

Stockton Poll: N.J. Split on Legalizing Marijuana; One in Four Would Try or Use it

Majority support tax free community college, but many still undecided about the new governor

For immediate release

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Galloway, N.J. _ Adults in New Jersey are split over whether marijuana should be made legal in the state for recreational use, but one in four say they would try it or use it if it were legal, according to Stockton University poll results released today.

According to the poll of 728 adult New Jersey residents, 49 percent support legalizing marijuana for recreational purposes in New Jersey, where marijuana use is allowed only for medical purposes. Forty-four percent oppose legalization, with 5 percent unsure. One percent volunteered that they would decriminalize marijuana. Gov. Phil Murphy

Pro-legalization poll respondents were asked to identify the main reason for their support. Twenty-four percent say tax revenues are their main reason, while a combined 22 percent say marijuana is safer than alcohol or tobacco (11 percent) or other illegal drugs (11 percent). Fifteen percent identify medical or health benefits of marijuana as their main reason. Another 11 percent say legalizing marijuana would reduce law enforcement or prison costs.

More than half of opponents of legalization cite health problems or addiction as the reason they are against the proposal, with 24 percent saying it could lead to harder drugs, 20 percent saying marijuana is harmful to good health and 11 percent saying it is addictive. Ten percent cite difficulties in government regulating the drug.

The Stockton Poll finds that less than three months into his first term, the new governor remains an unknown to a sizable part of the population. He is viewed favorably by 40 percent, compared to 27 percent who have unfavorable impressions of Murphy. But one in three respondents say they are not familiar with Murphy (10 percent) or are unsure what to think (23 percent). Among those who know who Murphy is, 39 percent give him good or excellent job performance ratings while 45 percent rate it as fair or poor, with 19 percent unsure. The results break down along party lines, with a majority of Democrats giving the Democratic governor positive ratings.

Overall, 36 percent say New Jersey is going in the right direction, but 45 percent say it is on the wrong track and 19 percent are not sure. Those numbers are more positive than feelings about the nation as a whole. In Stockton poll results released Tuesday, only 27 percent say the country is going in the right direction and 63 percent feel it is on the wrong track, with 10 percent unsure.

Majorities in the poll strongly support other policy initiatives advocated by the governor, according to the poll results released today. Sixty-eight percent support raising state taxes on households with annual income of more than \$1 million, while 29 percent oppose a so-

points at a 95 percent confidence level. MOE is higher for subsets. Data are weighted based on United States Census Bureau demographics for the State of New Jersey population.

About the Hughes Center

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy (www.stockton.edu/hughescenter) 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 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 at <https://www.facebook.com/StocktonHughesCenter> and can be followed on Twitter @hughescenter.

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Contact:

**Director of News and Media Relations
Galloway, N.J. 08205**

609-652-4593

stockton.edu/media