DELAWARE VOTERS GIVE A COLLECTIVE YAWN FOR STATE RACES BUT ARE LARGELY UPBEAT ABOUT LEADERS AND STATE'S HEALTH

Fairleigh Dickinson University, July 27, 2016– The majority of registered voters in Delaware are not paying close attention to the two big statewide races that will be before them in November. The jointly sponsored survey from Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind and The News Journal finds that barely a third of registered voters are following the upcoming races for the state's sole House of Representatives seat (33%) and the governor's race (36%). Both seats are open, as the incumbent is either moving on (Representative John Carney - D) or is term-limited (Jack Markell - D). Few say they have a preference in their party's primary election in September.

In the Democratic primary for the state's House seat, about half (52%) of those registered say they are undecided among candidates vying to represent their party in September. Lisa Blunt Rochester and Bryan Townsend are tied among registered Democrats, with 11 percent support each. Mike Miller (9%), Scott Walker (6%) and Sean Barney (4%) are all in the single digits.

On the Republican side, similar numbers say they have not decided whom to support (55%), despite the fact that Hans Reigle is the only declared candidate. Reigle only attracts the support of about a quarter (26%) of voters with 14 percent saying they intend to support "someone else."

"The uncertainty of whom to support, coupled with the minimal interest in the House race, means things remain wide open as we head into the fall," said Krista Jenkins, director of PublicMind and professor of political science at Fairleigh Dickinson University. "All of the candidates have a great opportunity to define themselves to voters, assuming they can first get their attention."

In the race for governor, outgoing U.S. Congressman John Carney has a strong advantage on the Democratic side, with 67 percent intending to support him. Even though he's the only game in town for Democrats, a full quarter (23%) say they remain uncertain about whom to support. Carney's support, though, is bolstered by his 57 percent approval rating, with Democrats (75%) and independents (47%) clearly on his side, and Republicans evenly split over his job performance (38% versus 39%, respectively).

It's a closer race on the Republican side, although large numbers also say they're unsure about who should represent their party in November. State Senator Colin Bonini attracts the support of 29 percent, with retired Delaware State Police Officer Lacey Lafferty (22%) not too far behind.

"As with the House seat, Republicans will face an uphill battle at the gubernatorial level given the state's preponderance of self-identified Democrats. But there's still a lot of room for both Bonini and Lafferty to connect with their base and define themselves in opposition to Carney," said Jenkins.

The mood of the electorate toward state leaders and institutions is more positive than negative. Almost six-in-10 approve of the job Governor Jack Markell is doing (59%) with a quarter (25%) saying they disapprove of his job performance. Markell is solidly favored by Democrats (72%) and independents (61%), with a third of Republicans (38%) giving him a favorable rating and around the same number (40%) dissatisfied with his leadership.

The Democratic-controlled Legislature is evaluated positively by 49 percent of registered voters. More Democrats (61%) and independents (44%) favor than disfavor the Legislature's performance of late, with Republicans more dissatisfied (45%) than satisfied (34%).

"Although support for both Markell and the Legislature is not overwhelming, even their natural opponents – Republicans – are more divided than united in their opinions of both institutions," said Jenkins.

Over half say the state is headed in the right direction (54%) with 38 percent saying it's headed down the wrong track. Partisan differences prevail, with 60 percent of Republicans expressing concern and 67 percent of Democrats satisfied with how things are going.

As for what poses the greatest challenge to the state – the economy, crime, access to health care, or stagnant wages – greatest concern is expressed for crime (35%) and the economy (28%). Notably fewer identify health care (14%) and stagnant wages (17%). The economy is of greater concern among Republicans (39%) than Democrats (20%), among men (34%) than women (22%) and among whites (31%) than non-whites (21%). And worry over crime resonates more with Democrats (41%) than Republicans (33%), and among women (39%) than men (31%).

"Crime and the economy are basic security issues. It's hard to feel secure if you think the economy is floundering and your safety isn't secure. Still, the fact that no single issue stands out among a majority of voters suggests policymakers have their work cut out for them in addressing the variety of problems of concern to their constituents," said Jenkins.

The same survey also asked about specific issues facing Delaware. Strong support exists for increasing the state's minimum wage to $10.25 from its current $8.25. Three-quarters (73%) of voters say they favor the increase, with widespread support across a variety of demographic groups. Although not as strongly in favor as others, more than half of Republicans (53%) support the hourly wage increase.

As for what to do about sand erosion on Delaware's beaches, opinion is divided over federal spending as a remedy. Half are in favor (49%) with slightly fewer opposed (41%). Beach replenishment and the use of taxpayer funds to assist private landowners in erosion-prone areas has been an ongoing and contentious issue.

Finally, though Delaware's roads and bridges are in need of significant repair, there's little appetite in the state to pay more in tolls and taxes. A quarter (26%) favor more in tolls, with similar numbers (23%) in favor of an increased gas tax from its current 23 cents per gallon. An increase of 10 cents has been floated recently.

More attractive is the use of reserve funds by state government to address deficiencies in Delaware's road and bridge infrastructure. 41 percent favor this avenue, and it is the most attractive among a variety of demographic groups considered.

PublicMind recently received an "A" rating from statistician Nate Silver's FiveThirtyEight blog. The ratings measure both accuracy and bias for all major polling services in the United States, providing an update to similar research the poll watchers conducted in 2014. PublicMind's "A" rating puts it in the top 14 of the more than 380 polling institutes reviewed and graded from A+ through F PublicMind was found to have a 94 percent accuracy rate for predicting election results, and is one of only two A-rated polling institutes with zero bias to their rankings.

Methodology

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted jointly with the *Delaware News Journal*. 715 self-identified registered voters in Delaware were randomly sampled and contacted by telephone via landline and cell phone from July 20-24, 2016. One can be 95 percent confident that the error attributable to sampling has a range of +/-4.1 percentage points, including the design effect. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers.

PublicMind interviews are conducted by Opinion America of Cedar Knolls, NJ, with professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a landline phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected.

Landline households are supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone respondents interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of gender, age, education, and race. 376 interviews were conducted on landlines and 339 were conducted on cellular telephones.

The sample was purchased from Marketing Systems Group and the research was funded by Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Tables

How closely are you following the upcoming race for the US House of Representatives in Delaware?													
		PID			**Gender**		**Race**		**Education**		**Age**		
	All	**Dem**	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
Very closely	**11%**	13	11	9	10	12	9	13	11	11	6	13	12
Somewhat closely	**22%**	24	14	25	21	23	26	14	19	26	11	25	28
Just a little	**26%**	24	35	23	26	26	23	32	27	24	32	22	27
Not at all	**40%**	39	39	42	41	38	40	40	41	38	49	39	32
DK/Both (vol)	**1%**	0	1	1	1	01	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Refused (vol)	**0**	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

How closely are you following the upcoming race for governor in Delaware?													
		PID			**Gender**		**Race**		**Education**		**Age**		
	All	**Dem**	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
Very closely	**14%**	13	14	15	14	13	14	12	12	16	9	15	17
Somewhat closely	**22%**	25	17	21	24	20	23	18	21	23	9	27	26
Just a little	**28%**	30	28	25	28	28	26	32	26	30	37	24	26
Not at all	**36%**	31	40	38	34	38	36	37	41	31	46	34	30
DK/Both (vol)	**0**	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Refused (vol)	**0**	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

If the Democratic primary for US House of Representatives was today, who would you vote for? [rotate choices] N = 344; MoE +/- 5.3	
Sean Barney	**4%**
Mike Miller	**9%**
Lisa Blunt Rochester	**11%**
Bryan Townsend	**11%**
Scott Walker	**6%**
Elias Weir	**0**
Other	**1%**
Won't vote (vol)	**3%**
DK (vol)	**52%**
Refused (vol)	**2%**

If the Republican primary for US House of Representatives was today, who would you vote for? [rotate choices] N = 224; MoE +/- 6.6	
Hans Reigle	**26%**
Someone else	**14%**
Won't vote (vol)	**3%**
DK (vol)	**55%**
Refused (vol)	**2%**

If the Democratic primary for the governor's race was today, who would you vote for? [rotate choices] N = 344; MoE +/- 5.3	
John Carney	**67%**
Someone else	**9%**
Won't vote (vol)	**1%**
DK (vol)	**23%**
Refused (vol)	**0**

Do you approve or disapprove of the job US Representative John Carney is doing in Congress? [Randomize approve/disapprove]

		PID			Gender		Race		Education		Age		
	All	**Dem**	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
Approve	**57%**	75	47	38	54	61	52	68	56	59	68	55	52
Disapprove	**22%**	10	31	39	29	16	27	13	21	23	13	26	25
Neither (vol)	**7%**	6	7	8	7	8	6	9	9	6	7	7	8
DK (vol)	**12%**	10	15	15	10	15	14	9	13	12	12	12	14
Refused (vol)	**0**	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1

If the Republican primary for the governor's race was today, who would you vote for? [rotate choices] N = 224; MoE +/- 6.6	
Colin Bonini	**29%**
Lacey Lafferty	**22%**
Other (vol)	**3%**
Won't vote (vol)	**3%**
DK (vol)	**42%**
Refused (vol)	**1%**

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Jack Markell is doing as governor? [Randomize approve/disapprove]

		PID			Gender		Race		Education		Age		
	All	**Dem**	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
Approve	**59%**	72	61	40	53	65	56	66	57	62	63	60	55
Disapprove	**25%**	13	24	45	29	21	30	14	24	26	14	29	29
Neither (vol)	**8%**	9	6	8	8	8	8	9	9	7	14	5	7
DK (vol)	**8%**	6	8	7	9	6	5	11	9	5	9	6	7
Refused (vol)	**0**	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1

Do you approve or disapprove of the job the state legislature is doing? [Randomize approve/disapprove]

		PID			Gender		Race		Education		Age		
	All	**Dem**	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
Approve	**49%**	61	44	34	44	54	47	56	49	50	62	47	42
Disapprove	**30%**	19	36	45	40	21	34	21	32	28	20	33	35
Neither (vol)	**7%**	7	5	8	7	8	7	7	6	9	7	8	6
DK (vol)	**13%**	12	12	13	9	16	12	15	13	12	12	11	16
Refused (vol)	**1%**	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	9	1	0	1	1

In your opinion, do you think things in Delaware are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track? [Rotate right direction/wrong track]

	All	PID			Gender		Race		Education		Age		
		Dem	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
Right direction	**54%**	67	52	33	50	57	50	63	54	54	71	49	45
Wrong track	**38%**	24	37	60	42	35	43	28	38	38	24	43	44
DK (vol)	**7%**	8	11	6	7	7	7	8	7	7	4	7	10
Refused (vol)	**1%**	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

If you had to choose, which of the following do you believe is the most important issue facing Delaware today? [Rotate choices]

	All	PID			Gender		Race		Education		Age		
		Dem	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
The economy	**28%**	20	31	39	34	22	31	21	25	31	24	28	31
Crime	**35%**	41	28	33	31	39	32	43	39	31	40	33	35
Access to health care	**14%**	14	15	14	12	17	16	11	15	14	11	18	12
Stagnant wages	**17%**	20	24	10	18	18	16	20	15	20	20	17	15
Other (vol)	**4%**	3	2	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	2	5
DK (vol)	**1%**	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	2
Refused (vol)	**0**	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Do you favor or oppose raising the minimum wage in Delaware to $10.25 an hour? [Randomize favor/oppose]

	All	PID			Gender		Race		Education		Age		
		Dem	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
Favor	**73%**	86	74	53	68	78	68	84	74	72	77	72	73
Oppose	**26%**	14	24	45	32	20	30	16	25	27	22	28	26
DK (vol)	**1%**	0	3	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Refused (vol)	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Do you favor or oppose federal funding to replace sand on erosion-prone beaches and private beach-adjacent land? [Randomize favor/oppose]

	All	PID			Gender		Race		Education		Age		
		Dem	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
Favor	**49%**	57	45	43	45	52	50	47	59	48	59	50	39
Oppose	**41%**	35	42	49	46	36	40	41	39	44	29	32	49
DK (vol)	**9%**	8	12	8	8	11	9	10	11	7	11	17	12
Refused (vol)	**1%**	1	1	0	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1

In your opinion, which of the following should be used to fund road improvements in the state? [rotate options]													
		PID			**Gender**		**Race**		**Education**		**Age**		
	All	**Dem**	**Ind**	**Repub**	**Male**	**Female**	**White**	**Non-white**	**HS/Some college**	**College+**	**18-34**	**35-59**	**60+**
An increased gas tax	**23%**	29	23	14	27	19	27	14	19	28	20	22	25
Increased tolls	**26%**	25	17	33	25	27	28	23	25	28	28	27	24
The use of reserve funds by state gov't	**41%**	38	53	40	37	45	35	54	45	37	47	41	39
Other (vol)	**4%**	2	3	6	4	3	4	2	4	3	0	5	5
DK (vol)	**4%**	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	6	2	4	4	5
Refused (vol)	**2%**	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	3

Exact Question Wording and Order

ELEC1   How closely are you following the upcoming race for the US House of Representatives in Delaware?
1   Very closely
2   Somewhat closely
3   Just a little
4   Not at all
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

ELEC2   How closely are you following the upcoming race for the governor in Delaware?
1   Very closely
2   Somewhat closely
3   Just a little
4   Not at all
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

D1   Regardless of who you might vote for, do you consider yourself a….ROTATE…
Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent?
1   Democrat
2   Republican
3   Independent [If Independent, ask D1b]
4   Other [DON'T READ]
8   Don't Know [DON'T READ]
9   Ref [DON'T READ]

D1b   Which way do you lean?
1   Democrat
2   Republican
3   Neither
8   DK (Vol)

*ELEC3A   If the Democratic primary for the US House of Representatives was today, who would
you vote for? [Ask if D1 = 1 or D1 = 3 & D1B = 1] [Rotate choices]*
1   Sean Barney
2   Mike Miller
3   Lisa Blunt Rochester
4   Bryan Townsend
5   Scott Walker
6   Elias Weir [Ee-Lye-is Wire]
7   Other (vol)
8   Won't vote (vol)
9   DK (vol)
99   Refused (vol)

*ELEC3B   If the Republican primary for the US House of Representatives was today, would you vote for Hans
Reigle or someone else [rotate choices]?
 [Ask if D1 = 2 or D1 = 3 & D1B = 2] [Rotate choices]*
1   Hans Reigle   [Hans Ree-gel]
2   Someone else
7   Won't vote (vol)
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

*ELEC4A   If the Democratic primary for the governor's race was today, would
you vote for John Carney, or someone else? [Ask if D1 = 1 or D1 = 3 & D1B = 1] [Rotate choices]*
1   John Carney
2   Someone else
7   Won't vote (vol)
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

*ELEC4B   If the Republican primary for the governor's race was today, who would you
vote for? [Ask if D1 = 2 or D1 = 3 & D1B = 2] [Rotate choices]*
1   Colin Bonini   [Beau-knee-knee]
2   Lacey Lafferty   [Laugh-er-dee]
6   Other (vol)
7   Won't vote (vol)
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

ELEC5 withheld

US1 and US2 withheld

*DE1.   And turning to Delaware, do you approve or disapprove of the job Jack Markell is
doing as governor? [rotate approve/disapprove]*
1   Approve
2   Disapprove
3   Neither (vol)
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

*DE2   Do you approve or disapprove of the job US Representative John Carney is doing in Congress?
[rotate approve/disapprove]*
1   Approve

2 Disapprove
3 Neither (vol)
8 DK (vol)
9 Refused (vol)

DE3. In your opinion, do you think things in Delaware are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track? [rotate right direction/wrong track]
1 Right direction
2 Wrong track
8 DK (vol)
9 Refused (vol)

DE4 Do you approve or disapprove [rotate] of the job the state legislature is doing?
1 Approve
2 Disapprove
3 Neither (vol)
8 DK (vol)
9 Refused (vol)

DE5 If you had to choose, which of the following do you believe is the most important issue facing Delaware today?[rotate choices]
1 The economy
2 Crime
3 Access to health care
4 Stagnant wages
5 Other (vol)
8 DK (vol)
9 Refused (vol)

ELEC6 and ELEC7 withheld

Sample characteristics (weighted)

Gender	*Male*	49
	Female	51
Age	*18-34*	27
	35-59	43
	60+	29
	Refused	1
Race	*White*	65
	African American	22
	Hispanic	7
	Asian	2
	Other/Refused	4
Party (with leaners)	*Dem*	48
	Ind/DK/Refused	21
	Repub	31