

Contact:

PATRICK MURRAY

732-263-5858 (office)

732-979-6769 (cell)

pdmurray@monmouth.edu

Released:

Thursday, July 26, 2012

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

OBAMA, MENENDEZ LEAD IN NEW JERSEY

But GOP voters as enthusiastic as Democrats this year

New Jersey appears on track to retain its “blue” hue in national elections, according to the ***Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll’s*** initial election poll of the season. Unlike 2008, though, GOP voters are as enthusiastic as Democrats about voting this year.

Among registered voters in New Jersey, President Barack Obama leads his Republican challenger Mitt Romney by 51% to 38%. That margin shrinks slightly to 50% to 42% among likely voters. In the U.S. Senate race, incumbent Democrat Bob Menendez leads GOP nominee Joe Kyrillos by 42% to 32% among registered voters and 44% to 35% among likely voters. A significant number of Garden State voters – 21% registered and 17% likely – are still on the fence in the Senate race.

“There is certainly more room for a GOP upset in the Senate race than the presidential one here in New Jersey, but it’s a contest that few voters are taking an interest in,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

The poll found that 72% of Garden State voters have a lot of interest in this year’s presidential contest, but only 49% have a lot of interest in the U.S. Senate race. These numbers are fairly similar to interest levels in July 2008, when 76% of New Jersey voters had a lot of interest in the presidential race and only 47% had the same level of interest in that year’s senate contest.

Just under half (47%) of registered New Jersey voters say they are more enthusiastic than usual about voting this year, compared to 32% who are less enthusiastic and 20% who say they have about the same level of enthusiasm as prior elections. At this point in the 2008 campaign, a similar 50% of voters were more enthused and 29% were less enthused than usual. However, those results showed a partisan gap, with 66% of Democrats being more enthused compared to just 39% of Republicans. This year it is

even, with 51% of Democrats and 53% of Republicans saying they are more enthused than usual. Enthusiasm among independent voters is practically the same now (41%) as it was in 2008 (39%).

“Voter enthusiasm is really a byproduct of frustration. Democrats in 2008 were galvanized by the prospect of moving on from the Bush years. In 2012, Republicans are motivated by the possibility of defeating the incumbent president, even though it is unlikely that New Jersey will award its electoral votes to his challenger,” said Murray.

The poll found that Pres. Obama is seen as better able to handle the economy – 46% of registered voters give him the edge on this issue compared to 37% who choose Romney. The gap is a much tighter 44% to 42% among likely voters. Obama also has a narrow registered voter edge over Romney on being the candidate with a clear plan for solving the country’s problems (34% to 29%), although this disappears among likely voters (34% to 34%). However, Obama has significant advantages when it comes to being a strong and decisive leader (45% to 26%) and caring about people (51% to 20%).

Of the four major party candidates who will be on the statewide ballot in November, only Pres. Obama has decidedly positive personal ratings at 53% favorable to 34% unfavorable. This is equivalent to Gov. Chris Christie’s 52% to 33% rating. The Christie aura does not rub off on his party’s presidential candidate, though. New Jersey voter opinion on Mitt Romney is split at 36% favorable to 38% unfavorable.

Both U.S. Senate candidates have nominal net positive ratings – 36% to 20% for Menendez and 22% to 11% for Kyrillos. But significant portions of the Garden State electorate say they have no real opinion of either the incumbent (40%) or his challenger (56%).

When asked which party should control Congress, 28% say the country would be better off if the Democrats were in charge, 24% say the Republicans would do a better job, and 44% say it makes no difference who is in control.

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by telephone with 678 New Jersey registered voters from July 18 to 22, 2012. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.8 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.)

- As you may know, there will be an election for President in November. How much interest do you have in the upcoming election – a lot, some, a little, or none at all?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
A lot	72%	82%	78%	66%	80%	72%	72%	54%	74%	80%
Some	20%	15%	17%	21%	17%	19%	20%	27%	22%	13%
A little	5%	2%	4%	8%	2%	6%	5%	11%	4%	4%
None at all	3%	1%	1%	5%	0%	3%	3%	8%	0%	2%

TREND:	July 2012	July 2008
A lot	72%	76%
Some	20%	16%
A little	5%	6%
None at all	3%	2%
Unwtd N	678	874

- There will also be an election for U.S. Senator from New Jersey. How much interest do you have in that election – a lot, some, a little, or none at all?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
A lot	49%	57%	51%	44%	55%	46%	51%	22%	55%	56%
Some	30%	27%	26%	30%	32%	29%	30%	38%	29%	27%
A little	14%	11%	14%	17%	12%	16%	13%	23%	11%	13%
None at all	7%	5%	10%	8%	2%	8%	6%	17%	4%	5%

TREND:	July 2012	July 2008
A lot	49%	47%
Some	30%	30%
A little	14%	13%
None at all	7%	10%
Unwtd N	678	874

- If the election for President were today, would you vote for Mitt Romney the Republican, or Barack Obama the Democrat, or some other candidate? [IF UNDECIDED: At this moment, do you lean more towards Romney or more towards Obama?] [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

(with leaners)	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Romney	38%	42%	5%	42%	81%	46%	31%	26%	38%	45%
Obama	51%	50%	89%	44%	10%	47%	54%	68%	49%	44%
Other candidate	3%	1%	0%	6%	0%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%
(VOL) Undecided	8%	6%	6%	9%	8%	5%	11%	4%	10%	9%

Composite Table: Strength of Presidential Vote Choice

If the election for President were today, would you vote for Mitt Romney the Republican, or Barack Obama the Democrat, or some other candidate?

At this moment, do you lean more towards Romney or more towards Obama?

Are you very sure about voting for [NAME]; or might you change your mind before Election Day?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Sure Romney	27%	32%	2%	29%	62%	34%	21%	18%	24%	36%
Weak Romney	4%	4%	1%	4%	8%	5%	3%	3%	6%	3%
Lean Romney	7%	7%	2%	8%	11%	7%	7%	4%	8%	7%
Undecided-Other	11%	8%	6%	15%	9%	7%	14%	6%	13%	11%
Lean Obama	8%	6%	6%	9%	5%	7%	8%	11%	7%	7%
Weak Obama	6%	5%	9%	5%	2%	5%	7%	9%	7%	3%
Sure Obama	38%	39%	74%	29%	3%	35%	39%	47%	36%	35%

4. If the election for Senator were today, would you vote for Joe Kyrillos the Republican, or Bob Menendez the Democrat, or some other candidate? [IF UNDECIDED: At this moment, do you lean more towards Kyrillos or more towards Menendez?] [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

(with leaners)	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Kyrillos	32%	35%	5%	32%	74%	36%	29%	20%	34%	36%
Menendez	42%	44%	76%	32%	13%	40%	43%	45%	39%	44%
Other candidate	5%	4%	2%	9%	2%	4%	5%	7%	6%	3%
(VOL) Undecided	21%	17%	17%	28%	11%	19%	22%	28%	21%	17%

Composite Table: Strength of Senate Vote Choice

If the election for Senator were today, would you vote for Joe Kyrillos the Republican, or Bob Menendez the Democrat, or some other candidate?

At this moment, do you lean more towards Kyrillos or more towards Menendez?

Are you very sure about voting for [NAME]; or might you change your mind before Election Day?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Sure Kyrillos	19%	21%	3%	17%	47%	23%	14%	9%	18%	24%
Weak Kyrillos	8%	9%	2%	6%	22%	8%	9%	6%	10%	8%
Lean Kyrillos	5%	5%	1%	9%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	4%
Undecided-Other	26%	21%	19%	36%	13%	24%	28%	35%	26%	20%
Lean Menendez	7%	7%	6%	10%	2%	8%	5%	9%	7%	5%
Weak Menendez	11%	9%	16%	8%	9%	8%	13%	17%	10%	9%
Sure Menendez	25%	29%	54%	14%	2%	24%	25%	19%	23%	30%

5. I'm going to read you a few names. Please tell me if your general impression of each is favorable or unfavorable, or if you don't really have an opinion. [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

Barack Obama

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Favorable	53%	53%	89%	45%	16%	49%	56%	70%	51%	46%
Unfavorable	34%	38%	4%	38%	73%	38%	30%	20%	34%	42%
No opinion	13%	9%	7%	17%	10%	13%	13%	11%	14%	12%
(VOL) Don't recognize/Refused	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%

Mitt Romney

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Favorable	36%	41%	10%	40%	68%	44%	29%	29%	33%	44%
Unfavorable	38%	39%	66%	31%	12%	34%	41%	41%	39%	36%
No opinion	26%	19%	24%	29%	18%	21%	29%	30%	28%	20%
(VOL) Don't recognize/Refused	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%

Bob Menendez

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Favorable	36%	41%	61%	27%	18%	35%	38%	28%	36%	41%
Unfavorable	20%	22%	4%	24%	37%	24%	16%	12%	18%	25%
No opinion	40%	35%	31%	46%	42%	38%	42%	53%	42%	31%
(VOL) Don't recognize/Refused	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	7%	3%	3%

Joe Kyrillos

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Favorable	22%	25%	4%	24%	46%	26%	19%	14%	21%	28%
Unfavorable	11%	12%	21%	6%	5%	11%	10%	10%	10%	11%
No opinion	56%	54%	60%	59%	43%	55%	56%	64%	60%	47%
(VOL) Don't recognize/Refused	12%	10%	15%	11%	6%	8%	14%	12%	9%	14%

Chris Christie

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Favorable	52%	55%	23%	56%	89%	57%	48%	40%	54%	56%
Unfavorable	33%	35%	59%	28%	9%	30%	36%	38%	31%	34%
No opinion	14%	9%	18%	16%	2%	13%	14%	20%	14%	9%
(VOL) Don't recognize/Refused	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%

6. Compared to past elections, are you more enthusiastic than usual about voting, or less enthusiastic?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
More enthusiastic	47%	52%	51%	41%	53%	48%	46%	45%	44%	51%
Less enthusiastic	32%	27%	28%	35%	31%	27%	37%	36%	34%	27%
(VOL) Same, no different	20%	20%	20%	23%	16%	24%	16%	18%	21%	21%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

TREND:	July 2012	July 2008
More enthusiastic	47%	50%
Less enthusiastic	32%	29%
(VOL) Same	20%	19%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	2%
Unwtd N	678	874

7. Regardless of which presidential candidate you support, please tell me if you think Barack Obama or Mitt Romney would do a better job handling the economy?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Obama better	46%	44%	78%	41%	9%	45%	47%	62%	43%	41%
Romney better	37%	42%	8%	41%	75%	45%	30%	24%	38%	44%
(VOL) Both equally, the same	3%	3%	6%	2%	3%	2%	4%	4%	4%	2%
(VOL) Neither	6%	5%	4%	10%	4%	4%	9%	4%	8%	5%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	6%	4%	7%	9%	4%	10%	6%	8%	7%

8. Now, thinking about different personal qualities, please tell me whether each of the following applies more to Obama or more to Romney, or to both equally. [ITEMS WERE ROTATED]

Is a strong and decisive leader

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Obama more	45%	44%	73%	41%	13%	43%	46%	56%	45%	39%
Romney more	26%	30%	7%	28%	51%	30%	23%	16%	20%	38%
Both equally	17%	16%	14%	16%	21%	17%	17%	17%	21%	11%
(VOL) Neither	7%	6%	3%	10%	10%	6%	9%	6%	10%	5%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	4%	4%	6%	5%	4%	6%	4%	4%	6%

Cares about people like you

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Obama more	51%	50%	82%	44%	20%	48%	54%	60%	50%	48%
Romney more	20%	23%	2%	19%	47%	21%	18%	11%	17%	27%
Both equally	16%	14%	9%	21%	18%	18%	14%	17%	20%	11%
(VOL) Neither	8%	8%	4%	11%	7%	9%	7%	8%	8%	8%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	4%	2%	5%	8%	4%	6%	4%	5%	6%

Has a clear plan for solving the country's problems

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Obama more	34%	34%	66%	24%	9%	33%	36%	40%	34%	33%
Romney more	29%	34%	8%	31%	62%	34%	25%	24%	27%	35%
Both equally	15%	13%	10%	20%	10%	13%	16%	17%	17%	10%
(VOL) Neither	17%	17%	14%	21%	14%	17%	18%	15%	18%	18%
(VOL) Don't know	4%	3%	2%	4%	5%	2%	6%	3%	4%	5%

9. Do you think the country would be better off if the Republicans controlled Congress, if the Democrats controlled Congress, or would the country be the same regardless of which party controlled Congress?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE		
			Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Republicans	24%	28%	1%	24%	60%	30%	19%	16%	22%	30%
Democrats	28%	28%	62%	15%	2%	29%	26%	32%	23%	31%
Same	44%	39%	33%	56%	34%	38%	49%	48%	50%	34%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	4%	4%	6%	4%	3%	6%	3%	5%	5%

TREND:	July 2012	September 2010	July 2010
Republicans	24%	23%	23%
Democrats	28%	27%	21%
Same	44%	42%	51%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	7%	5%
Unwtd N	678	726	747

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on July 18 to 22, 2012 with a statewide random sample of 678 registered voters, including 528 contacted on a landline telephone and 150 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 3.8 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>Registered Voter Sample (weighted)</i>			
34% Dem	47% Male	21% 18-34	70% White
43% Ind	53% Female	43% 35-54	11% Black
23% Rep		36% 55+	11% Hispanic
			8% Asian/Other

	<i>Registered Voters</i>	<i>Likely Voters</i>	<i>MARGIN OF ERROR</i>			<i>GENDER</i>		<i>AGE</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>Unweighted N</i>	678	535	221	276	164	324	354	117	247	309
<i>moe</i>	3.8%	4.2%	6.6%	5.9%	7.7%	5.5%	5.2%	9.1%	6.2%	5.6%

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.

###