

Contact:

PATRICK MURRAY

732-263-5858 (office)

732-979-6769 (cell)

pdmurray@monmouth.edu

Released:

Wednesday, July 2, 2014

Please attribute this information to:

***Monmouth University/
Asbury Park Press Poll***

For more information:

Monmouth University Polling Institute
West Long Branch, NJ 07764
www.monmouth.edu/polling

NJ SENATE: BOOKER IN LEAD, BUT NOT OVERWHELMING

Obama ratings slip; negative views of ACA, Iraq

Sen. Cory Booker has the early advantage in his bid for reelection, but his lead is tempered by an unsettled electorate. The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* also found that Pres. Barack Obama's ratings have slipped in the Garden State, with residents holding negative views on his handling of Iraq and his signature health care policy.

The early line on this year's New Jersey Senate race has incumbent Cory Booker garnering support from 43% of registered voters and challenger Jeff Bell with 23%. Another 15% say they would vote for another candidate at this early stage of the campaign and 17% are undecided. Booker garners the support of 73% of Democrats and Bell has the backing of 61% of his fellow Republicans. Independents give Booker a 35% to 20% edge. It's worth noting that 18% of independents, 13% of Republicans, and 12% of Democrats say they would back a third party candidate if the election were today.

"It is very unlikely that the pool of independent candidates in this year's senate contest will break into double digits, especially since Democrats and Republicans rarely stray from their respective party's nominee come Election Day. However, the early preference for 'none of the above' among both partisans and independent voters indicate a simmering distrust of the two major parties," said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute. "The underlying fundamentals of Booker's steady, positive job rating should place him in a strong position for November, but voters are less ready to commit to his reelection than they were just a few months ago."

Among the state's registered voters, 48% approve of Booker's performance during his eight months on the job while just 25% disapprove. Another 27% have no opinion. These numbers are similar to the 47%-23% rating he received in April and his 47%-20% rating in February. The poll finds that 68%

of Democrats, 41% of independents, and 31% of Republicans give Booker a positive job rating, while just 12% of Democrats, 27% of independents, and 39% of Republicans give him a negative job rating.

When asked whether Booker should be reelected, 44% of New Jersey voters say he deserves another term while 35% say it is time to have someone else in that Senate seat. Four months ago, a solid majority of 55% said that Booker should be reelected. The number of voters who say it is time for someone new, though, is basically the same as it was in February (33%). The shift in support for Booker has come from those who previously said he deserved reelection but now say they are unsure – 21%, up from 12% in February.

Currently, 44% of Garden State voters have a favorable impression of Cory Booker as a person and just 15% hold an unfavorable view. Another 40% have no opinion. These results are slightly lower, but not much different, than the 49% favorable, 16% unfavorable, and 36% no opinion result measured in February.

Jeff Bell, who was also the GOP nominee for US Senate in 1978 and recently moved back to New Jersey in order to run for Booker's seat, has much lower name recognition. Currently, 12% of voters have a favorable view and 6% have an unfavorable view of Bell, with 82% offering no opinion. That's a slightly better showing than in February, when public opinion of Bell registered at 4% favorable, 3% unfavorable, and 93% with no opinion.

The poll also examined Pres. Obama's standing in the Garden State. Among all adult residents, he currently holds a split 48% approve to 48% disapprove job rating. Among voters, Obama's rating is a decidedly negative 45% approve to 51% disapprove. That is a drop from the positive 49% approve to 47% disapprove rating he received from voters in both April and February and a return to the 44% approve to 50% disapprove levels recorded in January. While 71% of New Jersey Democrats approve of the President's job performance, only 41% of independents and just 19% of Republicans feel the same.

Two issues which do not help Obama's standing are tensions in Iraq and declining regard for his signature health care reforms. On foreign policy, just 30% of New Jerseyans approve of how Obama is handling the situation in Iraq while 46% disapprove, with 24% having no opinion.

On the domestic side, 42% of New Jerseyans hold a favorable view of the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, while a majority of 52% have an unfavorable opinion. This is more negative than the 45% favorable and 49% unfavorable rating recorded in April. The only time New Jerseyans held more positive than negative views of Obamacare was before it was actually launched last October.

"The situation in Iraq is a probably a good metaphor for Pres. Obama's standing with the public. It's difficult to see how it could turn the corner," said Murray.

The Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll also found that New Jersey’s senior U.S. Senator, Bob Menendez, holds a positive 47% approve to 34% disapprove job rating among the state’s voters. This is down slightly from the 51% approve to 31% disapprove rating he held in April.

The Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll was conducted by telephone with 800 New Jersey adults, including 717 registered voters, from June 25 to June 29, 2014. The total sample has a margin of error of ± 3.5 percent and the registered voter 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	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Approve	48%	45%	63%	71%	41%	19%	46%	50%	60%	46%	39%	36%	81%	57%
Disapprove	48%	51%	33%	26%	54%	78%	50%	46%	35%	51%	56%	61%	11%	41%
(VOL) Don't know	4%	4%	4%	3%	6%	3%	4%	4%	5%	3%	4%	3%	8%	2%

TREND: Registered Voters - Second Term	June 2014	April 2014	Feb. 2014	Jan. 2014	Dec. 2013	Sept. 2013	April 2013	Feb. 2013
Approve	45%	49%	49%	44%	47%	50%	55%	60%
Disapprove	51%	47%	47%	50%	47%	41%	42%	33%
(VOL) Don't know	4%	3%	5%	6%	6%	8%	2%	7%
Unwtd N	717	690	690	470	698	674	694	697

TREND: Registered voters - First Term	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	58%	54%	51%	47%	52%	60%	47%	51%	54%	53%	54%	59%
Disapprove	35%	41%	42%	46%	39%	36%	44%	42%	41%	38%	33%	29%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	5%	6%	7%	9%	4%	9%	6%	5%	9%	14%	12%
Unwtd N	726	692	709	693	730	725	726	747	719	716	785	792

[QUESTION 2 WAS ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS ONLY]

2. As you may know there will be an election for U.S. Senate in November. If the election for U.S. Senate was today, would you vote for Cory Booker the Democrat, Jeff Bell the Republican, or some other candidate? [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Cory Booker	43%	73%	35%	9%	42%	44%	52%	43%	37%	36%	65%	61%
Jeff Bell	23%	4%	20%	61%	28%	19%	17%	21%	29%	29%	3%	16%
Other candidate	15%	12%	18%	13%	14%	15%	12%	17%	13%	14%	20%	12%
(VOL) Undecided	17%	9%	25%	16%	14%	20%	15%	17%	19%	20%	10%	8%
(VOL) Will not vote	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	4%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%

[QUESTIONS 3 AND 4 WERE ROTATED]

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

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Approve	47%	47%	48%	61%	41%	33%	46%	49%	53%	44%	46%	44%	51%	59%
Disapprove	32%	34%	22%	19%	37%	49%	36%	29%	24%	35%	37%	37%	21%	26%
(VOL) Don't know	20%	19%	30%	20%	22%	17%	18%	22%	24%	21%	17%	19%	27%	16%

TREND: Registered voters only	June 2014	April 2014	Feb. 2014	Dec. 2013	April 2013	Feb. 2013	April 2012	Feb. 2012	Oct. 2011	Aug. 2011	May 2011	July 2010	Oct. 2008	April 2008	Jan. 2008
Approve	47%	51%	49%	47%	44%	41%	40%	41%	43%	38%	46%	38%	34%	41%	37%
Disapprove	34%	31%	30%	27%	38%	31%	25%	26%	29%	33%	28%	33%	25%	31%	25%
(VOL) Don't know	19%	18%	21%	26%	18%	28%	35%	33%	28%	29%	26%	29%	41%	28%	37%
Unwtd N	717	690	690	698	694	697	692	709	693	730	725	747	900	720	698

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

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Approve	49%	48%	56%	68%	41%	31%	47%	51%	59%	47%	44%	43%	69%	61%
Disapprove	24%	25%	15%	12%	27%	39%	27%	21%	18%	24%	28%	29%	11%	13%
(VOL) Don't know	27%	27%	29%	20%	32%	31%	26%	28%	22%	29%	28%	28%	20%	26%

TREND: Registered voters only	June 2014	April 2014	Feb. 2014	Dec. 2013
Approve	48%	47%	47%	37%
Disapprove	25%	23%	20%	21%
(VOL) Don't know	27%	30%	32%	43%
Unwtd N	717	690	690	698

5. 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	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Should be re-elected	44%	44%	47%	62%	38%	24%	45%	44%	49%	45%	39%	38%	65%	51%
Time to have someone else in office	35%	35%	31%	21%	39%	54%	37%	33%	30%	35%	38%	41%	20%	25%
(VOL) Don't know	21%	21%	22%	17%	23%	22%	18%	23%	20%	19%	23%	21%	15%	24%

TREND: Registered voters only	June 2014	February 2014
Should be re-elected	44%	55%
Time to have someone else in office	35%	33%
(VOL) Don't know	21%	12%
Unwtd N	717	690

[QUESTIONS 6 AND 7 WERE ROTATED]

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

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Favorable	43%	44%	33%	54%	41%	24%	44%	42%	39%	45%	43%	41%	56%	40%
Unfavorable	14%	15%	8%	6%	16%	24%	17%	11%	8%	16%	17%	18%	7%	6%
No opinion	43%	40%	59%	40%	44%	51%	39%	47%	53%	39%	40%	41%	37%	54%

TREND: <i>Registered voters only</i>	June 2014	February 2014	February 2013*	September 2012*
Favorable	44%	49%	55%	49%
Unfavorable	15%	16%	9%	13%
No opinion	40%	36%	36%	38%
Unwtd N	717	690	697	715

*Questions in 2012 & 2013 stated "Newark Mayor Cory Booker"

7. Is your general impression of Jeff Bell favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Favorable	12%	12%	7%	8%	8%	27%	14%	9%	6%	14%	14%	14%	14%	3%
Unfavorable	6%	6%	9%	8%	7%	2%	6%	6%	7%	4%	7%	5%	0%	0%
No opinion	83%	82%	84%	84%	86%	71%	80%	85%	88%	79%	82%	80%	82%	97%

TREND: <i>Registered voters only</i>	June 2014	February 2014
Favorable	12%	4%
Unfavorable	6%	3%
No opinion	82%	93%
Unwtd N	717	344

8. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the situation in Iraq, or do you have no opinion on this?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Approve	30%	29%	36%	47%	25%	10%	27%	33%	26%	32%	32%	27%	41%	31%
Disapprove	46%	49%	31%	31%	50%	68%	48%	43%	39%	50%	47%	54%	16%	42%
No opinion	24%	22%	33%	23%	25%	23%	24%	23%	35%	19%	20%	19%	43%	27%

9. A question on the health reform bill that was signed into law in 2010, known as the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a generally favorable or generally unfavorable opinion of it? [Is that a very or somewhat (favorable/unfavorable) opinion?]

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Very favorable	18%	18%	17%	22%	19%	7%	18%	18%	17%	20%	16%	13%	38%	20%
Somewhat favorable	24%	22%	36%	34%	23%	10%	24%	25%	31%	22%	22%	20%	30%	27%
Somewhat unfavorable	16%	15%	21%	21%	11%	15%	15%	17%	20%	14%	14%	17%	15%	17%
Very unfavorable	36%	39%	22%	15%	42%	64%	39%	34%	27%	39%	41%	46%	8%	27%
No opinion	6%	6%	4%	7%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	7%	5%	9%	9%

TREND:	June 2014	April 2014	December 2013	September 2013
Very favorable	18%	19%	16%	22%
Somewhat favorable	24%	26%	24%	23%
Somewhat unfavorable	16%	17%	20%	13%
Very unfavorable	36%	32%	30%	27%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	5%	10%	16%
Unwtd N	800	803	802	783

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from June 25 to June 29, 2014 with a statewide random sample of 800 adult residents, including 586 contacted via live interview on a landline telephone and 214 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 3.5 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>			
38% Dem	49% Male	30% 18-34	62% White
43% Ind	51% Female	38% 35-54	13% Black
19% Rep		32% 55+	16% Hispanic
			9% Asian/Other
<i>Registered Voter Sample (weighted)</i>			
37% Dem	48% Male	23% 18-34	69% White
42% Ind	52% Female	41% 35-54	12% Black
21% Rep		36% 55+	13% Hispanic
			6% Asian/Other

<i>MARGIN OF ERROR</i>														
	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>REGISTERED VOTER</i>		<i>PARTY ID</i>			<i>GENDER</i>		<i>AGE</i>			<i>RACE</i>		
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Dem</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>Rep</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>18-34</i>	<i>35-54</i>	<i>55+</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
<i>Unweighted N</i>	800	717	83	261	354	172	364	436	162	290	345	608	84	55
<i>moe</i>	3.5%	3.7%	10.8%	6.1%	5.2%	7.5%	5.1%	4.7%	7.7%	5.8%	5.3%	4.0%	10.7%	13.2%

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.

###