

# Christie's Out-of-State Trips Hurting His Ratings Back Home

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New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's popularity may be growing on the road, but back in his home state, his constituents appear to be growing tired of having a governor whose various travels keep taking him away from home.

Polls in the last three months alone show Christie's popularity is at its lowest point, [reports The New York Times](#), and that many residents think his decisions are more about his national standing — as he mulls a 2016 presidential race — than they are about his state.

[According to a Rutgers-Eagleton Institute Poll](#) this fall, just 42 percent of registered voters have a favorable opinion of Christie, while 45 percent are unfavorable.

"There's no obvious wind for him in the state," said Rutgers-Eagleton poll director David Redlawsk. "There's nothing to make people say, 'Hey, he's really doing something.' Voters in New Jersey know that the guy's got other things on his mind."

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In addition, [a Monmouth University-Asbury Park Press poll](#) said more than half of the state's residents think Christie is more concerned with his own political future than governing the state, and several of those polled believe his plans are making him a less-effective governor.

Christie, who is chairman of the Republican Governors Association, was outside of New Jersey last year for 152 days, or for 42 percent of the time because of his duties, reports The Times. This year, he was out of state for 137 days, or 40 percent of the time, since he was inaugurated in January.

And if he does decide to seek the Republican nomination, his campaigns would take him out of state and take his focus away from his state even more, critics fear.

Christie has made some trips that have brought attention from big Republican donors, including endorsing the long-fought-over Keystone XL pipeline project. Back home though, he has not spoken about a pipeline planned for the state and opposed by state Republican leaders.

In another incident, he vetoed a bill that bans gestation crates for pigs, which was legislation that was popular in New Jersey but would prove unpopular in Iowa, the first caucus state and where Christie will meet with a conference of conservative voters next month.

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Christie's waning support in his own state could affect him as he seeks the nomination, reports The Times. One of his main arguments is that he enjoys broad support in the predominantly blue state, which could give his party its best hope for winning in 2016.

"The kind of support that he's had among nontraditional households is what made him interesting," Krista Jenkins, the director of the PublicMind Poll at Fairleigh Dickinson University, said. "That has really shifted."

The PublicMind Poll shows that just after his handling of Hurricane Sandy in January 2013, 48 percent of voters "liked everything about him" and 17 percent "disliked everything."

But by October of this year, a new poll showed just 32 percent liked everything about the governor, and 35 percent disliked him.

Christie has not said if he will run for the presidency, saying he planned to discuss the issue with his family and make his decision known after the first of the year.

But his press secretary pointed out the governor has had several bipartisan accomplishments this year, and that he won his re-election bid by a 22 point margin in November 2013. Further, they blame the low poll numbers on the George Washington Bridge closure scandal, a claim pollsters say does not account for the decline.

Analysts say other news events, such as downgrades to the state's credit rating and Atlantic City casino closures are among the issues that are driving the polls, in addition to Christie's time away from the state.

