## SIENA RESEARCH INSTITUTE



SIENA COLLEGE, LOUDONVILLE, NY

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PDF version; crosstabs; website:

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### Siena College Poll:

Half of Voters Agree with Gov: 'NYS Govt. is Working Again'; However, Two-Thirds Say State Government is Becoming More Dysfunctional Every Day in Light of Corruption Scandals Passing Laws to Address Corruption Tops List for End of Session Are More Legislative Arrests Imminent? Nearly Nine in Ten Voters Say Yes

Loudonville, NY. By a margin of 50-36 percent, voters agree with Governor Andrew Cuomo when he says 'New York State government is working again.' However, when asked how they feel about state government in light of the series of state government corruption scandals, only 26 percent said state government is working effectively, compared to 67 percent who said state government is becoming more dysfunctional every day, according to a new Siena College Poll of New York voters released today. A plurality of voters, 41 percent, said passing laws to address legislative corruption should be the top end-of-session priority. And more arrests of legislators are coming, 88 percent of voters believe, up from 81 percent last month.

Cuomo's favorability rating – which had fallen incrementally in each of the last four months – has edged up a little, as did his re-elect number, while his job performance rating remains identical to last month. Support for a casino gambling constitutional amendment, 53-37 percent, is the highest it's ever been, while support for public campaign financing remains strong, and voters remain tightly divided over hydrofracking.

"How do voters feel about their state government? By one measure, not bad. By another measure, really bad," said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg. "When asked if they agree with a recent statement by Governor Cuomo that 'New York State government is working again,' 50 percent said 'yes,' while 36 percent disagreed and 13 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. A strong majority of Democrats and New York City voters agreed with the Governor, however, a majority of Republicans and pluralities of independents and upstaters disagreed.

"Yet, two-thirds of voters – including strong majorities from every region and party – say that in light of the recent arrests of several legislators they believe 'state government is becoming more dysfunctional every day,' while only 26 percent say 'state government is working effectively for New Yorkers.' Yes, voters – particularly Democrats and downstaters – may be inclined to agree with the Governor that state government is working, but when asked to consider the legislative arrests, their thoughts quickly turn to dysfunction," Greenberg said.

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"Will we see more legislative mug shots? Only the prosecutors know for sure but 88 percent of voters think it's likely, including 44 percent who say it's very likely. That's up from 81 percent likely, 29 percent very likely last month," Greenberg said. "Similarly, 89 percent say that corruption in the State Legislature is a serious problem, including 41 percent who say it's a very serious problem, virtually the same as last month."

When asked to rate Governor Cuomo's efforts to address legislative corruption 63 percent of voters said he 'has tried hard to clean up state government in Albany, but there is nothing he or any governor can do to prevent crooked politicians from getting elected' and 27 percent said he 'hasn't even tried to clean up state government in Albany; he deserves much of the blame for this.'

"Voters are certainly not blaming the Governor for the recent outburst of legislative corruption headlines but it's clear that they want the Governor and Legislature to address the issue before session ends next month," Greenberg said. "A plurality of voters, 41 percent – including voters of every region and party – says that passing laws to address corruption should be the top end-of-session priority. Addressing the Governor's women's equality agenda came in second at 21 percent – with more than twice as much support from women as from men – followed by public campaign financing at 15 percent and the casino amendment at 13 percent."

Despite Headlines, No Drop in Favorability for Legislature, Leaders in Last Month

Legislative Favorability Ratings				
Individual/Institution	May 2013	April 2013	Best Ever	Worst Ever
State Senate	43-48-9	40-53-7	<b>45-41-14</b> Dec. 2012	<b>20-74-6</b> July 2009
Your State Senator	59-28-14		<b>65-24-11</b> May 2012	<b>55-30-15</b> June 2011
Dean Skelos	14-16-70	15-24-61	<b>10-8-82</b> July 2008	<b>9-19-71</b> Dec 2010
Jeff Klein	13-10-76	17-15-68	<b>13-10-76</b> April 2013	<b>12-14-73</b> Jan 2013
State Assembly	39-45-16	39-49-12	<b>45-42-13</b> Jan. 2013	<b>25-61-13</b> July 2010
Your State Assemblymember	52-24-24		<b>54-24-21</b> May 2012	<b>47-29-25</b> June 2011
Sheldon Silver	23-34-43	28-39-33	<b>28-34-38</b> July 2005	<b>19-41-39</b> Feb. 2011
(Favorable % - Unfavorable % - Don't know	v/no opinion %)		Source: Sien	a College Poll (May 20, 2013)

"Weeks of stories and editorials about legislative arrests and corruption have not taken a toll on how voters view the Legislature and its leaders. While they are viewed more unfavorably than favorably, there is little change since last month," Greenberg said. "And while a plurality views each house unfavorably, a majority views *their* senator and assemblymember favorably.

#### Cuomo Favorability Edges Up, Ending Four Consecutive Months of Edging Down

Cuomo now has 64-32 percent favorability rating, up slightly from 62-33 percent last month. Fifty-two percent say Cuomo is doing an excellent or good job as governor and 47 percent say he's doing only a fair or poor job (unchanged from April). Fifty-five percent say they are prepared to re-elect Cuomo, while 36 percent would prefer someone else (up from 53-39 percent in April).

"The Governor's standing with voters improved slightly in the last month and he maintains a solid two-to-one favorability rating," Greenberg said. "While not dramatic, the uptick in Cuomo's favorability rating and re-elect number and the consistent job performance rating end four consecutive months of seeing those numbers drop."

On Fiscal Issues & Ethics Voters Say State Government is Not Working Well

State Government: Working Well or Not Working Well					
Issue	Working Well	Not Working Well	Don't Know Enough to Answer		
Safeguarding the rights of all New Yorkers	43%	42%	15%		
Making state government more ethical	27%	45%	28%		
Enacting policies that lead to job creation	24%	55%	22%		
Demonstrating fiscal accountability	23%	47%	30%		
Controlling state spending	22%	57%	21%		
Source: Siena College Poll (May 20, 2013)					

"While half of voters say they agree with the Governor that state government is working again, when it comes to specific aspects of state government – particularly ethics and fiscal issues – only about one-quarter of voters think state government is working well," Greenberg said. "When it comes to safeguarding the rights of New Yorkers, voters are nearly evenly divided but on ethics, job creation, fiscal accountability, and state spending clear or near majorities thinks state government is not working well."

### **Casino Gambling Amendment Has Largest Support Ever**

"By a 53-37 percent margin, voters support a constitutional amendment to allow non-Indian casinos in New York, up from 49-44 percent last month, and the largest margin in support ever," Greenberg said. "All three regions of the state support the amendment, with New York City moving from opposition last month to strong support this month. Strong majorities of Republicans and independents support it, as do a plurality of Democrats."

#### Opposition to Fracking Falls Slightly as the Issue Continues to Nearly Evenly Divide Voters

"The year-long trend of fracking nearly evenly dividing voters across the state continues. Currently, 39 percent of voters want to see fracking move forward, while 41 percent are opposed. Last month, opponents outnumbered supporters 45-40 percent," Greenberg said. "A plurality of upstaters is opposed, while New York City voters are evenly divided and downstate suburban voters offer plurality support."

### Public Campaign Financing Has Majority Support Upstate & Downstate, with Democrats & Independents

"Statewide, voters strongly support – 57-34 percent – creating a public campaign financing system using state money to match contributions to candidates and lowering contribution limits," Greenberg said. "More than 60 percent of Democrats and independents support it and Republicans are evenly divided."

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This Siena College Poll was conducted May 13-16, 2013 by telephone calls to 623 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 and frequencies: <a href="https://www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY">www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY</a>.



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### Siena College Poll Trends – May 2013

**Q. 3** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Andrew Cuomo?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	64	32	5
April 2013	62	33	4
March 2013	64	30	6
February 2013	67	29	4
January 2013	71	24	5
December 2012	72	21	7
October 2012	67	24	9
August 2012	71	24	5
July 2012	69	22	9
HIGHEST EVER	77 (2/11)	42 (10/06)	24 (1/06, 2/06, 9/07)
LOWEST EVER	44 (8/06, 10/0	<b>14</b> (8/09)	3 (10/20/10)

Q. 13 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
May 2013	10	42	31	16	1
April 2013	11	41	31	16	1
March 2013	12	42	31	13	1
February 2013	16	42	28	13	1
January 2013	16	44	28	10	1
December 2012	15	45	30	8	2
October 2012	15	43	32	8	3
August 2012	16	44	33	7	1
July 2012	13	45	33	8	1
HIGHEST EVER	17 (1/12)	47 (4/12, etc.)	36 (9/11, 5/11)	<b>16 (5/</b>	<b>13, 4/13) 28</b> (1/11)
LOWEST EVER	8 (3/11)	34 (1/11)	24 (1/11)	4 (2/	11, 1/11) 1 (many)

**Q. 12** I know it's a long way off, but if Andrew Cuomo runs for re-election as Governor in 2014, as things stand now, would you vote to re-elect him or would you prefer someone else?

DATE	RE-ELECT CUOMO	PREFER SOMEONE ELSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	55	36	9
April 2013	53	39	7
March 2013	54	37	9
February 2013	56	36	8
January 2013	60	32	8
December 2012	62	29	9
HIGHEST EVER	62 (12/12)	39 (4/13)	9 (3/13, 12/12)
LOWEST EVER	53 (4/13)	29 (12/12)	7 (4/13)

**Q. 8** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about the New York State Assembly?

DATE	<b>FAVORABLE</b>	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	39	45	16
April 2013	39	49	12
February 2013	44	42	14
January 2013	45	42	13
December 2012	41	40	19
October 2012	41	41	18
July 2012	42	45	13
HIGHEST EVER	45 (1/13)	61 (7/10)	19 (12/12)
LOWEST EVER	25 (7/10)	40 (12/12)	12 (4/13, 1/10)

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

DATE	<b>FAVORABLE</b>	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	52	24	24
May 2012	54	24	21
July 2011	47	29	25
HIGHEST EVER	54 (5/12)	29 (6/11)	25 (6/11)
LOWEST EVER	47 (6/11)	<b>24</b> (5/13, 5/12	) 21 (5/12)

**Q. 5** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Sheldon Silver?

DATE	<b>FAVORABLE</b>	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	23	34	43
April 2013	28	39	33
January 2013	24	38	38
December 2012	24	34	42
October 2012	21	39	41
July 2012	25	37	39
HIGHEST EVER	28 (4/13, '	7/05) 42 (12/10)	50 (4/05)
LOWEST EVER	19 (2/11,	4/05) 30 (4/05)	33 (4/13)

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

DATE	<b>FAVORABLE</b>	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	43	48	9
April 2013	40	53	7
February 2013	45	46	9
January 2013	45	45	10
December 2012	45	41	14
October 2012	45	42	13
July 2012	43	48	9
HIGHEST EVER	46 (5/12)	74 (7/09)	14 (12/12, 6/11)
LOWEST EVER	20 (7/09)	41 (12/12)	6 (7/09)

**Q. 11** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about your New York State Senator?

DATE	<b>FAVORABLE</b>	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	59	28	14
May 2012	65	24	11
July 2011	55	30	15
HIGHEST EVER	65 (5/12)	30 (6/11)	15 (6/11)
LOWEST EVER	55 (6/11)	24 (5/12)	11 (5/12)

**Q. 6** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Dean Skelos?

DATE	<b>FAVORABLE</b>	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	14	16	70
April 2013	15	24	61
January 2013	16	20	65
December 2012	16	18	67
October 2012	14	20	67
July 2012	13	22	64
HIGHEST EVER	16 (1/13, 1	2/12) 24 (4/13)	82 (11/08)
LOWEST EVER	9 (12/10)	8 (7/08)	61 (4/13)

**Q. 7** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Jeff Klein?

DATE	<b>FAVORABLE</b>	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	13	10	76
April 2013	17	15	68
January 2013	12	14	73
HIGHEST EVER	17 (4/13)	15 (4/13)	84 (11/09)
LOWEST EVER	9 (11/09)	7 (11/09)	68 (4/13)

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Q. 15 Which of the following two statements best describes how you feel about New York State legislators: While there are some bad apples, most New York State legislators and honest and law-abiding, or while there are some good ones, most New York State legislators cannot be trusted? (CHOICES WERE ROTATED)

SOME BAD APPLES, SOME GOOD, MOST						
DATE	MOST HONEST	CANNOT BE TRUSTED	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION			
May 2013	52	44	4			
April 2013	50	47	3			
HIGHEST EVER	<b>52 (5/13)</b>	47 (4/13)	<mark>4 (5/13)</mark>			
LOWEST EVER	50 (4/13)	44 (5/13)	3 (4/13)			

Q. 23 How serious a problem would you say corruption is in the New York State Legislature? Would you say it's very serious, somewhat serious, not very serious, or not at all serious?

	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NOT VERY	NOT AT ALL	_
DATE	SERIOUS	SERIOUS	SERIOUS	<b>SERIOUS</b>	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	41	48	8	0	3
April 2013	41	50	6	1	2
HIGHEST EVER	<b>41</b> (5/1	<b>3,4/13) 50</b> (4/13)	8 (5/13)	1 (4/1	3 (5/13)
LOWEST EVER	<mark>41 (5/1</mark>	3,4/13) <b>48</b> (5/13)	6 (4/13)	0 (5/1	<b>2</b> (4/13)

**Q. 26** How likely would you say it is that there will be more arrests of state legislators for corruption in the near future? Would you say it is very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not likely at all?

	Very	SOMEWHAT	NOT VERY	NOT AT ALL	
DATE	LIKELY	LIKELY	LIKELY	LIKELY	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	44	44	7	2	2
April 2013	29	52	12	3	3
HIGHEST EVER	<mark>44 (5/1</mark>	<b>52</b> (4/13)	12 (4/13)	3 (4/13	3 (4/13)
LOWEST EVER	29 (4/1	<b>44 (5/13)</b>	7 (5/13)	<b>2</b> (5/13	2 (5/13)

Q. 27 Who do you think should take the lead in trying to clean up corruption in the State Legislature: Governor Cuomo, Federal prosecutors, Attorney General Schneiderman, local county district attorneys, or the Legislature itself? (CHOICES WERE ROTATED)

	Gov.	FEDERAL	$\mathbf{AG}$	LOCAL	LEGISLATURE	
DATE	Сиомо	<b>PROSECUTORS</b>	SCHNEIDERMAN	DAS	ITSELF	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	20	27	26	9	12	7
April 2013	18	29	27	10	10	7
HIGHEST EVER	<b>20 (5/1</b>	3) 29 (4/13	27 (4/13)	10 (4/13	3) <b>12 (5/1</b>	7 (5/13, 4/13)
LOWEST EVER	18 (4/1	<b>27 (5/13</b>	<b>26 (5/13)</b>	<mark>9 (5/13</mark>	3) 10 (4/1	<b>7</b> (5/13, 4/13)

Q. 28 How confident are you that Governor Cuomo will succeed in pushing through reforms to reduce corruption in New York's political system? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident, or not confident at all?

	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NOT VERY	NOT AT ALL	
DATE	CONFIDENT	CONFIDENT	CONFIDENT	CONFIDENT	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	10	51	25	12	2
April 2013	15	47	24	13	1
HIGHEST EVER	15 (4/13	) 51 (5/13)	<b>25</b> (5/13)	13 (4/13	3) 2 (5/13)
LOWEST EVER	10 (5/13	47 (4/13)	24 (4/13)	<b>12 (5/13</b>	1 (4/13)

Q. 29 Do you support or oppose passing an amendment to the state constitution to allow non-Indian, Las Vegas style casinos to be built in New York?

			NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION/
DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	53	37	10
April 2013	49	44	7
March 2013	46	43	11
February 2013	48	42	10
January 2013	52	43	5
August 2012	52	38	9
HIGHEST EVER	53 (5/13, 1/12)	49 (3/12)	11 (3/13)
LOWEST EVER	46 (3/13)	<b>37</b> (5/13)	3 (3/12)

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Q. 30 While the proposed constitutional amendment would allow for seven casinos to be built in New York, Governor Cuomo has proposed that initially only three casinos – all in upstate New York – be built. Do you support or oppose the Governor's proposal to initially build only three casinos, all upstate?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	53	41	6
April 2013	51	44	5
March 2013	50	43	8
February 2013	51	42	7
January 2013	57	40	3
HIGHEST EVER	57 (1/13)	44 (4/13)	8 (3/13)
LOWEST EVER	50 (3/13)	40 (1/13)	3 (1/13)

Q. 31 The State Department of Environmental Conservation is expected to soon issue a decision on whether or not to allow hydrofracking – that is the proposed method to recover natural gas from parts of upstate New York – to move forward. How much have you heard or read about it – a great deal, some, not very much, or nothing at all?

DATE	A GREAT DEAL S	OME	NOT VERY MUCH N	NOTHING	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	32	29	20	19	0
April 2013	32	32	18	19	0
March 2013	32	32	21	15	0
February 2013	26	34	22	18	0
January 2013	31	33	18	17	0
December 2012	27	36	20	17	0
October 2012	27	39	21	12	0
August 2012	28	35	22	15	1
HIGHEST EVER	33 (5/12)	39 (10/1	2) 22 (2/13, 8/12	2) 20 (5/1	2) 1 (8/12)
LOWEST EVER	27 (12/12, etc.)	29 (5/13	14 (5/12)	12 (10/	(12) 0 (many)

Q. 32 Do you support or oppose the Department of Environmental Conservation allowing hydrofracking to move forward in parts of upstate New York?

DATE	SUPPORT		OT ENOUGH INFORMATION/ OON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	39	41	20
April 2013	40	45	15
March 2013	39	43	18
February 2013	40	40	20
January 2013	40	44	16
December 2012	42	36	22
October 2012	42	36	23
August 2012	39	38	23
HIGHEST EVER	42 (12/12, 10/12)	45 (4/13)	27 (5/12)
LOWEST EVER	37 (5/12)	36 (12/12, 10/12,	5/12) 15 (4/13)

Q. 33 Do you support or oppose creating a system of public campaign financing in New York that would limit the size of political contributions to candidates and use state money to match smaller contributions made to candidates for state offices?

DATE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	57	34	9
March 2013	61	33	6
January 2013	59	36	5
August 2012	55	31	14
HIGHEST EVER	61 (3/13)	36 (1/13)	14 (8/12)
LOWEST EVER	55 (8/12)	31 (8/12)	5 (1/13)

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**Q. 4** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Barack Obama?

DATE	<b>FAVORABLE</b>	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
May 2013	58	40	2
March 2013	56	41	3
February 2013	66	32	2
January 2013	66	33	1
December 2012	62	36	2
October 2012	61	37	2
August 2012	64	35	1
July 2012	59	38	3
HIGHEST EVER	81 (1/09)	46 (10/31/10	40 (11/06)
LOWEST EVER	48 (11/06)	10 (1/09)	1 (1/13, 8/12)

**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
May 2013	41	56	4
March 2013	32	60	8
January 2013	46	49	5
December 2012	50	43	8
October 2012	48	45	7
August 2012	46	48	6
July 2012	44	52	5
HIGHEST EVER	62 (5/09)	74 (8/11)	17 (9/08)
LOWEST EVER	19 (10/08)	24 (12/09)	5 (1/13)

**Q. 14** 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
May 2013	1	19	44	33	2
March 2013	1	16	47	35	2
February 2013	0	19	44	35	2
January 2013	1	18	47	32	2
December 2012	2	18	42	35	2
October 2012	0	19	47	31	2
August 2012	1	19	49	31	1
July 2012	0	19	44	36	1
HIGHEST EVER	2 (12/12,	5/12) <mark>19 (5/13</mark>	, etc.) 49 (8/12)	67 (3	/22/10) 4 (9/08)
LOWEST EVER	0 (man	v) 6 (3/22	/10, etc.) 25 (3/22/10)	31 (1	0/12, 8/12) 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
May 2013	49	44	7
April 2013	48	42	10
March 2013	50	42	8
February 2013	55	35	9
January 2013	57	33	10
December 2012	55	32	13
October 2012	53	35	11
August 2012	56	33	10
July 2012	53	36	11
HIGHEST EVER	57 (1/13)	76 (10/31/10)	30 (1/07)
LOWEST EVER	14 (10/10)	26 (1/07)	<b>7</b> (5/13)

**Poll Trend Notes:** 

All surveys are of registered voters except for the polls of August and October 2012, October 2010, September and October 2008, and September and October 2006, which are polls of likely voters.

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 July 2012.

"Highest Ever" and "Lowest Ever" is provided at the bottom of each question.