

# Will Gov. Christie's speech change Garden State's perception? N.J. voters say no, poll shows

John O'Boyle / The Star-Ledger

[John O'Boyle / The Star-Ledger Republican National Convention on 8/27/12](#) gallery (13 photos)



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Governor Chris Christie addresses members of the California delegation at their St. Petersburg hotel during the Republican Convention. 8/27/12 John O'Boyle / The Star-Ledger



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**TRENTON** — Gov. Chris Christie wants to use his keynote speech at [the Republican National Convention](#) to change the opinion of New Jersey held by outsiders, but a poll to be released Tuesday says voters here don't think that'll work.

The latest Rutgers-Eagleton poll found 46 percent of those surveyed think Christie's speech will make no difference in how the state is perceived. Nearly a third — 32 percent — think it will enhance the state's image, while 14 percent think it will hurt.

At a town hall meeting in Woodstown last week, Christie promised to talk up New Jersey. "I hope to continue to change people's image of our state, and I think if we can do that we'll have accomplished a heck of a lot on Tuesday night," he said.

But David Redlawsk, director of the poll, said most of the 916 voters, who were interviewed Aug. 23-25, were skeptical.

"While Gov. Christie will speak to his largest audience yet, with as many as 30 million viewers expected to tune in, New Jerseyans are not that impressed," Redlawsk said. "While not exactly a case of 'familiarity breeds contempt,' voters simply don't think the VP talk or the speech itself makes much difference in how New Jersey is viewed from outside."

Nor has the selection of Christie as the keynoter improved his image at home. Forty-nine percent of voters view him favorably and 40 percent think of him unfavorably — virtually unchanged from June.

Fewer black voters viewed Christie favorably in the new poll, however. In June, 31 percent of voters viewed him favorably, while in the latest poll the number dropped to 20 percent. The poll had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.2 percentage points.

When asked to grade Christie's job performance, 45 percent of all respondents gave him either an A or a B, and 29 percent gave him a D or F; 25 percent gave him a C. The grades have barely changed since March.

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