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Poll: Voters Support Christie's Appearance In "Stronger than the Storm" Ads

staff report
September 25, 2013



NEW BRUNSWICK – While a majority of voters believe that the producers of New Jersey's "Stronger than the Storm" ad campaign were chosen for political reasons, most Garden State residents believe Gov. Chris Christie's appearance in the commercials had more to do with promoting tourism than building his own political brand.

The results of the new Rutgers-Eagleton Poll show that 54 percent believe Christie's appearance in the commercials was focused on promoting confidence in the shore's recovery, while 34 percent say the appearances were mostly about gaining publicity for his re-election campaign. Another 11 percent are unsure.

Views are more mixed over the appropriateness of the choice of MWW, the company the state used to create the ad campaign. Democrats criticized the firm in recent months for its supposed close ties to Christie, and a price tag reportedly \$2 million higher than its competitors. By a 2 to 1 margin, voters believe MWW was chosen primarily for political reasons. A noteworthy 37 percent are uncertain about where why the firm was chosen.

"While voters see Christie's appearance as part of his job to promote the state's recovery, many are cynical about why MWW was chosen," said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. "We specifically tested Senator Buono's criticism to see if it resonates, finding that many view the award of the project as political. But that perspective does not change the positive view of the governor's role in the ad campaign."

The "Stronger than the Storm" campaign generated high levels of awareness, as 80 percent of voters saw or heard the ads promoting Jersey shore tourism this summer.

Results are from a poll of 925 New Jersey adults conducted statewide among both landline and cell phone households from Sept 3-9. The subsample of 814 registered voters reported on here has a margin of error of +/- 3.4 percentage



points.

