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PRES. OBAMA RE-ELECT HITS 50% IN NJ

Gas prices a hardship, but no worse than last year

President Barack Obama maintains a majority positive job rating in New Jersey, and has improved his prospects for picking up New Jersey's 14 electoral votes in November, according to the latest ***Monmouth University/NJ Press Media Poll***. Senator Bob Menendez continues to have less stellar ratings than the president, with a large chunk of voters sitting on the fence regarding his re-election.

Currently, Pres. Obama earns a 56% approve to 38% disapprove job rating among all Garden State residents. Among registered voters, his rating stands at 54% approve to 41% disapprove, a slight improvement on his 51% positive rating in February. More importantly, Pres. Obama now has 50% of New Jersey voters saying he deserves to be re-elected, up from 47% in February and 46% in October. Another 40% say it is time to have someone else in the Oval Office, which is down from 45% in February and 47% in October.

Pres. Obama will be sharing the New Jersey ballot with Sen. Menendez this November. The Senator's numbers are not as high as the President's, but they are in net positive territory. Sen. Menendez earns a 40% approval rating from Garden State voters to a 25% disapproval rating. Another 35% have no opinion on his job performance. These results are similar to polls conducted over the past two years.

When asked whether Sen. Menendez deserves to be sent back to DC, just 26% of Garden State voters say "yes", while 32% say "no" and a whopping 41% are undecided. Even 46% of state Democrats say they are uncommitted about the Senator's reelection. These numbers are just slightly improved from February, when 21% said he deserved reelection to 32% who said he did not.

Sen. Menendez's probable opponent in November, state legislator Joe Kyrillos, is recognized by just 19% of voters statewide, with 6% having a favorable opinion of him and 2% unfavorable. These

numbers are basically unchanged from a poll taken shortly after the Republican launched his campaign in February.

“Given President Obama’s improving prospects in New Jersey, the magic word in Menendez campaign headquarters right now has got to be ‘coattails,’” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

The poll also found Senator Frank Lautenberg with 41% approve to 32% disapprove ratings among New Jersey voters. Another 27% have no opinion. These numbers are basically unchanged from polls taken since August 2011.

The *Monmouth University/NJ Press Media Poll* also asked New Jersey residents about the impact of rising fuel costs, with prices at the pump approaching the \$4.00 mark as they did this time last year and in the summer of 2008. Fully 4-in-10 (40%) New Jerseyans say they are experiencing a lot of financial hardship due to rising gasoline prices. Another 32% are feeling a little hardship and 28% say that they are feeling no financial pinch from gas prices. These findings are similar to New Jersey polls conducted in May 2011 and July 2008. However, these results differ somewhat from a recent national ABC News/Washington Post Poll which found 62% of Americans saying gas prices are a hardship, compared with 72% in New Jersey.

As may be expected, rising gas prices are more likely to hurt low and middle income families, but less so than a year ago. Nearly half (46%) of those earning under \$50,000 feel a lot of hardship, which is down from 55% last year. Just over 4-in-10 (42%) of those earning \$50,000 to \$100,000 are feeling a lot of hardship, down from 49% last year. In comparison, fewer residents (29%) earning more than \$100,000 say gas prices are causing them a lot of financial hardship, but this number is actually up from 21% a year ago.

“As we saw when gas prices reached this level in the past, New Jerseyans have turned to some familiar strategies to cope with the financial burden,” said Murray.

Overall, 56% of the state’s drivers say they have cut back on weekend or vacation driving and an similar 57% have reduced general household spending. These numbers are slightly lower than the percentage reporting the same activities in May 2011 when it was 61% for both, but they are similar to the July 2008 poll when 58% cut back on driving and 56% cut back on other spending. In the current poll, 17% report carpooling to work, similar to the 18% reported in 2011 and 20% reported in 2008.

The *Monmouth University/NJ Press Media Poll* was conducted by telephone with 804 New Jersey adults from April 11 to 15, 2012. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.5 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the NJ Press Media newspaper group (Asbury Park Press, 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	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Approve	56%	54%	63%	87%	49%	20%	43%	86%	66%	50%	54%	63%	55%	49%
Disapprove	38%	41%	26%	10%	42%	77%	51%	11%	29%	42%	42%	31%	39%	45%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	5%	11%	3%	9%	4%	6%	4%	5%	8%	5%	6%	6%	6%

TREND: Registered voters only	April 2012	February 2012	October 2011	August 2011	May 2011	September 2010	July 2010	April 2010	February 2010	October 2009	July 2009
Approve	54%	51%	47%	52%	60%	47%	51%	54%	53%	54%	59%
Disapprove	41%	42%	46%	39%	36%	44%	42%	41%	38%	33%	29%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	6%	7%	9%	4%	9%	6%	5%	9%	14%	12%
Unwtd N	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 Frank Lautenberg is doing as United States Senator?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Approve	41%	41%	40%	63%	36%	20%	39%	48%	39%	40%	44%	47%	44%	32%
Disapprove	30%	32%	21%	9%	36%	52%	38%	18%	22%	29%	39%	31%	28%	33%
(VOL) Don't know	29%	27%	39%	28%	29%	28%	23%	34%	39%	31%	17%	22%	28%	35%

TREND: Registered voters only	April 2012	February 2012	October 2011	August 2011	May 2011	July 2010	October 2008	July 2008	April 2008	January 2008
Approve	41%	39%	43%	41%	48%	47%	48%	45%	48%	43%
Disapprove	32%	33%	31%	32%	30%	33%	28%	33%	31%	28%
(VOL) Don't know	27%	28%	27%	26%	21%	21%	24%	22%	21%	30%
Unwtd N	692	709	693	730	725	747	900	874	720	698

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

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Approve	40%	40%	41%	55%	39%	20%	38%	51%	46%	34%	42%	44%	41%	38%
Disapprove	24%	25%	20%	9%	28%	44%	31%	11%	18%	27%	28%	23%	26%	24%
(VOL) Don't know	35%	35%	38%	36%	33%	36%	31%	38%	36%	40%	29%	33%	32%	38%

TREND: Registered voters only	April 2012	February 2012	October 2011	August 2011	May 2011	July 2010	October 2008	April 2008	January 2008
Approve	40%	41%	43%	38%	46%	38%	34%	41%	37%
Disapprove	25%	26%	29%	33%	28%	33%	25%	31%	25%
(VOL) Don't know	35%	33%	28%	29%	26%	29%	41%	28%	37%
Unwtd N	692	709	693	730	725	747	900	720	698

[QUESTIONS 4 THROUGH 6 WERE ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS ONLY]

4. Looking ahead to November's election for president, do you think that Barack Obama should be re-elected, or do you think that it is time to have someone else in office?

	REGISTERED VOTER	PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Should be re-elected	50%	86%	40%	15%	40%	78%	62%	49%	46%	57%	54%	45%
Time to have someone else in office	40%	9%	45%	80%	52%	11%	31%	41%	45%	37%	37%	44%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	6%	15%	5%	8%	11%	6%	11%	10%	6%	9%	11%

TREND: <i>Registered voters only</i>	April 2012	February 2012	October 2011
Should be re-elected	50%	47%	46%
Time to have someone else in office	40%	45%	47%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	8%	7%
Unwtd N	692	709	693

5. Senator Menendez is up for re-election this year. Do you think that he should be re-elected, do you think that it is time to have someone else in office, or do you have no opinion on this?

	REGISTERED VOTER	PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Should be re-elected	26%	39%	24%	7%	22%	37%	28%	22%	28%	25%	25%	27%
Time to have someone else in office	32%	14%	36%	57%	38%	12%	28%	32%	36%	30%	32%	36%
No opinion	41%	46%	39%	35%	38%	50%	43%	46%	34%	43%	43%	37%
(VOL) Refused	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%

TREND: <i>Registered voters only</i>	April 2012	February 2012
Should be re-elected	26%	21%
Time to have someone else in office	32%	32%
No opinion	41%	46%
(VOL) Refused	1%	1%
Unwtd N	692	709

6. Do you happen to know of State Senator Joe Kyrillos, or haven't you heard of him before? [If YES: Is your general impression of him favorable or unfavorable, or don't you really have an opinion?]

	REGISTERED VOTER	PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Favorable	6%	3%	6%	11%	7%	4%	2%	5%	11%	7%	5%	6%
Unfavorable	2%	3%	1%	4%	3%	1%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Heard of but no opinion	11%	12%	11%	10%	12%	9%	9%	12%	12%	11%	7%	13%
Does not recognize name	80%	82%	82%	74%	78%	87%	88%	81%	75%	79%	86%	77%

TREND: <i>Registered voters only</i>	April 2012	February 2012
Favorable	6%	4%
Unfavorable	2%	2%
Heard of but no opinion	11%	14%
Does not recognize name	80%	80%
Unwtd N	692	709

7. Have recent increases in gasoline prices caused any financial hardship for you or your household? [If YES: Would you say a lot or a little hardship?]

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Yes, a LOT of hardship	40%	39%	40%	38%	41%	40%	38%	40%	39%	40%	40%	46%	42%	29%
Yes, a LITTLE hardship	32%	32%	30%	32%	31%	37%	32%	34%	36%	32%	28%	26%	34%	38%
No hardship	28%	28%	27%	31%	27%	23%	30%	24%	26%	27%	31%	28%	22%	33%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%

TREND:	April 2012	May 2011	July 2008	April 2008
A LOT of hardship	40%	42%	38%	40%
A LITTLE hardship	32%	29%	29%	27%
No hardship	28%	28%	32%	32%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	0%	1%	1%
Unwtd N	804	807	1004	803

[The following questions were asked only of people who have a car: moe=+/-3.7%]

8. Has the price of gasoline caused you to do any of the following recently? [ITEMS WERE ROTATED]

Cut down weekend or vacation travel by car

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Yes	56%	54%	64%	54%	60%	52%	56%	58%	58%	60%	51%	72%	59%	40%
No	44%	46%	36%	46%	40%	48%	44%	42%	42%	40%	49%	28%	41%	60%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

TREND:	April 2012	May 2011	July 2008
Yes	56%	61%	58%
No	44%	39%	42%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	0%	0%
Unwtd N	715	741	915

Cut back household spending on other things

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Yes	57%	56%	61%	52%	57%	61%	54%	65%	67%	59%	46%	73%	57%	44%
No	43%	44%	39%	48%	43%	39%	46%	34%	33%	41%	54%	26%	43%	56%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%

TREND:	April 2012	May 2011	July 2008
Yes	57%	61%	56%
No	43%	39%	44%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	0%	0%
Unwtd N	715	741	915

Carpool with others to work or school

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
Yes	17%	15%	28%	21%	16%	14%	14%	23%	28%	15%	9%	17%	20%	15%
No	83%	85%	72%	79%	84%	86%	86%	76%	71%	84%	91%	83%	80%	84%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%

TREND:	April 2012	May 2011	July 2008
Yes	17%	18%	20%
No	83%	82%	79%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	0%	1%
Unwtd N	715	741	915

The *Monmouth University/NJ Press Media Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on April 11 to 15, 2012 with a statewide random sample of 804 New Jersey adults, including 644 contacted on a landline telephone and 160 on a cell phone. Live interviewing services were provided by Braun Research, Inc. and the telephone sample was obtained from Survey Sampling International. 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 3.5 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>			
36% Dem	49% Male	29% 18-34	64% White
22% Rep	51% Female	39% 35-54	12% Black
42% Ind		32% 55+	15% Hispanic
			9% Asian/Other
<i>Registered Voter Sample (weighted)</i>			
37% Dem	47% Male	24% 18-34	70% White
23% Rep	53% Female	39% 35-54	12% Black
40% Ind		37% 55+	10% Hispanic
			8% Asian/Other

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			RACE		AGE			INCOME		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	White	Black & Hisp	18-34	35-54	55+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	> \$100K
<i>Unweighted N</i>	804	692	112	284	327	160	589	138	160	326	299	202	238	253
<i>moe</i>	3.5%	3.7%	9.3%	5.8%	5.4%	7.8%	4.0%	8.4%	7.8%	5.4%	5.7%	6.9%	6.4%	6.2%

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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