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Siena New York Poll:

Voters See Senate Fight as a Farce – Bad for NYers
Half Prefer Senate to be Controlled by Coalition of Both Parties
Record High 63% Think State is Headed in Wrong Direction

Loudonville, NY. More than half of New York voters in describing the current State Senate situation say “this farce is an embarrassment,” including nearly two-thirds of the 58 percent of voters who have read or heard a great deal or some about the Senate leadership fight, according to a new Siena (College) Research Institute poll of registered voters. Nearly half of voters, including pluralities of Republicans and independents, want to see the Senate controlled by a coalition of both parties, rather than by Democrats or Republicans. By the largest margin ever, 63-24 percent, voters say New York is headed in the wrong direction.

“Two-thirds of New York voters think the Senate leadership fight is bad for the people of the state. An overwhelming 84 percent think the fight will make it harder to pass important legislation – legislation that voters want the Senate to act upon, including property tax reform, state government ethics reform, reducing pension costs, and legislation on same sex marriages,” said Siena New York pollster Steven Greenberg.

“Democrats, Republicans and independent voters all strongly agree that the Senate fight is bad for New York and making it harder to enact critical legislation. Republicans, Democrats and independents also agree that the situation in the Senate is a ‘farce’ and an ‘embarrassment,’ ” Greenberg said.

“On which party should control the Senate and which is more committed to reforming the way the Senate operates, not surprisingly there are big differences between the parties,” Greenberg said. “Democrats say Democrats are more committed to reform. Republicans say Republicans. And a plurality of independent voters volunteered that neither party is committed to reforming Senate operations.

“Forty-five percent of Democrats, 48 percent of Republicans and 59 percent of independents want a coalition of both parties controlling the Senate. A plurality of Democrats, New York City and African American voters opt for Democrats, and a majority or plurality of all other demographic groups says coalition,” Greenberg said.

“When it comes to the individual senators publicly most involved, all remain unknown to a majority of voters and all have more voters saying they have an unfavorable opinion of them than have a favorable opinion,”

Greenberg said. “Among voters who have paid attention to the Senate fight, the senators’ unfavorable ratings are even larger. And while a plurality of voters has an unfavorable view of the State Assembly, an overwhelming majority of voters look upon the State Senate unfavorably.”

	All Voters			Know Great Deal/Some About Senate Fight		
	Fav	Unfav	DK/NO	Fav	Unfav	DK/NO
Tom Golisano	30%	32%	38%	30%	42%	29%
Sheldon Silver	27%	37%	36%	28%	49%	23%
Dean Skelos	15%	23%	62%	16%	30%	54%
Pedro Espada	13%	33%	54%	10%	48%	42%
Malcolm Smith	12%	32%	56%	12%	42%	46%
John Sampson	9%	12%	79%	6%	14%	80%
Hiram Monserrate	7%	36%	58%	5%	51%	44%
NYS Assembly	37%	47%	15%	33%	59%	8%
NYS Senate	29%	62%	9%	18%	78%	4%

Direction of the State: Worst Ever in a Siena New York Poll

“Whether directly related to the Senate chaos or not, New Yorkers currently have the most negative view on the direction the state is headed in over the five years of the Siena New York Poll. While 24 percent believe New York is on the right track, 63 percent say the state is headed in the wrong direction. For the first time ever, this includes a majority of every political party, region of the state and age group,” Greenberg said.

Senate Fight Imperils Numerous Legislative Issues Voters Want Addressed

“More than three-quarters of voters say it is very or somewhat important that the Senate address property tax relief (94 percent), state government ethics reform (89 percent) and reducing pension costs (77 percent) before they adjourn for the summer. Mayoral control of New York City schools – particularly for voters in the five boros – and same sex marriages are also legislative issues voters want addressed,” Greenberg said.

Support for Same Sex Marriage Has Slim Majority – Voter Attitudes Continue to Sway

“Half of New York voters support Senate passage of same sex marriage legislation, up four points from last month, while 43 percent oppose it, down three points from last month,” Greenberg said. “While many voters have a definitive position in support or opposition to legalizing same sex marriages in New York, a substantial number of ‘swing voters’ continues to grapple with their position on the issue.”

Paterson Ratings Inch Up Slightly; Cuomo Has His Highest Favorability Ever

“Governor David Paterson’s favorability and job performance ratings rose slightly from his record lows, while Attorney General Andrew Cuomo has a 71 percent favorable rating, including 62 percent among Republicans. A plurality of voters, 46 percent, still believes Cuomo should run for Governor in 2010,” Greenberg said.

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This SRI survey was conducted June 15-18, 2009 by telephone calls to 626 New York State registered voters. It has a margin of error of ± 3.9 percentage points. Data was statistically adjusted by age, party and geography to ensure representativeness. Sampling was conducted via random digit dialing weighted to reflect known population patterns. For more information, please call Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.



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Siena New York Poll Trends – June 2009

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about David Paterson?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	31	57	11
May 2009	27	60	13
April 2009	27	63	10
March 2009	29	58	13
February 2009	40	47	13
January 29, 2009	54	30	17
January 26, 2009	60	23	16
December 2008	63	22	16
November 2008	64	19	17
October 27, 2008	62	19	18
September 2008	59	13	28
August 2008	59	16	26
July 2008	57	15	28
June 2008	57	17	25
May 2008	48	17	35
April 2008	48	18	34
March 24, 2008	58	10	31
January 2007	17	8	76
HIGHEST EVER	64 (11/08)	63 (4/09)	76 (1/07)

How would you rate the job that David Paterson is doing as Governor – excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	2	18	39	39	2
May 2009	2	16	43	38	1
April 2009	1	17	41	40	2
March 2009	1	18	46	32	2
February 2009	2	26	46	23	3
January 26, 2009	8	43	35	10	4
December 2008	9	46	32	8	4
November 2008	9	46	34	7	4
October 27, 2008	7	48	35	5	5
September 2008	7	44	33	4	12
August 2008	7	45	30	5	12
July 2008	7	41	34	5	13
June 2008	6	38	31	6	19
May 2008	5	35	28	4	29
April 2008	4	30	30	4	32
HIGHEST EVER	9 (12/08)	48 (10/08)	46 (3/09, 2/09)	40 (4/09)	32 (4/08)

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If David Paterson runs for Governor in 2010, would you vote to elect him or would you prefer someone else?

DATE	ELECT	PREFER SOMEONE ELSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	15	70	15
May 2009	15	71	15
April 2009	12	71	17
March 2009	14	67	19
February 2009	19	57	24
January 26, 2009	32	36	32
December 2008	36	31	33
November 2008	42	32	26
October 27, 2008	40	29	31
September 2008	35	25	39
August 2008	35	26	40
July 2008	34	27	40
June 2008	30	30	40
May 2008	29	25	47
HIGHEST EVER	42 (11/08)	71 (5/09, 4/09)	47 (5/08)

(DEMS ONLY): Looking ahead to 2010 and the next election for Governor. If the Democratic primary for governor were held today and the candidates were David Paterson or Andrew Cuomo, who would you vote for? (CANDIDATE CHOICES WERE ROTATED)

DATE	PATERSON	CUOMO	SUOZZI	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	16	69	NA	15
May 2009	19	70	NA	11
April 2009	11	64	8	17
March 2009	17	67	NA	17
February 2009	27	53	NA	20
January 26, 2009	35	33	NA	33
December 2008	49	26	NA	25
November 2008	53	25	NA	22
July 2008	51	21	NA	28
June 2008	43	31	NA	26
May 2008	42	29	NA	29
April 2008	35	30	7	28
HIGHEST EVER	53 (11/08)	70 (5/09)	8 (4/09)	33 (1/09)

If the 2010 election for governor were held today and the candidates were David Paterson on the Democratic line and Rudy Giuliani on the Republican line, who would you vote for? (CANDIDATE CHOICES WERE ROTATED)

DATE	PATERSON	GIULIANI	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	27	57	15
May 2009	31	59	10
April 2009	29	56	15
March 2009	33	56	11
February 2009	36	51	13
January 26, 2009	44	42	14
December 2008	51	38	11
November 2008	49	43	8
October 27, 2008	51	40	9
September 2008	50	40	10
August 2008	48	38	15
July 2008	47	40	13
HIGHEST EVER	51 (10/08, 12/08)	59 (5/09)	15 (4/09, 8/08)

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If the 2010 election for governor were held today and the candidates were Andrew Cuomo on the Democratic line and Rudy Giuliani on the Republican line, who would you vote for? (CANDIDATE CHOICES WERE ROTATED)

DATE	CUOMO	GIULIANI	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	49	40	11
May 2009	53	41	6
April 2009	53	39	8
March 2009	51	41	9
February 2009	51	38	11
January 26, 2009	48	39	13
December 2008	50	37	13
November 2008	44	46	10
July 2008	47	42	11
HIGHEST EVER	53 (5/09, 4/09)	46 (11/08)	13 (12/08, 1/09)

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Andrew Cuomo?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	71	17	12
May 2009	66	20	14
April 2009	66	18	16
March 2009	68	17	15
February 2009	69	18	13
January 26, 2009	64	17	19
December 2008	59	24	17
November 2008	61	19	20
October 27, 2008	59	25	16
September 2008	54	24	22
August 2008	54	25	21
July 2008	57	23	21
June 2008	57	22	21
May 2008	56	25	20
April 2008	55	24	21
March 24, 2008	53	25	22
January 2008	51	29	20
December 2007	52	29	19
November 2007	56	27	17
October 2007	54	29	17
September 2007	51	26	24
July 2007	55	26	19
June 2007	49	31	20
May 2007	51	32	18
April 2007	52	31	18
March 2007	50	32	19
February 2007	45	35	20
January 2007	48	29	23
HIGHEST EVER	71 (6/09)	42 (10/06)	24 (1/06, 2/06, 9/07)
LOWEST EVER	44 (8/06, 10/06)	17 (6/09, 3/09, 1/09)	12 (6/09)

Would you prefer to see Attorney General Andrew Cuomo run for re-election as Attorney General next year or would you prefer to see him run for Governor instead?

DATE	ATTORNEY GENERAL	GOVERNOR	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	35	46	19
May 2009	33	47	20
HIGHEST EVER	35 (6/09)	47 (5/09)	20 (5/09)

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Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Rudy Giuliani?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	62	33	5
May 2009	61	35	5
April 2009	55	41	4
March 2009	58	36	6
February 2009	58	35	7
January 29, 2009	60	35	5
January 26, 2009	59	33	8
December 2008	50	43	7
November 2008	57	39	4
August 2008	51	42	7
July 2008	51	39	10
January 2008	44	48	8
December 2007	48	46	6
November 2007	49	41	11
September 2007	53	39	9
July 2007	53	40	7
June 2007	50	42	8
May 2007	51	43	6
April 2007	56	38	6
March 2007	60	33	8
February 2007	59	34	7
January 2007	63	29	9
HIGHEST EVER	63 (4/05, 10/06, 1/07)	48 (1/08)	11 (2/05, 11/07)
LOWEST EVER	44 (1/08)	26 (4/05)	4 (4/09, 11/08)

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Sheldon Silver?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	27	37	36
November 2008	24	36	40
July 2008	22	32	47
March 24, 2008	24	31	44
October 2007	22	37	42
July 2007	24	34	42
March 2007	23	35	42
January 2007	20	37	43
HIGHEST EVER	28 (7/05)	37 (6/09, 10/07, 1/07)	50 (4/05)
LOWEST EVER	19 (4/05)	30 (4/05)	36 (6/09)

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Dean Skelos?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	15	23	62
November 2008	10	11	79
July 2008	10	8	82
HIGHEST EVER	15 (6/09)	23 (6/09)	82 (11/08)

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Malcolm Smith?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	12	32	56
November 2008	10	11	79
HIGHEST EVER	12 (6/09)	32 (6/09)	79 (11/08)

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Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Tom Golisano?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	30	32	38
August 2008	22	20	58
HIGHEST EVER	33 (1/06)	32 (6/09)	58 (8/08)
LOWEST EVER	22 (8/08)	14 (8/05)	38 (6/09)

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about the New York State Senate?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	29	62	9
February 2009	43	43	13
HIGHEST EVER	43 (2/09)	62 (6/09)	13 (2/09)

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about the New York State Assembly?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	37	47	15
February 2009	40	42	18
HIGHEST EVER	40 (2/09)	47 (6/09)	18 (2/09)

The State Assembly has passed a bill to legalize same sex marriages in New York State. Governor Paterson has said he supports it. To date, the State Senate has not voted on the bill. Do you support or oppose the State Senate passing a bill to legalize same sex marriages, virtually ensuring it would become law in New York?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	50	43	7
May 2009	46	46	8
April 2009	53	39	8
HIGHEST EVER	53 (4/09)	46 (5/09)	8 (5/09, 4/09)

– more –

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Is New York State on the right track, or is it headed in the wrong direction?

DATE	RIGHT TRACK	WRONG DIRECTION	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
June 2009	24	63	13
May 2009	33	52	14
April 2009	27	57	15
March 2009	30	52	19
February 2009	31	53	16
January 26, 2009	39	42	19
December 2008	37	44	19
November 2008	39	43	18
October 27, 2008	39	41	19
October 2, 2008	35	40	25
September 2008	35	37	28
August 2008	34	44	22
July 2008	36	39	25
June 2008	30	46	23
May 2008	32	43	26
April 2008	33	48	20
March 24, 2008	34	41	26
February 2008	33	43	24
January 2008	39	38	23
December 2007	35	45	21
November 2007	32	45	23
October 2007	42	36	22
September 2007	44	30	26
July 2007	37	38	25
June 2007	45	28	27
May 2007	46	29	25
April 2007	47	29	24
March 2007	37	37	26
February 2007	49	26	25
January 2007	45	26	30
HIGHEST EVER	52 (11/15/06)	63 (6/09)	30 (1/07)
LOWEST EVER	24 (6/09)	26 (1/07)	13 (6/09)

Poll Trend Notes: Trends reflect questions asked at least twice since the first Siena New York poll in February 2005. Results listed here include all times questions have been asked since January 2007

“Highest Ever” is provided at the bottom of each question. “Lowest Ever” is presented at the bottom of each question that was asked prior to 2007.

All surveys are of registered voters except for the polls of September 2008, October 2008, September 2006, and October 2006, which are polls of likely registered voters.