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For Immediate Release: Contact:

Friday, December 19, 2014 Steven Greenberg, 518-469-9858

PDF version; crosstabs; website: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY

Siena College Poll:

Majority of NYers: SI Grand Jury Should Have Indicted Cop in Garner Death; Feds Should Bring Civil Rights Charges; AG Should Handle Cases When Civilian Killed by Police

Strong Opposition to a Legislative Pay Raise; Support for SAFE ACT; Voters Divided on Dream Act and Fracking Looking to 2016, Hillary Clinton Overwhelmingly Leads Dem Field; Christie, Romney & Jeb Bush Are Top 3 Choices of Republicans

Loudonville, NY. By an almost two-to-one margin, New Yorkers believe that the Staten Island grand jury was wrong to not have brought charges against the police officer in the death of Eric Garner, with significant partisan, geographic and racial differences. With similar partisan, regional and racial differences, voters say 50-36 percent that the Federal government should bring civil rights charges against the officer and that New York& criminal justice system does not treat people of color fairly (52-35 percent). There is strong support, 58-33 percent, for giving the State Attorney General the power to investigate and prosecute cases where unarmed civilians are killed by police officers, rather than remaining within the current jurisdiction of local district attorneys, according to a new Siena College poll of New York State registered voters released today.

New Yorkers continue to strongly oppose a legislative pay raise, 63-28 percent. And they continue to support the SAFE ACT, 58-33 percent. Voters are divided on the Dream Act with 44 percent supporting it and 48 percent opposing it. Similarly, fracking continues to divide voters, with 38 percent opposing and 35 percent supporting.

õBy a strong 55-30 percent margin, New Yorkers believe that the Staten Island grand jury investigating the death of Eric Garner should have brought charges against the police officer. While Democrats, voters from New York City, blacks and voters under 35 overwhelmingly say charges should have been brought, Republicans say two-to-one the grand jury was correct to not indict. And pluralities or smaller majorities of downstate suburbanites, upstaters, whites and voters over 55 say charges should have been brought,ö said Siena pollster Steven Greenberg

õSimilarly, large majorities of Democrats, New York City voters, blacks, Latinos and younger voters want the Feds to bring civil rights charges, while Republicans are opposed, and upstaters, suburbanites, white and older voters are closely divided,ö Greenberg said.

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õA majority of Democrats, independents, voters from every region and race agree that the Attorney General and not local district attorneys should have authority in cases where unarmed civilians are killed by police officers, although Democrats, New York City voters, blacks and Latinos feel most strongly about this,ö Greenberg said.

õOnly majorities of Republicans and conservatives think people of color are treated fairly by our criminal justice system. Two-thirds of Democrats and a plurality of independents disagree, as do a majority of downstaters, particularly New York City, and people of color. Whites and upstaters are closely divided,ö Greenberg said.

Big Thumbs Down for Legislative Pay Raise

õAn issue that unifies New York voters is a legislative pay raise. It pays opposed by strong majorities of Democrats, Republicans and independents, downstaters and upstaters of upstaters really hate the idea of blacks and whites, young and old, of Greenberg said.

The State Assembly is viewed favorably by 39 percent of voters and unfavorably by 41 percent (little changed from 40-44 percent in September, among, then, likely voters) and the State Senate has a negative 41-44 percent favorability rating (little changed from September 40-46 percent rating).

New Yorkers Continue to Strongly Support the SAFE Act

õEnacted almost two years ago, the SAFE Act continues to be supported by a strong majority of voters. Opposed by only Republicans and conservatives, the SAFE Act is supported by 69 percent of Democrats and 57 percent of independents, 67 percent of voters from New York City and 61 percent from the downstate suburbs. Upstate voters are evenly divided between supporters and opponents,ö Greenberg said. õThe 58-33 percent support statewide for the SAFE Act is down only slightly from 63-32 percent support for it back in March.ö

Dream Act Divides Voters Statewide, and Along Partisan, Racial and Geographic Lines

New Yorkers remain divided on the Dream Act, whether the wording of the question is to provide higher
education financial aid to the children of -undocumented immigrantsøor -illegal aliens.ø When the split sample of
the differently worded questions are combined it has the support of 44 percent and is opposed by 48 percent, little
changed from 48-47 percent support in April,ö Greenberg said. oDemocrats, New York City voters, young people
and people of color strongly support the Dream Act. It is opposed strongly by Republicans and upstaters, and
opposed by whites, downstate suburbanites and older voters.ö

Even As Cuomo Administration Makes Fracking Decision, Voters Remain Divided on Issue of The announcement this week by the Governor that fracking will not move forward in New York will make 38 percent of voters happy, while 35 percent will be disappointed, of Greenberg said. of Fracking has closely divided New Yorkers for several years. And while it has the intuitive partisan divide with Democrats opposing and Republicans supporting, from a regional perspective the results might be a little counterintuitive as New York City and upstate voters narrowly oppose fracking and a plurality of downstate suburbanites support it.

Well Known Candidates Have Very Early Leads as New Yorkers Look Ahead to 2016

Looking ahead to 2016 presidential primaries, among registered Democrats, Hillary Clinton has the support of 58 percent, compared to 11 percent for Elizabeth Warren, eight percent for Joe Biden, and five percent for Andrew Cuomo. Four percent of Democrats volunteered another choice, while 14 percent are undecided. Among

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of?					
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Don't Know/ No Opinion		
Hillary Clinton	63% (81%)	32% (14%)	5% (5%)		
Andrew Cuomo	58% (73%)	37% (24%)	4% (3%)		
Joe Biden	54% (71%)	37% (20%)	9% (9%)		
Elizabeth Warren	31% (41%)	20% (13%)	49% (46%)		
Chris Christie	46% (59%)	43% (29%)	11% (12%)		
Mitt Romney	38% (68%)	53% (25%)	8% (7%)		
Jeb Bush	31% (54%)	47% (32%)	22% (14%)		
Rand Paul	29% (48%)	38% (25%)	34% (28%)		
Paul Ryan	27% (44%)	35% (20%)	38% (36%)		
Marco Rubio	24% (43%)	32% (16%)	44% (42%)		
Ted Cruz	19% (36%)	35% (24%)	46% (40%)		
NOTE: Numbers in parentheses are among voters of candidate's party					
Siena College Poll – December 19, 2014					

registered Republicans, Chris Christie
is supported by 25 percent, followed by
Mitt Romney (18 percent), Jeb Bush
(14 percent), Rand Paul (seven
percent), Paul Ryan (five percent),
Marco Rubio (four percent), and Ted
Cruz (two percent), with six percent
volunteering other names and 19
percent undecided.

õThe big names have the early leads. Among Democrats, Hillary Clinton is

the runaway favorite with ó at the moment ó nobody even closely challenging her among voters in her adopted home state,ö Greenberg said. õFor the Republicans, it is a much more crowded field and a much tighter race at this point. The leader is neighboring Governor Chris Christie, with a seven-point lead over 2012 standard bearer Mitt Romney. Presidential son and brother Jeb Bush is four points behind Romney, with four other prominent Republicans all in single digits.ö

Cuomo Favorability Rebounds a Little; Voters Say He's Made NY Better; Uncertain About Next 4 Years Cuomo has a 58-37 percent favorability rating (up from 54-43 percent among likely voters in October), and 52 percent say hea made New York a better place to live in the last four years, with 14 percent saying it worse and 26 percent saying it about the same. Twenty-four percent are optimistic about the next four years with Cuomo as governor, 17 are pessimistic and 58 percent are somewhere in the middle.

õWhile Cuomoøs favorability rose a little since the election, it remains considerably lower than it was for most of his first term. Still, most voters give him credit for making New York a better place to live over the last four years, even while only one-quarter say they are optimistic about the next four years,ö Greenberg said.

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This Siena College Poll was conducted December 11-16, 2014 by telephone calls to 639 New York State registered voters. It has an overall margin of error of \pm 3.9 percentage points. Data was statistically adjusted by age, party, region, and gender to ensure representativeness. Sampling was conducted via random digit dialing to landline and cell phones weighted to reflect known population patterns. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in New York State. SRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Steve Greenberg at (518) 469-9858. For survey cross-tabs: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.



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Siena College Poll Trends – December 2014

Q. 4 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Andrew Cuomo?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	58	37	4
October 2014*	54	43	3
September 2014*	55	40	5
August 2014*	57	36	7
July 2014*	61	35	4
June 2014	63	31	6
April 2014	57	38	6
March 2014	58	34	7
February 2014	60	35	5
January 2014	66	28	6
HIGHEST EVER	77 (2/11)	43 (10/14)	24 (1/06, 2/06, 9/07)
LOWEST EVER	44 (8/06, 10/06)	14 (8/09)	3 (10/20/10)

Q. 22 How would you rate the job that Andrew Cuomo is doing as Governor? Would you rate it excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	Poor	Don't Know/No Opinion
December 2014	7	35	40	17	1
October 2014*	9	34	32	25	0
September 2014*	7	35	35	21	1
August 2014*	9	35	38	17	1
July 2014*	9	41	31	18	1
June 2014	8	41	34	16	1
April 2014	9	36	36	18	1
March 2014	7	39	35	19	1
February 2014	7	41	38	13	1
January 2014	10	44	35	11	1
HIGHEST EVER	17 (1/12)	47 (4/12, etc.)	39 (11/13)	25 (10/	28 (1/11)
LOWEST EVER	7 (Seve	ral) 34 (10/14, 1/1	1) 24 (1/11)	4 (2/1	1, 1/11) 0 (10/14)

Q. 23 Over the last four years, would you say Andrew Cuomo has or has not made New York a better place to live?

DATE	HAS	HAS NOT	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	52	40	7
September 2014*	54	41	5
August 2014*	55	39	6
July 2014*	59	37	3
HIGHEST EVER	59 (7/14)	41 (9/14)	7 (12/14)
LOWEST EVER	52 (12/14)	37 (7/14)	3 (7/14)

Q. 24 (IF õHAS NOTö): Then would you say Andrew Cuomo has made New York a worse place to live or would you say that living in New York is about the same as it was four years ago?

DATE	Worse	SAME	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	35	64	0
September 2014*	52	47	1
August 2014*	40	59	1
July 2014*	41	58	1
HIGHEST EVER	52 (9/14)	64 (12/14)	1 9/14, (8/14, 7/14)
LOWEST EVER	35 (12/14)	47 (9/14)	0 (12/14)

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Q.5 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Eric Schneiderman?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	32	22	46
October 2014*	41	20	39
September 2014*	27	23	50
August 2014*	25	16	59
July 2014*	26	18	56
June 2014	23	16	61
April 2014	27	20	53
February 2014	27	19	55
January 2014	27	15	58
HIGHEST EVER	41 (10/14)	27 (10/31/10)	86 (11/09)
LOWEST EVER	8 (11/09)	6 (5/10, 11/09	39 (10/14)

Q. 6 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Thomas DiNapoli?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	27	19	53
October 2014*	35	19	46
September 2014*	30	17	52
August 2014*	26	13	61
July 2014*	28	16	56
June 2014	26	12	62
April 2014	29	17	54
February 2014	26	21	54
January 2014	28	17	55
HIGHEST EVER	35 (10/14)	36 (10/31/10)	80 (6/07)
LOWEST EVER	7 (6/07, 5/07)	10 (12/09, 11/08	37 (10/31/10)

Q. 9 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about the New York State Assembly?

DATE	FAVORABLE	Unfavorable	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	39	41	20
September 2014*	40	44	16
July 2014*	39	43	17
April 2014	36	47	17
March 2014	39	46	16
February 2014	37	49	14
January 2014	41	43	16
HIGHEST EVER	45 (1/13)	61 (7/10)	20 (12/14)
LOWEST EVER	25 (7/10)	40 (12/12)	12 (4/13, 1/10)

Q. 10 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about the New York State Senate?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	41	44	14
September 2014*	40	46	14
July 2014*	41	45	14
April 2014	40	48	12
March 2014	39	49	13
February 2014	37	51	12
January 2014	46	42	12
HIGHEST EVER	46 (1/14, 5/12)	74 (7/09)	14 (12/14, 7/14, 12/12, 6/11)
LOWEST EVER	20 (7/09)	41 (12/12)	6 (7/09)

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Q. 28 The State Department of Environmental Conservation is expected to soon issue a decision on whether or not to allow hydrofracking ó that is the proposed method to recover natural gas from parts of upstate New York ó to move forward. How much have you heard or read about it ó a great deal, some, not very much, or nothing at all?

DATE	A GREAT DEAL	SOME	NOT VERY MUCH	NOTHING	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	24	34	21	19	1
July 2014*	31	36	17	16	1
April 2014	31	35	18	16	1
March 2014	29	33	22	15	1
February 2014	28	32	22	18	1
HIGHEST EVER	35 (6/13)	39 (10/	12) 22 (3/14, etc	e.) 21 (9/1	3) 1 (many)
LOWEST EVER	24 (12/14)	29 (5/13	3) 13 (6/13)	12 (10/	12) 0 (many)

Q. 29 Do you support or oppose the Department of Environmental Conservation allowing hydrofracking to move forward in parts of upstate New York?

			NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION/
DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	35	38	27
July 2014*	40	43	17
April 2014	41	43	17
March 2014	40	42	19
February 2014	38	43	19
HIGHEST EVER	42 (12/12, 10/12	45 (9/13, 4/1	27 (12/14, 5/12)
LOWEST EVER	35 (12/14)	36 (12/12, 1	0/12, 5/12) 12 (8/13)

Q. 30 In general, do you support or oppose the New York Dream Act, which would allow the children of (SPLIT SAMPLE: HALF ASKED õundocumented immigrantsö; HALF ASKED õillegal aliensö) to receive financial aid for higher education?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	44	48	8
April 2014	48	47	5
HIGHEST EVER	48 (4/14)	48 (12/14)	8 (12/14)
LOWEST EVER	44 (12/14)	47 (4/14)	5 (4/14)

Q. 33 Do you support or oppose increasing the pay of state legislators, which is currently \$79,500?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	28	63	10
May 2012	21	65	14
HIGHEST EVER	21 (5/12)	65 (5/12)	14 (5/12)
LOWEST EVER	21 (5/12)	65 (5/12)	14 (5/12)

Q. 7 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Charles Schumer?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE DON	'T Know/No Opinion
December 2014	61	29	10
July 2014*	62	27	11
February 2014	61	29	10
HIGHEST EVER	70 (7/05)	32 (10/31/10, 9/10, 0	6/10) 17 (2/05)
LOWEST EVER	54 (6/10)	20 (2/05, 11/06)	4 (10/31/10)

Q. 8 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Kirsten Gillibrand?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	50	21	29
July 2014*	55	23	23
February 2014	54	23	23
HIGHEST EVER	61 (12/12)	34 (10/31/10)	56 (1/09)
LOWEST EVER	26 (3/09)	14 (1/09)	14 (10/31/10)

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Q. 11 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Barack Obama?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	54	43	3
September 2014*	50	46	4
July 2014*	53	45	1
February 2014	52	45	3
HIGHEST EVER	81 (1/09)	46 (9/14, 10/31/10	40 (11/06)
LOWEST EVER	48 (11/06)	10 (1/09)	1 (7/14, 1/13, 8/12)

Q.13 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Joe Biden?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	54	37	9
August 2012	56	38	6
HIGHEST EVER	62 (10/27/08)	38 (8/12)	28 (9/08)
LOWEST EVER	46 (9/08)	26 (9/08)	6 (8/12)

Q. 12 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Hillary Clinton?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	63	32	5
March 2014	65	32	3
February 2014	61	35	4
January 2014	68	29	3
HIGHEST EVER	75 (12/12)	46 (4/08)	8 (3/05, 6/06, 3/07)
LOWEST EVER	48 (4/08)	23 (12/12)	2 (many)

Q. 17 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Chris Christie?

DATE	FAVORABLE	Unfavorable	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	46	43	11
January 2014	49	39	12
November 2013	63	25	12
HIGHEST EVER	63 (11/13, 12/	43 (12/14)	18 (12/12)
LOWEST EVER	46 (12/14)	18 (12/12)	11 (12/14)

Q. 19 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Mitt Romney?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	38	53	8
October 2012*	41	55	5
HIGHEST EVER	41 (10/12)	61 (8/12)	35 (12/07)
LOWEST EVER	25 (12/07)	40 (12/07)	5 (10/12, 8/12)

Q. 20 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Paul Ryan?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	27	35	38
August 2012*	31	46	22
HIGHEST EVER	31 (8/12)	46 (8/12)	38 (12/14)
LOWEST EVER	27 (12/14)	35 (12/14)	22 (8/12)

Q. 39 If the 2016 election for president was held today and the candidates were Hillary Clinton on the Democratic line and Chris Christie on the Republican line, who would you vote for? (Choices were rotated.)

DATE	CLINTON	CHRISTIE	OTHER/WON'T VOTE/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	56	32	12
January 2014	60	32	8
HIGHEST EVER	60 (1/14)	<mark>32 (12/14, 1/1</mark> 4	12 (12/14)
LOWEST EVER	56 (12/14)	<mark>32 (12/14, 1/1</mark> 4	8 (1/14)

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Q. 40 If the 2016 election for president was held today and the candidates were Andrew Cuomo on the Democratic line and Chris Christie on the Republican line, who would you vote for? (Choices were rotated.)

DATE	Сиомо	CHRISTIE	OTHER/WON'T VOTE/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
December 2014	49	34	16
January 2014	55	35	11
HIGHEST EVER	55 (1/14)	35 (1/14)	<mark>16 (12/14)</mark>
LOWEST EVER	49 (12/14)	34 (12/14)	11 (1/14)

Q. 2 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
December 2014	34	57	9
October 2014*	33	60	7
September 2014*	36	55	9
July 2014*	38	56	7
March 2014	36	57	8
February 2014	39	55	6
January 2014	37	55	8
HIGHEST EVER	62 (5/09)	74 (10/13, 8/11)	17 (9/08)
LOWEST EVER	19 (10/13, 10/08)	24 (12/09)	5 (1/13)

Q.3 How would you describe the fiscal condition of New York State right now? Would you describe it as excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	Poor	Don't Know/No Opinion
December 2014	3	26	40	28	2
September 2014*	2	28	41	25	4
July 2014*	2	29	41	25	2
April 2014	2	20	46	30	3
March 2014	2	19	45	30	4
February 2014	2	22	43	31	2
January 2014	2	27	42	27	2
HIGHEST EVER	3 (12/14, 8	/13) 29 (7/14)	49 (8/12)	67 (3/	22/10) 4 (9/14, etc.)
LOWEST EVER	0 (many	(3/22/1 d)	0, etc.) 25 (3/22/10)	25 (9/	14, 7/14) 0 (4/11, etc.)

Q. 1 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
December 2014	41	45	14
October 2014*	46	46	8
September 2014*	48	43	10
August 2014*	47	40	13
July 2014*	49	40	10
June 2014	50	39	11
April 2014	46	44	10
March 2014	46	43	12
February 2014	48	40	12
January 2014	52	36	12
HIGHEST EVER	57 (1/13)	76 (10/31/10)	30 (1/07)
LOWEST EVER	14 (10/10)	26 (1/07)	7 (5/13)

Poll Trend Notes:

Trends reflect questions asked at least twice since the first Siena College Poll in February 2005.

Results listed here include all times questions have been asked since January 2014.

^{*} All surveys are of registered voters except for the polls of July thru October 2014, August/October 2012, October 2010, September/October 2008, and September/October 2006, which are polls of likely voters.

[&]quot;Highest Everö and õLowest Everö is provided at the bottom of each question.

^A Inconsequential wording change.