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NJ SENATE: BOOKER LEADS LONEGAN BY 13

More say Booker focused on national stage rather than state

Democrat Cory Booker holds a 13 point lead over Republican Steve Lonegan in the race for U.S. Senate, according to the latest *Monmouth University Poll*. Despite this advantage, voters say Booker's ambitions are focused more on grabbing the national spotlight than serving New Jersey.

Booker currently holds a 53% to 40% lead over Lonegan among New Jerseyans likely to vote in the October 16 special election. This is down slightly from the 16 point edge he held in polls taken in both August and June, but the differences are within the survey's margin of error.

Booker has solid support among Democratic voters (88%), while Lonegan musters support from 83% of his Republican base. Independent voters give a statistically insignificant 46% to 40% edge to Booker.

"Monmouth University's polls have consistently shown this race to be closer than most pundits thought it would be. While Cory Booker's lead is relatively sizable, many voters have doubts about his motives in seeking this seat," said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

The poll asked voters whether they think Cory Booker wants to become a US Senator more to be on the national stage or more to serve the state of New Jersey. A 45% plurality say the national spotlight is the main attraction compared to 35% who say Booker's focus is on the Garden State. Another 12% say he is pursuing both aims equally.

Not surprisingly, most Republicans (67%) say Booker is attracted to the national platform of being a US Senator, while a majority of Democrats (52%) say he is in it to serve his constituents. Among independents, 53% say that Booker has his eyes on the national stage compared to 29% who say he is focused on his home state. Among voters who are still undecided or might change their minds before October 16, 42% think Booker is focused on the national stage, 20% say he is focused on New Jersey, 16% say he is focused on both equally, and 22% are not sure.

“Statewide positive opinion of Cory Booker has been broad, but not necessarily deep. It’s possible that Steve Lonegan’s attacks have caused many voters to reconsider their opinion of Booker, even if they don’t change their vote,” said Murray.

Cory Booker’s personal rating stands at 54% favorable to 28% unfavorable among likely voters, with 18% having no opinion. Booker’s favorable rating has declined by 7 points since June, while his unfavorable rating has increased by 13 points.

Steve Lonegan is not as well-known as his Democratic opponent, but voter awareness has increased over the past few months, to 35% favorable and 28% unfavorable, with 38% having no opinion. In prior polls, between 45% and 49% of likely voters had no opinion of Lonegan. Since June, Lonegan’s favorable rating has held fairly steady – ranging between 31% and 35% – while his unfavorable rating has increased by 8 points.

A notable change in these approval ratings comes from Republicans. Currently, 68% of GOP voters have a favorable opinion of Lonegan, which is up 11 points since August. On the other hand, 53% have an unfavorable opinion of Booker, which represents a 14 point increase in his negative standing among Garden State Republicans since August.

The poll also found that 4-in-10 (41%) voters feel they know a great deal about where Cory Booker stands on issues that are important to them. Another 36% say they have some awareness of his positions. About 1-in-4 say they know not much (16%) or nothing at all (7%) about Booker’s positions.

Slightly fewer (36%) voters feel they know a great deal about where Steve Lonegan stands on the issues that are important to them. Another 31% say they have some awareness of his positions. About 1-in-3 say they know not much (21%) or nothing at all (12%) about Lonegan’s positions.

Turnout continues to be a big question in this unprecedented situation: a mid-October Wednesday election being held just three weeks before the regularly scheduled November election for governor, state legislature, and a variety of local offices. If given the choice of voting in only one of those two elections, 29% say they would opt for the special Senate election, which is up slightly from 26% in August and 23% in June. This suggests that turnout in October could also have an impact on November’s election if more voters than anticipated decide to stay home for the second one.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from September 26 to 29, 2013 with 571 New Jersey voters likely to vote in the October special election. This sample has a margin of error of ± 4.1 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. If you could only vote in one election this fall, which one would it be, the special election for U.S. Senate or the regular election for governor and legislature?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		REGION			VOTE INTENT		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	North	Central	South	Booker	Lonegan	
Special election	29%	35%	30%	21%	36%	23%	34%	23%	28%	33%	30%	13%
Regular election	65%	61%	63%	72%	57%	72%	61%	68%	66%	61%	64%	81%
Not sure	6%	4%	7%	7%	7%	5%	5%	9%	5%	6%	6%	6%

TREND:	September 2013	August 2013	June 2013
Special election	29%	26%	23%
Regular election	65%	67%	71%
Not sure	6%	7%	6%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	571	696	560

2. If the election for U.S. Senate was today, would you vote for Steve Lonegan, the Republican, Cory Booker, the Democrat or some other candidate? [NAMES WERE ROTATED]
[IF UNDECIDED: At this moment, do you lean toward Steve Lonegan or do you lean toward Cory Booker?]

(with leaners)	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		REGION		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	North	Central	South
Steve Lonegan	40%	8%	40%	83%	44%	37%	36%	41%	45%
Cory Booker	53%	88%	46%	14%	50%	55%	57%	50%	50%
Other candidate	3%	2%	5%	0%	2%	3%	3%	3%	1%
Undecided	4%	2%	8%	3%	4%	5%	3%	6%	4%

TREND:	September 2013	August 2013	June 2013
Steve Lonegan	40%	38%	37%
Cory Booker	53%	54%	53%
Other	3%	2%	--
Undecided	4%	5%	10%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	571	696	560

[QUESTIONS 3 AND 4 WERE ROTATED]

3. Is your general opinion of Cory Booker favorable, unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		REGION			VOTE INTENT		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	North	Central	South	Booker	Lonegan	
Favorable	54%	81%	50%	22%	48%	60%	58%	55%	48%	90%	15%	41%
Unfavorable	28%	7%	31%	53%	34%	22%	26%	28%	30%	3%	61%	18%
No opinion	18%	12%	19%	25%	18%	18%	16%	17%	21%	7%	24%	40%

TREND:	September 2013	August 2013	June 2013
Favorable	54%	57%	61%
Unfavorable	28%	23%	15%
No opinion	18%	20%	24%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	571	696	560

4. Is your general opinion of Steve Lonegan favorable, unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		REGION			VOTE INTENT		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	North	Central	South	Booker	Lonegan	
Favorable	35%	10%	34%	68%	41%	29%	32%	33%	39%	6%	79%	16%
Unfavorable	28%	47%	24%	6%	24%	31%	33%	31%	17%	50%	1%	17%
No opinion	38%	43%	42%	26%	35%	40%	35%	35%	43%	44%	20%	68%

TREND:	September 2013	August 2013	June 2013
Favorable	35%	31%	34%
Unfavorable	28%	20%	20%
No opinion	38%	49%	45%
Unwtd N	571	696	560

5. In the U.S. Senate race, how much do you feel you know about where Cory Booker stands on issues that are important to you – a great deal, some, not much, or nothing at all?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		REGION			VOTE INTENT		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	North	Central	South	Booker	Lonegan	
Great deal	41%	50%	41%	30%	43%	39%	44%	38%	41%	53%	33%	11%
Some	36%	36%	39%	31%	34%	37%	34%	41%	33%	41%	30%	39%
Not much	16%	12%	13%	23%	16%	15%	14%	15%	19%	5%	26%	31%
Nothing	7%	2%	6%	15%	6%	8%	7%	6%	8%	1%	11%	16%
Not sure	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%

6. In the U.S. Senate race, how much do you feel you know about where Steve Lonegan stands on issues that are important to you – a great deal, some, not much, or nothing at all?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		REGION			VOTE INTENT		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	North	Central	South	Booker	Lonegan	
Great deal	36%	28%	35%	46%	41%	31%	34%	37%	37%	28%	52%	11%
Some	31%	29%	31%	32%	27%	34%	30%	37%	26%	33%	31%	29%
Not much	21%	29%	19%	12%	19%	22%	21%	19%	22%	26%	10%	38%
Nothing	12%	13%	12%	10%	11%	12%	14%	7%	14%	13%	7%	20%
Not sure	1%	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%

7. Do you think Cory Booker wants to become a U.S. Senator more to be on the national stage or more to serve New Jersey?

	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		REGION			VOTE INTENT		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	North	Central	South	Booker	Lonegan	
More national stage	45%	22%	53%	67%	51%	40%	46%	44%	44%	18%	80%	42%
More to serve NJ	35%	52%	29%	19%	31%	39%	35%	35%	35%	59%	9%	20%
Both equally	12%	19%	9%	6%	12%	12%	14%	12%	10%	18%	4%	16%
Not sure	8%	7%	9%	8%	6%	10%	5%	8%	11%	5%	7%	22%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from September 26 to 29, 2013 with a statewide random sample of 571 likely voters drawn from a list of registered voters who voted in at least two of the last four general elections, including 463 contacted by interactive voice response (IVR) on a landline telephone and 108 contacted by a live interviewer on a cell phone. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey questionnaire design, data weighting and analysis. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 4.1 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

<i>POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)</i>			
<i>LIKELY VOTERS</i>			
38% Dem	48% Male	10% 18-34	75% White
33% Ind	52% Female	19% 35-49	13% Black
29% Rep		36% 50-64	8% Hispanic
		35% 65+	4% Asian/Other

	<i>Likely Voters</i>	<i>PARTY ID</i>			<i>GENDER</i>		<i>REGION</i>			<i>VOTE INTENT</i>		<i>Undecided/ May change mind</i>
		<i>Dem</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>Rep</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>Central</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>Booker</i>	<i>Lonegan</i>	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	571	186	239	146	260	311	220	187	164	274	228	122
<i>moe</i>	4.1%	7.2%	6.3%	8.1%	6.1%	5.6%	6.6%	7.2%	7.7%	5.9%	6.5%	8.9%

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