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BOOKER IN 2014 NJ SENATE POLE POSITION

Potential GOP opponents unknown to voters

Cory Booker's only been on the job for a few months, but New Jersey voters seem ready to re-up his U.S. Senate contract for another six years. The ***Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll*** finds the state's junior senator enjoys growing approval ratings while the field of potential Republican opponents is largely unknown.

Currently, 47% of New Jersey voters approve of the job Booker is doing as U.S. Senator compared to just 20% who disapprove. Another 32% have no opinion. In December, his job rating stood at 37% approve to 21% disapprove and 43% with no opinion. Booker took office in October, shortly after winning a special election to fill the remainder of the late Frank Lautenberg's term. Booker garners solid ratings among his fellow Democrats (66% approve to 9% disapprove), generally positive ratings among independents (41% approve to 23% disapprove), and negative ratings among GOP voters (24% approve to 39% disapprove).

"New Jersey voters are just getting to know Cory Booker as their Senator and generally giving him positive reviews," said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute. "They feel they have seen enough to say he deserves a full term."

A majority (55%) of Garden State voters say that Booker should be re-elected to the U.S. Senate this November compared to 33% who say it is time to have someone else in office. Booker's re-election is endorsed by 82% of Democrats and 50% of independents. Only 18% of Republicans agree.

When pitted against one potential GOP candidate in a hypothetical head-to-head contest, nearly 6-in-10 (58%) registered voters say they would support Cory Booker compared to just 25% who would

vote for Murray Sabrin. The Ramapo College finance professor may be known to Garden State political junkies from prior runs in 1997 – when he garnered 5% of the vote as a Libertarian candidate for Governor – and in 2008 – when he placed third in the GOP primary for Senate. However, he is still unknown to most New Jersey voters. No more than 1-in-10 have an impression of Sabrin, which is currently 6% favorable to 3% unfavorable. This is not much different from voter opinion of Sabrin six years ago, when it was 4% favorable to 7% unfavorable.

Sabrin's name recognition is no better or worse than other Republicans who intend to vie for Booker's seat. Only 7% of New Jersey voters have an opinion of Jeff Bell, who upset the state's last sitting GOP senator in the 1978 primary but ultimately lost the general election. Opinion of Bell is 4% favorable to 3% unfavorable. A similarly low number of voters have any opinion of other announced candidates, including Brian Goldberg (9%), Rich Pezzullo (9%), and Robert Turkavage (7%).

Voter awareness of the Republican field stands in stark contrast to the incumbent. Currently, 49% have a favorable opinion of Cory Booker and 16% have an unfavorable one. These results are very similar to statewide New Jersey polls taken when Cory Booker served as mayor of Newark – 55% favorable to 9% favorable in February 2013 and 49% favorable to 13% unfavorable in September 2012.

“In a race that pits Cory Booker against What's His Name, Booker is the odds on favorite,” said Murray.

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* also found that Booker's senior colleague, Sen. Bob Menendez, garners positive job ratings from Garden State voters, 49% approve to 30% disapprove. This is relatively unchanged from his December rating of 47% approve to 27% disapprove.

New Jersey voters continue to render a split decision on Pres. Barack Obama. Currently, 49% approve and 47% disapprove of the president's job performance. This is slightly, but not substantially, better than Obama's 44% positive to 50% negative rating last month and is very similar to his December rating of 47% positive to 47% negative.

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by telephone with 690 New Jersey registered voters from February 19 to 23, 2014. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.7 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the Asbury Park Press and its sister publications (Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, and Home News Tribune).

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

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

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as president?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Approve	49%	79%	39%	14%	44%	53%	58%	44%	49%	38%	84%	50%
Disapprove	47%	19%	52%	84%	53%	41%	36%	53%	46%	57%	11%	45%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	3%	8%	2%	4%	5%	6%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%

TREND: Registered voters	Feb. 2014	Jan. 2014	Dec. 2013	Sept. 2013	April 2013	Feb. 2013	Dec. 2012	April 2012	Feb. 2012	Oct. 2011	Aug. 2011	May 2011	Sept. 2010	July 2010	April 2010	Feb. 2010	Oct. 2009	July 2009
Approve	49%	44%	47%	50%	55%	60%	58%	54%	51%	47%	52%	60%	47%	51%	54%	53%	54%	59%
Disapprove	47%	50%	47%	41%	42%	33%	35%	41%	42%	46%	39%	36%	44%	42%	41%	38%	33%	29%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	6%	6%	8%	2%	7%	6%	5%	6%	7%	9%	4%	9%	6%	5%	9%	14%	12%
Unwtd N	690	470	698	674	694	697	726	692	709	693	730	725	726	747	719	716	785	792

[QUESTIONS 2 AND 3 WERE ROTATED]

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Bob Menendez is doing as United States Senator?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Approve	49%	68%	42%	27%	50%	48%	63%	42%	48%	43%	62%	56%
Disapprove	30%	12%	37%	46%	36%	24%	22%	32%	32%	36%	14%	24%
(VOL) Don't know	21%	20%	21%	27%	14%	28%	15%	26%	20%	22%	24%	19%

TREND: Registered voters only	February 2014	December 2013	April 2013	February 2013	April 2012	February 2012	October 2011	August 2011	May 2011	July 2010	October 2008	April 2008	January 2008
Approve	49%	47%	44%	41%	40%	41%	43%	38%	46%	38%	34%	41%	37%
Disapprove	30%	27%	38%	31%	25%	26%	29%	33%	28%	33%	25%	31%	25%
(VOL) Don't know	21%	26%	18%	28%	35%	33%	28%	29%	26%	29%	41%	28%	37%
Unwtd N	690	698	694	697	692	709	693	730	725	747	900	720	698

3. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Cory Booker is doing as United States Senator?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Approve	47%	66%	41%	24%	48%	47%	60%	47%	40%	42%	62%	51%
Disapprove	20%	9%	23%	39%	24%	17%	22%	21%	18%	21%	22%	22%
(VOL) Don't know	32%	25%	36%	37%	28%	36%	18%	32%	41%	37%	16%	27%

TREND: Registered voters only	February 2014	December 2013
Approve	47%	37%
Disapprove	20%	21%
(VOL) Don't know	32%	43%
Unwtd N	690	698

4. Is your general impression of the following people favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of them? [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

A. Cory Booker

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Favorable	49%	65%	44%	27%	48%	49%	60%	43%	48%	45%	62%	50%
Unfavorable	16%	6%	16%	33%	20%	13%	16%	15%	16%	18%	16%	11%
No opinion	36%	28%	40%	40%	31%	39%	24%	41%	36%	37%	22%	38%

TREND: Registered voters only	February 2014	February 2013*	September 2012*
Favorable	49%	55%	49%
Unfavorable	16%	9%	13%
No opinion	36%	36%	38%
Unwtd N	690	697	715

* Prior questions stated "Newark Mayor Cory Booker"

B. Murray Sabrin

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Favorable	6%	8%	7%	3%	8%	5%	7%	5%	7%	4%	15%	6%
Unfavorable	3%	3%	4%	3%	5%	2%	2%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%
No opinion	90%	90%	89%	95%	87%	93%	90%	91%	90%	92%	82%	90%

TREND: Registered voters only	February 2014	April 2008
Favorable	6%	4%
Unfavorable	3%	7%
No opinion	90%	88%
Unwtd N	690	720

[QUESTIONS 4C THROUGH 4F WERE ASKED OF A RANDOM HALF-SAMPLE: moe= ± 5.3%]

C. Jeff Bell

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Favorable	4%	6%	3%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%
Unfavorable	3%	4%	3%	2%	2%	4%	1%	1%	7%
No opinion	93%	91%	93%	93%	93%	92%	94%	94%	90%

D. Robert Turkavage

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Favorable	5%	2%	6%	7%	4%	5%	12%	4%	2%
Unfavorable	2%	2%	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	4%
No opinion	94%	96%	92%	92%	94%	93%	87%	96%	94%

E. Brian Goldberg

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Favorable	5%	8%	4%	2%	6%	4%	9%	5%	3%
Unfavorable	4%	4%	5%	0%	5%	2%	6%	6%	0%
No opinion	91%	88%	90%	98%	88%	93%	86%	90%	97%

F. Rich Pezzullo

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Favorable	5%	7%	5%	2%	7%	3%	7%	6%	3%
Unfavorable	4%	3%	5%	3%	6%	2%	6%	5%	2%
No opinion	91%	90%	90%	95%	87%	95%	87%	90%	95%

5. If the election for U.S. Senate was today, who would you vote for if the candidates were Cory Booker the Democrat OR Murray Sabrin the Republican? [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Cory Booker	58%	90%	52%	15%	56%	60%	67%	57%	55%	51%	82%	63%
Murray Sabrin	25%	3%	23%	70%	30%	21%	20%	29%	25%	32%	7%	19%
(VOL) Other candidate	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	0%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%
(VOL) Undecided	13%	6%	21%	12%	10%	16%	14%	12%	16%	14%	9%	14%
(VOL) Will not vote	2%	0%	3%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%

6. Looking ahead to November's election for U.S. Senate, do you think that Cory Booker should be re-elected, or do you think that it is time to have someone else in office?

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Should be re-elected	55%	82%	50%	18%	51%	58%	63%	53%	51%	45%	73%	69%
Time to have someone else in office	33%	12%	35%	66%	37%	30%	33%	33%	33%	40%	17%	27%
(VOL) Don't know	12%	6%	16%	16%	12%	12%	4%	14%	16%	15%	9%	4%

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from February 19 to 23, 2014 with a statewide random sample of 690 registered voters, including 539 contacted via live interview on a landline telephone and 151 via live interview 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 3.7 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.

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)			
REGISTERED VOTERS			
38% Dem	47% Male	22% 18-34	65% White
40% Ind	53% Female	42% 35-54	13% Black
22% Rep		36% 55+	14% Hispanic
			8% Asian/Other

	TOTAL	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Unweighted N	690	257	270	147	336	354	127	235	322	515	87	48
moe	3.7%	6.1%	6.0%	8.1%	5.4%	5.2%	8.7%	6.4%	5.5%	4.3%	10.5%	14.2%

It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute's policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues that affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.

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