

FOR RELEASE: AUGUST 22, 2018

**GOP CHALLENGER CUTS MENENDEZ LEAD IN NJ SENATE RACE,
QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY POLL FINDS;
MURPHY GETS GOOD GRADES OVERALL, MIXED ON TRANSIT**

The New Jersey U.S. Senate campaign is developing into a horse race as Democratic incumbent U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez leads former pharmaceutical executive Bob Hugin, his Republican challenger, by a slim 43 – 37 percent, according to a Quinnipiac University Poll released today.

This compares to a 49 – 32 percent Menendez lead in a March 13 survey by the independent Quinnipiac (KWIN-uh-pe-ack) University Poll.

There is a wide racial gap as Hugin leads 47 – 38 percent among white voters and Menendez leads 51 – 18 percent among non-white voters. Republicans back Hugin 85 – 6 percent while Democrats go to Menendez 74 – 10 percent. Independent voters are divided with 37 percent for Hugin and 33 percent for Menendez.

Menendez was involved in serious wrongdoing, New Jersey voters say 49 – 16 percent, including 38 – 25 percent among Democrats. Among all voters, 31 percent say they haven't heard enough to decide if Menendez was involved in wrongdoing.

Voters give Menendez a negative 40 – 47 percent approval rating and a negative 29 – 47 percent favorability rating.

Hugin gets a slightly positive 24 – 20 percent favorability, but 54 percent of voters haven't heard enough about him to form an opinion.

Ethics in government is the most important issue in deciding how they will vote for U.S. Senator, 25 percent of New Jersey voters say, as 21 percent list taxes; 19 percent cite health care, with 14 percent each for immigration and the economy.

“As Sen. Robert Menendez sees his once dominant lead whittled down to single digits, New Jersey voters are sending a clear message. They are troubled by the ethics cloud hanging over him,” said Mary Snow, polling analyst for the Quinnipiac Poll.

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“While voters prefer Sen. Menendez over Republican Bob Hugin in deep blue New Jersey, they give the incumbent negative approval and favorability ratings,” Snow added.

Gov. Murphy, Sen. Booker, President Trump

New Jersey voters approve 54 – 32 percent of the job Gov. Phil Murphy is doing, up from 44 – 23 percent March 13, shortly after he took office. Approval is 82 – 7 percent among Democrats and 45 – 39 percent among independent voters. Republicans disapprove 64 – 25 percent.

Voters approve 56 – 31 percent of the job U.S. Sen. Cory Booker is doing, compared to 59 – 31 percent March 13. Voters say 51 – 37 percent that Booker should not run for president.

President Donald Trump gets a big negative 33 – 63 percent job approval rating.

Only 4 percent of New Jersey voters give Gov. Murphy an A for the way he is handling mass transit, with 22 percent giving a B, 32 percent giving a C, 12 percent at D and 14 percent flunking the governor on mass transit.

He gets similar grades for handling roads and highways: A – 5 percent, B – 25 percent, C – 32 percent, D – 13 percent, F – 13 percent.

“New Jersey voters are warming to Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy. They give him less than stellar grades, however, on his handling of mass transit as commuters struggle with delays and cancellations on NJ TRANSIT this summer,” Snow said.

Legalized Marijuana

New Jersey voters support 62 – 33 percent allowing adults to legally possess small amounts of marijuana for personal use, compared to 59 – 37 percent March 13.

Voters also support 63 – 27 percent erasing criminal records for marijuana possession.

By a smaller 50 – 45 percent, voters support the sale of marijuana in their community.

From August 15 – 20, Quinnipiac University surveyed 908 New Jersey voters with a margin of error of +/- 4.6 percentage points, including the design effect. Live interviewers call landlines and cell phones.

The Quinnipiac University Poll, directed by Douglas Schwartz, Ph.D., conducts nationwide public opinion surveys, and statewide polls in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Florida, Ohio, Virginia, Iowa, Colorado and Texas as a public service and for research.

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1. If the election for United States Senator were being held today, and the candidates were Robert Menendez the Democrat and Bob Hugin the Republican, for whom would you vote?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | COLLEGE DEG | Yes |
| Menendez | 43% | 6% | 74% | 33% | 42% | 43% | 46% | 30% |
| Hugin | 37 | 85 | 10 | 37 | 42 | 33 | 41 | 52 |
| SMONE ELSE (VOL) | 2 | 2 | - | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| WLDN'T VOTE (VOL) | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | - | 3 |
| DK/NA | 16 | 7 | 14 | 23 | 11 | 21 | 10 | 13 |

| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|-----|-----|
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Menendez | 47% | 48% | 44% | 36% | 35% | 41% | 38% | 51% |
| Hugin | 22 | 30 | 38 | 51 | 55 | 39 | 47 | 18 |
| SMONE ELSE (VOL) | 6 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| WLDN'T VOTE (VOL) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| DK/NA | 23 | 18 | 14 | 9 | 6 | 16 | 12 | 26 |

2. Is your opinion of Robert Menendez favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about him?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | COLLEGE DEG | Yes |
| Favorable | 29% | 7% | 49% | 23% | 29% | 29% | 23% | 21% |
| Unfavorable | 47 | 74 | 32 | 49 | 52 | 44 | 59 | 56 |
| Hvn't hrd enough | 20 | 17 | 16 | 23 | 15 | 23 | 15 | 19 |
| REFUSED | 4 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 |

| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
|------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|-----|-----|
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Favorable | 28% | 25% | 35% | 30% | 20% | 23% | 22% | 43% |
| Unfavorable | 31 | 41 | 52 | 60 | 63 | 52 | 57 | 28 |
| Hvn't hrd enough | 40 | 27 | 11 | 7 | 13 | 22 | 17 | 24 |
| REFUSED | 1 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

3. Is your opinion of Bob Hugin favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about him?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... | |
|------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|-------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | COLLEGE DEG | Yes |
| Favorable | 24% | 48% | 8% | 26% | 27% | 21% | 27% | 33% |
| Unfavorable | 20 | 5 | 34 | 14 | 21 | 18 | 22 | 16 |
| Hvn't hrd enough | 54 | 46 | 58 | 54 | 50 | 58 | 49 | 48 |
| REFUSED | 3 | 1 | - | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Favorable | 7% | 18% | 26% | 37% | 34% | 26% | 30% | 12% |
| Unfavorable | 19 | 18 | 26 | 18 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 21 |
| Hvn't hrd enough | 72 | 58 | 47 | 43 | 44 | 53 | 49 | 65 |
| REFUSED | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |

4. What is the most important issue to you in deciding how to vote in this year's election for United States Senator: the economy, taxes, ethics in government, immigration, or health care?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|-------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | COLLEGE DEG | Yes |
| Economy | 14% | 18% | 10% | 16% | 17% | 12% | 15% | 13% |
| Taxes | 21 | 31 | 15 | 21 | 20 | 22 | 20 | 23 |
| Ethics in government | 25 | 16 | 27 | 28 | 25 | 24 | 30 | 24 |
| Immigration | 14 | 22 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 16 | 11 | 16 |
| Health care | 19 | 11 | 29 | 14 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 |
| SOMETHING ELSE (VOL) | 3 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| DK/NA | 4 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Economy | 13% | 19% | 15% | 11% | 17% | 11% | 14% | 14% |
| Taxes | 20 | 27 | 20 | 19 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 21 |
| Ethics in government | 30 | 24 | 25 | 24 | 25 | 29 | 27 | 20 |
| Immigration | 12 | 7 | 18 | 19 | 12 | 15 | 13 | 16 |
| Health care | 23 | 17 | 15 | 20 | 15 | 21 | 18 | 22 |
| SOMETHING ELSE (VOL) | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| DK/NA | - | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 5 |

8. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Robert Menendez is handling his job as United States Senator?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... | |
|------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|-------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | COLLEGE DEG | Yes |
| Approve | 40% | 17% | 57% | 37% | 39% | 41% | 38% | 30% |
| Disapprove | 47 | 75 | 27 | 50 | 51 | 43 | 51 | 59 |
| DK/NA | 13 | 7 | 16 | 13 | 10 | 16 | 11 | 11 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | | Non |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Approve | 46% | 39% | 43% | 35% | 32% | 37% | 34% | 52% |
| Disapprove | 33 | 45 | 47 | 58 | 60 | 50 | 55 | 30 |
| DK/NA | 21 | 16 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 14 | 11 | 17 |

9. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... | |
|------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|-------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | COLLEGE DEG | Yes |
| Approve | 33% | 82% | 4% | 33% | 38% | 28% | 35% | 48% |
| Disapprove | 63 | 11 | 94 | 61 | 58 | 67 | 62 | 46 |
| DK/NA | 5 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 6 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | | Non |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Approve | 17% | 33% | 32% | 44% | 48% | 36% | 41% | 15% |
| Disapprove | 76 | 61 | 65 | 54 | 47 | 61 | 54 | 79 |
| DK/NA | 7 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 6 |

10. Do you think Cory Booker should run for president in 2020 or not?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... COLLEGE DEG | |
|------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | Yes | No |
| Yes/Should | 37% | 19% | 53% | 32% | 37% | 38% | 35% | 31% |
| No | 51 | 73 | 35 | 54 | 54 | 48 | 56 | 56 |
| DK/NA | 12 | 8 | 11 | 14 | 9 | 14 | 8 | 14 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Yes/Should | 47% | 42% | 37% | 30% | 33% | 34% | 33% | 47% |
| No | 44 | 50 | 46 | 59 | 60 | 53 | 56 | 39 |
| DK/NA | 9 | 8 | 17 | 11 | 7 | 13 | 11 | 13 |

11. In general, how satisfied are you with the way things are going in New Jersey today; are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... COLLEGE DEG | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | Yes | No |
| Very satisfied | 3% | 3% | 5% | 2% | 4% | 2% | 2% | 3% |
| Smwht satisfied | 45 | 29 | 63 | 38 | 42 | 49 | 40 | 41 |
| Smwht dissatisfied | 30 | 32 | 24 | 35 | 32 | 28 | 36 | 30 |
| Very dissatisfied | 20 | 35 | 7 | 23 | 21 | 19 | 21 | 25 |
| DK/NA | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Very satisfied | 6% | 1% | 1% | 5% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 4% |
| Smwht satisfied | 56 | 40 | 49 | 35 | 37 | 44 | 41 | 54 |
| Smwht dissatisfied | 26 | 39 | 29 | 27 | 36 | 30 | 33 | 26 |
| Very dissatisfied | 10 | 19 | 19 | 29 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 13 |
| DK/NA | 2 | - | 2 | 3 | - | 2 | 1 | 3 |

12. As you may know, U.S. Senator Robert Menendez was indicted on charges of bribery, but the case was dismissed after the jury failed to reach a verdict. Do you think that Senator Menendez was involved in any serious wrongdoing, not involved in any serious wrongdoing, or haven't you heard enough about it?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... COLLEGE DEG | |
|------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | Yes | No |
| Yes/Involved | 49% | 65% | 38% | 51% | 57% | 43% | 57% | 53% |
| No | 16 | 9 | 25 | 11 | 17 | 15 | 15 | 13 |
| Hvn't hrd enough | 31 | 23 | 32 | 35 | 23 | 38 | 25 | 28 |
| REFUSED | 4 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Yes/Involved | 37% | 51% | 48% | 56% | 62% | 48% | 54% | 39% |
| No | 12 | 15 | 25 | 15 | 15 | 13 | 14 | 19 |
| Hvn't hrd enough | 48 | 33 | 23 | 23 | 20 | 33 | 27 | 40 |
| REFUSED | 3 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 2 |

13. Do you support or oppose allowing adults in New Jersey to legally possess small amounts of marijuana for personal use?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... COLLEGE DEG | |
|---------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | Yes | No |
| Support | 62% | 41% | 78% | 59% | 65% | 60% | 68% | 54% |
| Oppose | 33 | 52 | 21 | 34 | 29 | 37 | 29 | 38 |
| DK/NA | 5 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 8 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Support | 90% | 65% | 63% | 46% | 63% | 59% | 61% | 66% |
| Oppose | 10 | 29 | 33 | 47 | 29 | 37 | 33 | 31 |
| DK/NA | - | 6 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 3 |

14. Do you support or oppose erasing criminal records for marijuana possession?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... COLLEGE DEG | |
|---------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | Yes | No |
| Support | 63% | 46% | 74% | 61% | 66% | 60% | 67% | 62% |
| Oppose | 27 | 41 | 20 | 28 | 27 | 28 | 27 | 27 |
| DK/NA | 10 | 14 | 6 | 11 | 7 | 12 | 6 | 11 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Support | 81% | 63% | 62% | 60% | 68% | 62% | 65% | 61% |
| Oppose | 16 | 28 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 |
| DK/NA | 3 | 9 | 10 | 13 | 6 | 11 | 9 | 12 |

15. Would you support or oppose the sale of marijuana in your community?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... COLLEGE DEG | |
|---------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | | | | | | | Yes | No |
| Support | 50% | 28% | 66% | 46% | 54% | 47% | 55% | 43% |
| Oppose | 45 | 66 | 30 | 48 | 42 | 48 | 40 | 50 |
| DK/NA | 5 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 7 |
| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| Support | 81% | 55% | 51% | 33% | 52% | 47% | 49% | 54% |
| Oppose | 16 | 41 | 46 | 59 | 43 | 47 | 45 | 44 |
| DK/NA | 3 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 2 |

16. What letter grade would you give Governor Murphy for his handling of mass transit: A, B, C, D, or F?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... COLLEGE DEG | |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------------------------|----|
| | | | | | | | Yes | No |
| A | 4% | 2% | 6% | 3% | 4% | 3% | 4% | 3% |
| B | 22 | 11 | 28 | 24 | 22 | 23 | 19 | 21 |
| C | 32 | 26 | 39 | 30 | 29 | 35 | 32 | 30 |
| D | 12 | 21 | 7 | 11 | 14 | 10 | 13 | 10 |
| F | 14 | 21 | 4 | 19 | 17 | 12 | 16 | 17 |
| DK/NA | 16 | 20 | 16 | 13 | 15 | 16 | 16 | 19 |

| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|-----|-----|
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| A | 2% | 3% | 8% | 1% | 3% | 4% | 3% | 5% |
| B | 42 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 24 | 21 | 27 |
| C | 23 | 38 | 39 | 28 | 33 | 29 | 31 | 36 |
| D | 7 | 13 | 10 | 16 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 11 |
| F | 10 | 15 | 15 | 16 | 19 | 14 | 16 | 9 |
| DK/NA | 16 | 14 | 11 | 20 | 16 | 18 | 17 | 12 |

17. What letter grade would you give Governor Murphy for his handling of roads and highways: A, B, C, D, or F?

| | Tot | Rep | Dem | Ind | Men | Wom | WHITE..... COLLEGE DEG | |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------------------------|----|
| | | | | | | | Yes | No |
| A | 5% | 5% | 8% | 2% | 7% | 3% | 4% | 6% |
| B | 25 | 8 | 35 | 26 | 25 | 25 | 22 | 22 |
| C | 32 | 22 | 37 | 33 | 31 | 33 | 34 | 25 |
| D | 13 | 22 | 8 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 16 |
| F | 13 | 26 | 3 | 16 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| DK/NA | 11 | 16 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 12 | 12 | 15 |

| | AGE IN YRS..... | | | | WHITE..... | | Non | |
|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|------------|-----|-----|-----|
| | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | Men | Wom | Wht | Wht |
| A | 7% | 4% | 6% | 2% | 6% | 3% | 5% | 5% |
| B | 35 | 29 | 25 | 16 | 19 | 24 | 22 | 34 |
| C | 30 | 34 | 35 | 28 | 32 | 29 | 30 | 37 |
| D | 10 | 14 | 12 | 17 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 11 |
| F | 11 | 13 | 13 | 16 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 8 |
| DK/NA | 6 | 6 | 9 | 20 | 12 | 14 | 13 | 6 |