



## **Poll: 54 pct. in N.J. want gambling restricted to A.C.**

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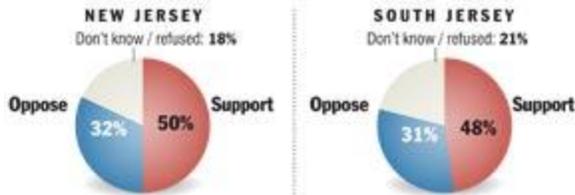
# The Inquirer New Jersey Poll

Presented by  **PSEG**

Here are results of a bipartisan poll based on telephone interviews of 604 likely New Jersey voters conducted from Oct. 4 to 8. The statewide margin of error is  $\pm 4.0$  percentage points. Poll results for South Jersey are based on interviews of 134 likely voters in Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Salem, Cumberland, Atlantic, and Cape May Counties, with a margin of error of  $\pm 8.5$  percentage points.

## Sports Betting

**Q** As you may know, you can bet on sports in Las Vegas but not in New Jersey. Do you support or oppose making sports betting legal in New Jersey?

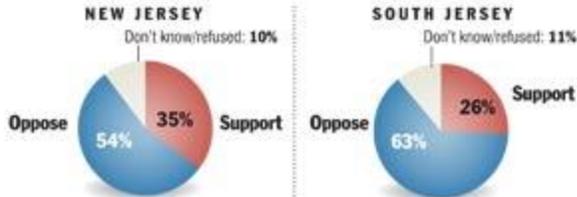


## Statewide demographics

By age	Support	Oppose	Und.	By gender	Support	Oppose	Und.
18-44	57%	27%	16%	Male	56%	29%	15%
45-64	48%	37%	15%	Female	45%	35%	21%
65 and over	39%	33%	28%				

## Expanding gambling outside of A.C.

**Q** Do you support or oppose expanding casino gaming outside of Atlantic City in New Jersey?

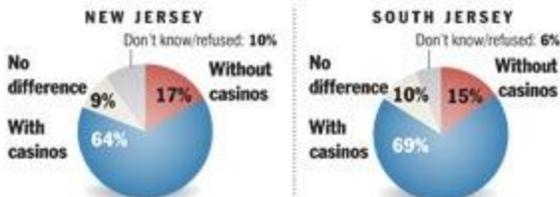


## Statewide demographics

By age	Support	Oppose	Und.	By gender	Support	Oppose	Und.
18-44	39%	51%	10%	Male	39%	52%	9%
45-64	34%	58%	9%	Female	32%	57%	11%
65 and over	30%	58%	12%				

## N.J. better with or without casinos

**Q** On the whole, do you think that New Jersey is better off with casinos or without them?



## Statewide demographics

Age	With	Without	N.D.	Und.	Gender	With	Without	N.D.	Und.
18-44	70%	14%	10%	7%	Male	70%	15%	7%	9%
45-64	62%	20%	8%	10%	Female	59%	19%	11%	10%
65+	59%	18%	10%	13%					

## Jobs/revenue vs. gambling addiction

**Q** And which of the following concerns you more? That ...



By Suzette Parmley

## INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

With Gov. Christie spending a great deal of financial and political capital to lift the sinking fortunes of his state's casino capital by the sea, more than half of New Jerseyans - 54 percent - say Atlantic City should maintain exclusive rights to gambling.

Thirty-five percent favor expanding gambling to other parts of the state, according to findings of the latest Inquirer New Jersey Poll, conducted Oct. 4-8 by a bipartisan team of pollsters who surveyed 604 likely voters.

The margin of error was plus or minus four percentage points.

Opposition to expanding gambling outside Atlantic City was strongest in South Jersey, where the casino industry employs about 36,000.

"It's not surprising," said State Sen. James Whelan (D., Atlantic), mayor of Atlantic City from 1992 to 2001. "The point is, what is the best long-term interest for the state and for Atlantic City?"

"We have billions of dollars in investment in infrastructure and tens of thousands of jobs, and you are not really looking at the new wave of casinos that have cropped up in Pennsylvania and New York in the same way," Whelan said. "Those are glorified bingo halls that don't generate the jobs or have the same type of capital investment."

As Atlantic City's gaming revenue continues to slide, the issue of expansion has recently been revisited by North Jersey lawmakers, who are championing casinos for the Meadowlands Complex in East Rutherford and other parts of the state.

Among those polled who live in the South Jersey counties, 63 percent opposed opening casinos in other parts of the state, while 26 percent favored it.

"I understand it creates jobs, but I just feel like the casinos that are in Atlantic City are floundering and Revel is struggling," Donna Boyle, 51, a real estate agent from Moorestown, told pollsters. "Particularly in an economy like this, [any expansion] would not be particularly successful. I think one strip of casinos is enough."

Christie spokesman Michael Drewniak said the poll's findings "align exactly with the governor's position and policies. We are providing considerable support and resources to renew and refocus Atlantic City and the tourism district. The governor set out a five-year plan in this regard, and this is not the time to diminish Atlantic City's potential by adding competition in our own state."

## **Showdown?**

Among other ideas to boost Atlantic City is sports betting, which Las Vegas has had since the 1950s.

Last year, the state Legislature passed, and Christie signed, a measure legalizing betting at the dozen Shore casinos and at four horse tracks. Regulations were approved over the summer, but the NCAA and professional sports leagues sued Aug. 7 to thwart the state.

Christie has said he may move forward despite the federal ban limiting sports betting to Nevada, Montana, Oregon, and Delaware.

The Inquirer poll found that 50 percent of New Jerseyans supported allowing sports betting even though the federal ban first must be overturned. Thirty-one percent opposed it.

In the South Jersey counties, 48 percent supported sports wagering, with 31 percent opposing it.

### **Better off?**

Even though gambling revenue is much diminished in Atlantic City - down by \$1.9 billion since 2006, its peak year, as well as the year Pennsylvania's first casino opened - 64 percent of those polled said New Jersey was better off with casinos than without. Seventeen percent of respondents said the state was better off without casinos.

Those figures mirrored the findings in South Jersey, where 69 percent said the state was better off with casinos, vs. 15 percent who said it was better off without.

(A similar question posed across the Delaware found 52 percent of 600 people surveyed in the Inquirer Pennsylvania Poll thought that state was better off with casinos, while 30 percent thought Pennsylvania was better off without them. In the five-county Philadelphia region, that poll showed, 50 percent of respondents said Pennsylvania was better off with casinos, vs. 32 percent who said otherwise.)

Regarding the future of Atlantic City's main industry, a plurality, 45 percent, said it would be about the same in the next 10 years as it is today; 17 percent said it would be stronger, including Boyle.

"As consumer confidence increases, I think people will start opening their wallets a little bit more and have more discretionary funds," she said, "which I think will help the casino business."

But nearly one in four did not share her sentiment. Of those polled, 27 percent said Atlantic City's casino industry would be weaker in the next decade.

Among respondents statewide, 51 percent said they were more concerned with the revenue and jobs that come from building casinos than hurting families and increasing addiction. Thirty-two percent said they were more concerned about families and addiction.

In South Jersey, the breakdown was 59 percent vs. 29 percent.

Said Les Bernal, executive director of Washington-based Stop Predatory Gambling, "The question that should be asked of New Jersey citizens is this: Knowing that the state's middle class is shrinking, the state debt is almost \$30,000 per citizen, and Atlantic City is still a total mess after 30 years of casinos, do you agree that state government's experiment with gambling has failed and government should stop promoting it?"