, 2010	48	5	45	1	1	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	51	5	42	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 (RVs)	58	5	27	--	1	9
Oct 13-18, 2010 (RVs)	54	5	30	--	1	10
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 (RVs)	56	6	29	--	*	9
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	46	5	36	--	1	13
Jun 16-20, 2010	46	5	30	--	*	19

¹ In the February 2-7, 2011, survey and before, question read "...do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement..." In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May 2010 through October 2010, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March 2010 it was described as "the Tea Party protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."

TEAPARTY3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No opinion either way</u>	(VOL.) <u>Haven't heard of</u>	(VOL.) <u>Refused</u>	Not heard of/ <u>DK</u>
May 20-23, 2010	53	4	25	--	1	16
Mar 11-21, 2010	48	4	26	--	1	21

Key to Pew Research trends noted in the topline:

(U) Pew Research Center/USA Today polls