

Poll: New Jerseyans favor immigrant legalization

The Associated Press, July 13, 2006

<http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/15032279.htm>

New Brunswick, NJ (AP) -- A poll released Thursday suggests New Jerseyans by a two-to-one margin favor legalizing undocumented immigrants who have worked in the United States for at least two years.

In a Rutgers-Eagleton telephone survey of 800 adults, 65 percent said illegal immigrants who have lived and worked in this country for at least two years should be permitted to keep their jobs and eventually seek legal status. Thirty-two percent said those immigrants should be deported.

Conducted from June 14 to 19, the poll has a sampling error margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

Opinion varied slightly by political affiliation, with 69 percent of Democrats surveyed supporting legalization for immigrants already here, compared to 62 percent of Republicans.

'Few states with as large a population of foreign-born and undocumented aliens as New Jersey are anywhere near as favorable in their views of legal immigration, and of allowing undocumented aliens to stay,' said Daniel Tichenor, an associate professor of political science at Rutgers University. 'Public opinion in places like Arizona, California or Texas is decidedly more restrictive.'

New Jersey attitudes toward legal immigration have become more favorable since the last such Rutgers-Eagleton poll three years ago, soon after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In June 2002, 35 percent said legal immigration should be curbed and 24 percent said it should be halted entirely. In the new survey, those figures were 29 percent and 5 percent, respectively.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Rutgers Eagleton Poll is available on line at

http://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu/polls/release_07-13-06.pdf