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Contact:

Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858

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Siena New York Poll:

Not So 'Blue': McCain Closing Gap vs. Clinton & Obama

Voters View Paterson Favorably; Split on Job Performance

**Half of NYers Plan to Use Federal Rebate Check to Pay Bills;
Only One in Five Plans on Going Shopping for Something New**

Loudonville, NY. If the presidential election were held today, neither Democrat – Senator Hillary Clinton or Senator Barack Obama – would get the support of 50 percent of New York voters against Senator John McCain. Clinton has a four point lead and Obama has a five point lead, according to a new Siena (College) Research Institute poll of registered voters released today. The Siena New York poll shows that Governor David Paterson's favorability rating is down from last month, although nearly half of voters still view him favorably, and voters are evenly divided on whether he is doing a positive or negative job as governor. Voters, however, do believe the Governor will be successful in improving the State in a variety of ways. Nearly three-quarters of voters anticipate getting a Federal rebate check, but half of them will use the money to pay outstanding bills and only 20 percent plan to primarily use the money to buy something new.

"With a little more than six months until Election Day, New York is looking more 'purple' than 'blue' these days, since neither Clinton or Obama gets 50 percent of the vote against McCain, and both Democrats have small and shrinking leads against the Arizona Republican," said Steven Greenberg, spokesman for the Siena New York Poll. "New York's senator, who has the highest unfavorable rating she has ever had in a Siena New York poll, leads McCain 46-42 percent and Obama's lead over McCain is 45-40 percent. Both Democrats had seven point leads in February."

Clinton's favorable/unfavorable rating is 48-46 percent; Obama's is 54-34 percent; McCain's is 54-35 percent.

Paterson's favorable/unfavorable rating is 48-18 percent, down from 58-10 percent last month. His job performance rating is 35 percent positive, 34 percent negative, with 32 percent of voters having no opinion.

"New Yorkers are still learning about their new Governor, and while they generally like him, one-third of voters don't know enough about David Paterson to have an opinion about him or the job that he is doing so far," Greenberg said.

“Despite their current view of the Governor, or lack thereof, it is clear that New Yorkers are rooting for Paterson to succeed, and on several key issues, they feel he will,” Greenberg said.

While Governor Paterson has only been in office for about a month, I'd like you to tell me whether you think he will be successful or unsuccessful in accomplishing each of the following priorities:	Successful	Unsuccessful	DK/NO
Creating a bi-partisan spirit of cooperation	63%	21%	16%
Making state government more effective	53%	26%	21%
Considering the interests of both upstate and downstate New Yorkers	57%	22%	22%
Moving New York State's economy forward	53%	26%	21%

“Even a majority of Republicans think the Democratic Governor will succeed in creating bipartisanship and considering the interest of all New Yorkers. A plurality of Republicans think he will succeed in making state government more effective and moving the economy forward,” Greenberg said. “Only time will tell if voters’ optimism in the Governor will prove accurate, but for now they are giving him the benefit of the doubt.”

By an 80-15 percent margin, voters do not believe that the Governor’s disclosure of extramarital affairs will affect his ability to be a successful governor. By an even larger 87-9 percent margin, they do not believe his disclosure of having tried illegal drugs will affect his ability to be a successful governor.

“Voters were well aware of the Governor’s personal disclosures. They don’t care. And they overwhelmingly do not believe it will hurt his ability to be a successful governor,” Greenberg said.

Paterson leads in a potential 2010 gubernatorial primary with the support of 35 percent of Democrats. Attorney General Andrew Cuomo garners 30 percent and Nassau County Executive Tom Suozzi only gets seven percent. In a potential general election match-up, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg would handily beat Paterson 48-34 percent. Bloomberg has the support of 40 percent of Democrats.

“While 73 percent of voters expect to get a Federal rebate check, 49 percent of them intend to use the money to pay bills. Only 20 percent anticipate going shopping to buy something new,” Greenberg said. “This windfall of cash for New Yorkers may not help the economy much since only a small minority plan on spending the money. Half the people plan on paying bills and another quarter are going to try and save it.”

By an overwhelming 72-19 percent margin, New York voters think the country is headed in the wrong direction. By a 48-33 percent margin they believe New York is headed in the wrong direction.

“New Yorkers are very pessimistic about the direction of the country and their pessimism about the direction of the state is growing, reaching its highest level in two years” Greenberg said.

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This SRI survey was conducted April 13-16, 2008 by telephone calls to 624 registered New York State voters. It has a margin of error of \pm 3.9 percentage points. For more information, please call Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: www.siena.edu/sri/sny04_08.



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Siena New York Poll Trends – April, 2008

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	48	18	34
March 24, 2008	58	10	31
January 2007	17	8	76

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
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
November 15, 2006	50	36	15
November 3, 2006	49	36	15
October 2006	44	42	15
September 2006	50	35	15
August 2006	44	35	21
June 2006	47	29	24
January 2006	45	31	24

How would you rate the job that Andrew Cuomo is doing as Attorney General – excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	10	42	30	8	11
January 2008	8	39	32	6	14
October 2007	7	42	35	6	12
September 2007	8	41	28	7	17
July 2007	11	41	27	6	14
June 2007	7	39	27	9	18
May 2007	9	41	26	9	16
April 2007	8	39	29	9	15
March 2007	5	35	29	8	23
January 2007	11	37	15	4	33

Siena New York Poll Trends – April, 2008

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Thomas DiNapoli?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	14	12	74
January 2008	11	16	73
November 2007	15	11	74
July 2007	14	12	74
June 2007	7	13	80
May 2007	7	18	75
April 2007	11	14	76
March 2007	9	14	78
February 2007	9	15	76

How would you rate the job that Tom DiNapoli is doing as State Comptroller – excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	2	22	28	6	42
January 2008	2	17	24	5	52
March 2007	1	12	25	3	59

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Michael Bloomberg?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	63	21	16
March 24, 2008	67	18	15
January 2008	59	24	17
October 2007	68	20	12
July 2007	65	19	17
June 2007	62	20	18

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

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	21	15	64
August 2006	28	17	55
January 2006	18	12	70

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Barack Obama?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	54	34	12
March 24, 2008	56	32	13
March 3, 2008	56	31	13
February 2008	60	30	10
January 2008	57	28	15
December 2007	55	30	15
September 2007	56	24	20
June 2007	53	24	23
May 2007	58	22	20
April 2007	55	23	22
March 2007	52	20	28
February 2007	52	21	28
January 2007	50	17	34
November 15, 2006	48	12	40

Siena New York Poll Trends – April, 2008

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Hillary Clinton?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	48	46	6
March 24, 2008	52	43	5
March 3, 2008	54	39	7
February 2008	53	43	4
January 2008	60	35	5
December 2007	51	44	5
November 2007	55	39	6
October 2007	53	41	6
September 2007	57	37	7
July 2007	59	35	6
June 2007	54	39	7
May 2007	56	39	5
April 2007	50	42	7
March 2007	56	37	8
February 2007	56	40	5
January 2007	60	33	7
November 15, 2006	65	29	6
November 3, 2006	61	33	6
October 2006	56	38	6
September 2006	60	37	4
August 2006	54	38	7
June 2006	54	38	8
May 2006	58	36	6
March 2006	55	39	6
January 2006	60	37	3
November 2005	60	34	6
October 2005	59	35	6
August 2005	59	37	4
July 2005	60	34	6
June 2005	60	33	7
May 2005	58	35	7
April 2005	60	33	6
March 2005	58	34	8
February 2005	61	33	6

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about John McCain?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	54	35	11
March 24, 2008	54	34	12
March 3, 2008	48	41	11
February 2008	55	34	11
January 2008	56	27	17
December 2007	53	29	18
June 2007	43	39	19
May 2007	42	44	14
April 2007	45	39	15
March 2007	45	34	21
February 2007	47	33	19
January 2007	51	29	21
November 15, 2006	56	24	20

Siena New York Poll Trends – April, 2008

If the 2008 presidential election were held today and the candidates were Hillary Clinton on the Democratic line and John McCain on the Republican line, who would you vote for (ROTATE CHOICES)?

DATE	CLINTON	MCCAIN	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	46	42	12
February 2008	49	42	8
January 2008	53	39	8
June 2007	55	37	9
May 2007	54	36	10
April 2007	51	39	10
March 2007	54	35	11
November 15, 2006	55	36	9
August 2006	42	46	12

If the 2008 presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama on the Democratic line and John McCain on the Republican line, who would you vote for (ROTATE CHOICES)?

DATE	OBAMA	MCCAIN	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	45	40	15
February 2008	47	40	13
January 2008	44	42	15
June 2007	49	35	16
May 2007	50	33	18
April 2007	50	37	13
March 2007	47	39	14
November 15, 2006	39	40	21

Is the United States on the right track, or is it headed in the wrong direction?

DATE	RIGHT TRACK	WRONG DIRECTION	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2008	19	72	9
March 24, 2008	23	64	13

Siena New York Poll Trends – April, 2008

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
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
November 15, 2006	52	30	18
November 3, 2006	36	43	21
October 2006	29	47	23
September 2006	33	39	28
August 2006	29	47	25
June 2006	29	45	26
May 2006	27	52	21
March 2006	35	39	26
January 2006	34	43	24
November 2005	38	41	22
October 2005	34	42	24
August 2005	36	44	20
July 2005	33	41	26
June 2005	30	44	26
May 2005	29	46	25
April 2005	29	44	27
March 2005	26	47	27
February 2005	32	44	24