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GOVERNOR CHRIS CHRISTIE

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INTRODUCTION

Chris Christie first ran for office in 1993, but was unsuccessful at getting on the ballot to challenge the New Jersey Senate Majority Leader in a primary. From 1995-1998, Christie served on the Morris County Board of Chosen Freeholders. He ran for a New Jersey General Assembly seat in 1995, but failed to secure the Republican nomination. In 1997, Christie lost his freeholder seat in a primary challenge. Christie then worked as a lobbyist in Trenton, NJ until 2001, when President George W. Bush appointed Christie to be U.S. Attorney for the District of New Jersey. Christie ran successfully for Governor of New Jersey in 2009 and won re-election in 2013. Since Christie has never served in Congress, he does not have a rating from the Club for Growth. However, the Cato Institute, a free market think tank, produces a biennial scorecard on the nation's governors based on their tax and spending policies and actions. Christie's grades were:

- 2012 – “B”
- 2014 – “B”

TAXES

The Club for Growth is committed to lower taxes – especially lower tax rates – across the board. Lower taxes on work, savings, and investments lead to greater levels of these activities, thus encouraging greater economic growth.

With both houses of the state legislature controlled by Democrats, New Jersey is not an easy place to enact pro-growth reforms. In general, Chris Christie has fought these headwinds to reduce the burden of taxation in his state, which, according to

the nonpartisan Tax Foundation, had the worst business tax climate in the nation when Christie took office.¹ To that end, one of Christie's first actions as governor was to reject an extension of New Jersey's “millionaire's tax,” despite pressure from Democrats. Governor Christie's predecessor, Jon Corzine, had temporarily raised taxes to 10.75% on income above \$1 million, 10.25% on income above \$500,000 and 8% on income above \$400,000. After the rates expired on December 31, 2009 the top income tax rate dropped back to 8.97% on income above \$500,000, and has remained at that level.² Christie later vetoed attempts by Democrats to revive the tax and continues to oppose similar attempts.³ Christie also allowed a four percent surcharge on business taxes to expire. The surcharge had been renewed annually since 2006.⁴

Governor Christie also has made changes to property taxes in New Jersey. He signed a bill that lowered the cap on the amount of annual property tax increases from four percent to two percent. The bill also reduced the number of loopholes that allowed for higher increases, but left intact loopholes that permitted higher increases for pension and health insurance costs, increased school enrollment, debt payments and states of emergency. A town could also exceed the cap through a referendum.⁵ As a result, despite the cap, 45% of New Jersey



PHOTO CREDIT: GAGE SKIDMORE

municipalities increased their levies by more than two percent in 2013.⁶

Some have criticized Christie for cutting property tax rebates, arguing that the rebate reductions amount to a property tax increase of about 19%.⁷ The property tax rebates are a function of the 1975 bill which first authorized New Jersey's income tax, but dedicated the entirety of that tax to a “Property Tax Relief Fund.” Most of the fund's spending is used for education and municipalities, with a small portion reserved for rebate checks to New Jersey homeowners, usually within a few weeks before the November elections, per “political tradition.”⁸ Governor Christie delayed delivery of the rebates several times⁹ and then made it a tax credit, rather than a check in the mail.¹⁰ Christie cut the size of the rebate program from \$1 billion to \$268 million and lowered the income eligibility

6 Asbury Park Press, 8/7/14 <http://on.app.com/1FiAkRs>

7 Courier-Post, 1/19/14 <http://on.cpsj.com/1Ks2sFb>

8 NJ Spotlight, 5/22/14 <http://bit.ly/1Kmtf94>

9 The Star-Ledger, 7/10/14 <http://bit.ly/1mO9Y5b>

10 Politifact New Jersey, 3/19/12 <http://bit.ly/1HOEJ1D>

1 Tax Foundation, [State Tax Climate](http://www.taxfoundation.org/state-tax-climate) – New Jersey

2 The Star-Ledger, 1/21/10 <http://bit.ly/1KrPSpr>

3 The Record, 6/30/11, The [Daily Record](http://www.dailyrecord.com), 7/1/14, [NJ.com](http://www.nj.com), 5/8/15

4 WABC 7 New York, 2/19/10 <http://7ny.tv/1JWTCk>

5 The Star-Ledger, 7/13/10

cap from \$150,000 to \$75,000. The average benefit declined from \$1,035 to \$269 between 2010 and 2011.¹¹ Whether this amounts to a tax increase or a spending cut is up for debate. Joseph Henchman, vice president of legal and state projects at the Tax Foundation, told *Politifact*, "...it'd be wrong to equate reductions in tax credits as tax increases or spending cuts. They have elements of both and are strictly neither."¹²

Other tax changes signed into law by Christie include a \$190 million cut in the payroll tax that funds New Jersey's disability insurance pool.¹³ That put about \$87 annually back into paychecks. Christie also proposed a 10% income tax cut during his 2012 State of the State address, but the state legislature did not act on it.¹⁴ And Christie cut the state's Earned Income Tax Credit by \$45 million, reducing it from 25% to 20% of the federal benefit.¹⁵

Governor Christie has also proposed or supported tax increases. He:

- Supported a tax on electronic cigarettes.¹⁶
- Signed a bill imposing a three percent hotel tax in 14 towns in the Meadowlands district of Bergen and Hudson counties.¹⁷
- Lifted a cap on New Jersey's hospital bed tax in his 2010 budget.¹⁸

11 Factcheck, 9/28/11 <http://bit.ly/1EvAymw>

12 Politifact New Jersey, 6/30/13 <http://bit.ly/1EvAymw>

13 The Star-Ledger, 10/18/11 <http://bit.ly/1J8R964>

14 State of the State Address, 1/17/12 <http://bit.ly/1BnAENS>

15 *Chris Christie: The Inside Story of his Rise to Power*, P. 193-194

16 Bloomberg, 5/4/14 <http://bloom.bg/1Awjsda>

17 The Star-Ledger, 11/22/14 <http://bit.ly/1F93OQv>

18 Gloucester County Times, 4/28/10

Christie's record on business tax breaks and credits is mixed to bad. On the plus side, Christie:

- Famously eliminated the "Snooki Subsidy," a \$420,000 tax credit for the hit MTV television show *Jersey Shore*.¹⁹
- Suspended New Jersey's film tax credit program and allowed it to sunset.²⁰
- Raised the threshold of revenue a farm must produce before it can claim agricultural subsidies.²¹

Conversely, in 2011, Governor Christie vastly expanded a "business retention" tax break. A press release from his office said, "The program will now provide a maximum tax credit of \$2,250 per year for six years, per job retained in the State. The current program provides for a maximum one-time tax credit incentive of \$1,500 per job retained in the State."²² Christie also created a \$200 million "Grow New Jersey" program to offer tax credits to businesses which meet criteria set by the state Economic Development Authority.²³ In some cases, these credits bordered on the absurd. Holtec International received \$260 million for relocating 160 nearby jobs and adding 235 more. Subaru moved its US headquarters from Cherry Hill, NJ to neighboring Camden, NJ and reaped \$18 million in tax credits as a result.²⁴ Christie also authorized \$261 million in tax incentives for the Revel Casino in Atlantic City if it were profitable. Revel never turned a profit, and shut down less than two years after its Grand Opening, and while no tax dollars were actually lost, it demonstrates Christie's proclivity for interfering in the

19 NJ.com, 9/26/11 <http://goo.gl/RE5ovt>

20 Press of Atlantic City, 10/19/13 <http://bit.ly/1AAaP1c>

21 The Record, 4/15/13

22 Office of the Governor, 1/7/11 <http://bit.ly/1dzM8b7>

23 The Star-Ledger, 1/6/12

24 Associated Press, 3/17/15 <http://cbsn.ws/1FcHFRp>

free market.²⁵ In total, under Governor Christie, New Jersey granted \$2.1 billion in tax incentives between 2010 and 2013. By contrast, the state gave out just \$1.5 billion during the previous ten years.²⁶

Another concern with the Christie record on taxes is that he joined New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (D) in supporting a \$1.50 EZ-Pass toll increase on bridges and tunnels connecting New Jersey and New York.²⁷

SPENDING

The Club for Growth is committed to reducing government spending. Less spending enhances economic growth by enabling lower taxes and diminishing the government's economically inefficient allocation of resources.

During Christie's first term as governor (2010-2014), National Association of State Budget Office data indicate that general fund spending increased by 14.9% and total spending increased by 12.0%.²⁸ These figures exceed the rate of population growth²⁹ and inflation³⁰ that together amount to 10.1%.

Christie has increased the size of the state budget to over \$34 billion, but 94% of that increase is attributable to pension costs, entitlements, and debt service.³¹ He has made "modest increases" in education funding, some of which were court mandated.³² Christie has line-item vetoed

25 Washington Post, 9/5/14 <http://wapo.st/1qlFwAe>

26 The Star-Ledger, 9/18/13

27 The Star-Ledger, 8/6/11

28 National Association of State Budget Offices, [State Expenditure Reports](#), p. 8

29 U.S. Census, Population Estimates by State <http://1.usa.gov/1H3S1qq>

30 Bureau of Labor Statistics <http://1.usa.gov/1Aw1w2o>

31 Wall Street Journal, 2/25/14 <http://on.wsj.com/1KB0GEI>

32 Politifact New Jersey, 10/6/11

some Democrat-supported spending, totaling \$900 million in 2011³³ and \$86 million in 2012.³⁴ Christie also vetoed a bill that would've given \$5 million in state aid to any municipality that loses a major employer (1,000 or more jobs).³⁵

Chris Christie has eliminated programs including the state-funded New Jersey News channel.³⁶ He also cut funding for the proposed tunnel project between New Jersey and New York.³⁷ The Obama Administration estimated the cost of the project to be between \$9.8 billion and \$12.7 billion. Christie also:

- Subsidized a new practice facility for the Philadelphia 76ers, to the tune of \$86 million.³⁸
- Offered \$350 million in subsidies for the American Dream Meadowlands mall.³⁹
- Spent \$150 million on buying up land for conservation projects, to the delight of environmentalist groups.⁴⁰

Chris Christie has also spoken out on some federal spending issues of note. He has endorsed federal crop insurance and agricultural subsidies.⁴¹ On the federal debt ceiling, Christie said Congress should “show some compromise.”⁴²

33 The Record, 6/30/11 <http://on.wsj.com/1FiLfl>

34 Politifact New Jersey, 7/23/12 <http://bit.ly/1ezSV4W>

35 Clifton Journal, 7/12/13 <http://bit.ly/1cld6BV>

36 *Chris Christie: The Inside Story of his Rise to Power*, P. 177

37 WNYC, 10/27/10 <http://bit.ly/1BromTT>

38 NJ Spotlight, 6/11/14 <http://bit.ly/1LMAswi>

39 WNYC, 10/10/11 <http://bit.ly/1GGDeE3>

40 Trust for Public Land, 8/3/11 <http://bit.ly/1AAf2BS>

41 National Review, 3/11/15 <http://bit.ly/1BqbRLs>

42 The Star-Ledger, 7/27/11 <http://bit.ly/1PQsMzB>

ENTITLEMENT REFORM

America's major middle-class entitlement programs are already insolvent. The Club for Growth supports entitlement reforms that enable personal ownership of retirement and health care programs, benefit from market returns, and diminish dependency on government.

Governor Christie is perhaps best known for his battle with teacher unions over merit pay and pensions. New Jersey's pension costs are massive and the state has the fifth highest unfunded pension liability in the country.⁴³ In 2011, Christie signed a bill that increased the required amount state employees, including teachers, must contribute toward their pensions. The increase was one percent or more, based on occupation. The bill also required state employees to pay more toward their health benefits.⁴⁴ Christie also signed into law a bill barring part-time state workers from the pension system, a move which was expected to save \$314 million annually.⁴⁵

Governor Christie did underfund pensions more significantly than his predecessors. According to the *Star-Ledger*, Christie has contributed \$2.9 billion, but skipped \$14.9 billion in required pension payments during the past five years as governor, arguing that he can't balance the budget with the larger payments.⁴⁶ Christie's predecessor, Democrat Jon Corzine made \$2.1 billion in pension payments while skipping an additional \$6.4 billion required from 2007 to 2010. In fact, Christie's \$14.9 billion skipped pension payments eclipses the \$12.8 billion combined missed payments of his five predecessors over a 15-year period from 1996 to 2010.⁴⁷ The missed

43 Standard and Poor's, "U.S. State Pension Funding: Strong Investment Returns Could Lift Funded Ratios, But Longer-Term Challenges Remain," 6/24/14 <http://bit.ly/1J4Mt2D>

44 Associated Press, 6/23/11

45 The Star-Ledger, 3/22/10 <http://bit.ly/1HOJDvj>

46 New York Times, 6/9/2015 <http://goo.gl/H2ODBU>

47 The Star-Ledger, 2/6/15 <http://bit.ly/1Lla34I>

pension payments are the primary reason that major credit rating agencies cut New Jersey's credit rating eight times under Christie's watch. No past New Jersey governor ever presided over that many credit downgrades.⁴⁸ Christie is currently trying to negotiate further pension cuts and reforms with New Jersey's public sector unions.⁴⁹

Governor Christie elected to accept the Obamacare Medicaid expansion, increasing eligibility for adults with children to 200% of the poverty line and childless adults up to 138% of the poverty line.⁵⁰ Christie said the expansion “was the smart thing to do.”⁵¹ He elected not to set up a state healthcare exchange because “the federal government cannot tell us what it will cost.”⁵² In 2010 Christie also increased eligibility for food stamps from 130% of the Federal Poverty Level to 185%.⁵³

On federal issues, Christie has publicly spoken out in favor of the 2011 Simpson-Bowles debt reduction plan saying it “should've been pursued.”⁵⁴ Simpson-Bowles promoted raising the retirement age for Social Security and Medicare and limiting other entitlements, but also called for increased payroll taxes and higher taxes on gasoline.⁵⁵

On Social Security specifically, Christie wants to raise the retirement age to 69, and he would means-test the program so that those who continue to earn income in retirement would have their benefits reduced or eliminated. To incentivize work among senior citizens, Christie would eliminate the

48 The Star-Ledger, 9/10/14

49 Wall Street Journal, 3/4/15 <http://on.wsj.com/1CBGyPs>

50 Politifact, 11/13/14 <http://bit.ly/1GGQEQR>

51 Politico, 2/26/13 <http://politi.co/1Evl9RU>

52 ABC News, 12/6/12 <http://abcn.ws/1KB8k1S>

53 NJ Dept. of Human Services, <http://bit.ly/1fdbRXq>

54 Brookings Institution, 7/10/12 <http://brook.gs/1KxULAh>

55 Business Insider, 10/8/12 <http://read.bi/1As9f1s>

payroll tax for people age 62 and older.⁵⁶ Christie wants similar reforms to Medicare – raising the eligibility age and expanding means testing for health benefits.⁵⁷

REGULATION

Excessive government regulation stymies individual and business innovation necessary for strong economic expansion. The Club for Growth supports less and more sensible government regulation as a critical step toward increasing freedom and growth in the marketplace.

Governor Christie has a mixed record on environmental regulation. He:

- Publicly supported construction of the Keystone XL pipeline⁵⁸
- Vetoed a bill that would have prohibited companies from treating, discharging, disposing, and storing waste from hydraulic fracturing.⁵⁹
- Withdrew New Jersey from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a regional cap-and-trade scheme.⁶⁰
- Expressed his dislike for drilling off the Atlantic Coast.⁶¹
- Imposed a one-year moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in his state.⁶²
- Supported the Renewable Fuel Standard and suggested that President Obama should enact it more forcefully.⁶³

56 TIME, 4/14/15

57 WSJ, 4/14/15 <http://on.wsj.com/1aP95Fd>

58 CNN, 12/4/14 <http://cnn.it/1KlohGp>

59 The Star-Ledger, 8/8/14 <http://bit.ly/1sLGA2b>

60 The Record, 11/9/14

61 The Star-Ledger, 3/31/10 <http://bit.ly/1FFw8xk>

62 Business Insider, 8/30/11 <http://bit.ly/1J3drGf>

63 National Review, 3/11/15 <http://bit.ly/1BqbRLs>

Governor Christie vetoed a bill that would have increased New Jersey’s minimum wage by \$1.25, and tied future increases to inflation. Christie said that he would have preferred a \$1.00 increase, phased-in over three years, without the inflation provision.⁶⁴ The following year, a \$1.00 minimum wage increase with the inflation provision was approved via voter referendum.⁶⁵ Christie also signed into a law a bill allowing electric car companies like Tesla to sell their cars directly to consumers, something that is currently illegal in several states.⁶⁶

Christie has a generally poor record on eminent domain. He signed a bill granting eminent domain powers to Rutgers University-Camden and Rowan University, but later seemed to have forgotten the bill, telling a radio show, “I haven’t heard anything at this point about eminent domain being given to a university - I don’t think that’s the way it works.”⁶⁷ Christie also supported the use of eminent domain to build beachfront dunes to help limit future hurricane damage.⁶⁸ When some property owners objected, Christie said “We are building these dunes, okay? We are building these dunes whether you consent or not.”⁶⁹

FREE TRADE

Free trade is a vital policy necessary for maximizing economic growth. In recent decades, America’s commitment to expanding trade has resulted in lower costs for consumers, job growth, and higher levels of productivity and innovation.

Christie has been supportive of free trade,

64 The Star-Ledger, 1/28/13

65 Asbury Park Press, 11/5/13 <http://usat.ly/1LLMl6a>

66 Asbury Park Press, 3/18/15 <http://on.app.com/1LLMvup>

67 Philadelphia Inquirer – Trenton, 2/6/14 <http://bit.ly/1BnGm1x>

68 Associated Press, 11/30/14 <http://bit.ly/1EckRk>

69 The Star-Ledger, 4/3/13 <http://bit.ly/1FFytZ7>

although there are some outstanding questions that he needs to clarify. He has traveled on at least three foreign trade missions as governor,⁷⁰ and has also publicly supported lifting restrictions on the export of liquefied natural gas.⁷¹ Christie vetoed a “Buy American” bill that would require public agencies, including universities, to buy more American-made products.⁷² He has said that he would ask Congress for Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) as president,⁷³ though he questioned whether granting it to President Obama was a good idea.⁷⁴ But Christie has also said that “we need to take another look at NAFTA,”⁷⁵ although it’s unclear what he meant by that.

Christie has not directly answered questions about whether the Export-Import Bank should exist, saying that “the government, I think, does have a role in trying to make our country as competitive as we can be.” When pressed, Christie said that “there are times when that goes overboard” and Congress is “supposed to be vigilant” about that.⁷⁶

SCHOOL CHOICE

The Club for Growth supports broad school choice, including charter schools and voucher programs that create a competitive education market including public, private, religious, and non-religious schools. More competition in education will lead to higher quality and lower costs.

Governor Christie has made waves for

70 The Star-Ledger, 12/8/14 <http://bit.ly/1EAqMQ4>

71 American Chamber of Commerce of Mexico Keynote Address, 9/3/14 <http://bit.ly/1CKHA9Q>

72 The Star-Ledger, 2/5/15 <http://bit.ly/1CyKQXH>

73 The Star-Ledger, 3/7/15 <http://bit.ly/1LN1HXr>

74 DTN/The Progressive Farmer, 3/7/15 <http://bit.ly/1JV3RWE>

75 WSJ, 4/21/15 <http://on.wsj.com/1eAetyf>

76 CNBC, 7/16/14 <http://www.cnbc.com/id/101842541>

fighting New Jersey's teacher unions. He signed a bill making it easier to fire bad teachers and requiring four years of service for a teacher to obtain tenure rather than three.⁷⁷ Christie also signed a deal to initiate merit-based pay for teachers in Newark,⁷⁸ and sought and received a waiver allowing New Jersey to opt out of No Child Left Behind.⁷⁹

In 2010, Christie signed a bill allowing public school choice for up to ten percent of students in a given school district.⁸⁰ He also advocated a bill which proposed a four-year pilot program that would provide funds for children in New Jersey's seven worst-performing school districts to attend private and parochial schools.⁸¹ Christie also called on the legislature to pass the Opportunity Scholarship Act, which would create a corporate tax credit for donations to fund scholarships for low-income students to attend private schools.⁸² Christie spoke about the bill in his 2015 State of the State address, calling it "an alternative to chronically failing neighborhood schools."⁸³

TORT REFORM

The American economy suffers from excessive litigation which increases the cost of doing business and slows economic growth. The Club for Growth supports major reforms to our tort system to restore a more just and less costly balance in tort litigation.

Governor Christie has done almost nothing

on tort reform. Though he once said, "...it would be hugely beneficial to our economy," Christie has also asserted that tort reform is "dead on arrival" in New Jersey's liberal legislature.⁸⁴ Christie nominated a conservative, pro-tort reform attorney to a judgeship, but withdrew the nomination over the objections of the New Jersey Bar Association.⁸⁵ The only tort bill that he signed into law made it more difficult for shareholders to launch derivative suits against corporations.⁸⁶

POLITICAL FREE SPEECH

Maximizing prosperity requires sound government policies. When government strays from these policies, citizens must be free to exercise their constitutional rights to petition and criticize those policies and the politicians responsible for them.

Christie has a fairly thin record on political free speech. During his 2009 campaign, Christie argued that state disclosure requirements should mirror federal ones,⁸⁷ and to that end he vetoed a disclosure bill pushed by Democrats in 2010. The bill would have required executive branch officials to report their income in more detailed ranges than legislators are required to report.⁸⁸ In 2014, Christie called for unlimited campaign donations with a 48-hour reporting period for disclosure.⁸⁹ Later that year, he made the same proposal with a 24-hour disclosure window.⁹⁰

Christie did, however, propose an ethics reform package that included a ban on

"wheeling" -- the shifting of contributions through different parties or candidates to get around contribution limits.⁹¹ Christie also signed an executive order limiting political donations by labor unions with state contracts.⁹²

POLITICAL ACTIVITY & ENDORSEMENTS

Robust political activity is essential to producing a federal government that is more respectful of free markets and produces more pro-economic growth policies. The Club for Growth's PAC has been active in some of the more central battles within the Republican Party nominating process in recent years, supporting pro-growth candidates over pro-government ones.

Chris Christie's earliest forays into politics, as a teenager, began with volunteer work for liberal Republican Tom Kean in 1977.⁹³ Christie's first run for elected office was a primary in which he attacked Senate Majority Leader John Dorsey from the left.⁹⁴

Since he became governor, most of Christie's endorsements have been New Jersey Republicans of various ideological moorings running for Congress, including moderate Jon Runyan⁹⁵, but also conservatives Jeff Bell⁹⁶ and Steve Lonegan⁹⁷. He has also campaigned for Republican gubernatorial candidates of all stripes in his capacity as Chairman of the Republican Governor's Association.

Christie has never endorsed a more conservative challenger in a contested primary as far as we can tell. In a few cases, Christie

77 The Star-Ledger, 8/7/12 <http://bit.ly/1rN7LFU>

78 Wall Street Journal, 10/17/12 <http://on.wsj.com/1HUst1>

79 The Record, 2/23/12 <http://bit.ly/1BrHRf4>

80 The Star-Ledger, 9/12/10 <http://bit.ly/1zcFDyL>

81 The Jewish Daily Forward, 10/7/13 <http://bit.ly/1FNvDb>

82 The Star-Ledger, 1/28/15 <http://bit.ly/1LN5tjN>

83 State of the State Address, 1/13/15 <http://bit.ly/1SEwqeT>

84 National Review, 4/27/14 <http://bit.ly/1HJ4EdD>

85 Ibid. <http://bit.ly/1HJ4EdD>

86 NJ Corporate & Securities Law, 4/18/13 <http://www.njcorporatelaw.com/>

87 The Associated Press State & Local Wire, 5/5/10

88 The Record, 9/8/10

89 The Stat-Ledger, 4/15/14 <http://bit.ly/1LN9ipa>

90 Christian Science Monitor, 11/7/14 <http://bit.ly/1Rlvr1j>

91 The Star-Ledger, 12/7/10 <http://bit.ly/1KBc0Rn>

92 The Star-Ledger, 1/20/10 <http://bit.ly/1HJbn7v>

93 Chris Christie: The Inside Story of his Rise to Power, P. 29

94 Chris Christie: The Inside Story of his Rise to Power, P. 45

95 The Record, 11/3/10

96 The Record, 7/8/14

97 The Record, 10/22/13

has endorsed relatively moderate candidates before the primary. In 2011, Christie endorsed moderate Missouri Congressional candidate Ann Wagner.⁹⁸ He also endorsed liberal Delaware Republican Mike Castle for Senate in 2010.⁹⁹ Both of these endorsements came before the primary.

SUMMATION

Chris Christie has a very difficult job as Governor of New Jersey, given his state's history of a Democrat-filled legislature and anti-growth policies. In spite of this, Christie has some achievements, including the end of the Millionaire's Tax, withdrawal from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and his successful extraction of concessions from public employee unions. However, Christie's support for free markets seems to go out the window when it comes to big business. His record on spending is mediocre, and some of his stances on entitlements, such as his support for Obamacare's Medicaid expansion, will create economic headaches for his state in the years to come. There are some signs that Christie would govern in a pro-growth way if elected president, but there are enough warning signs in Christie's record to give fiscal conservatives pause.

98 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 9/12/11

99 Meet the Press, 11/8/10