



PRESS RELEASES

Stockton Poll: Menendez Has Double-Digit Lead Over Hugin

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Galloway, N.J. – Democratic incumbent Bob Menendez has opened a 12-percentage-point lead over Republican Bob Hugin in New Jersey’s U.S. Senate race as Democrats focus on opposing President Donald Trump and GOP control in Washington, according to a Stockton University Poll released today.

Menendez leads with 51 percent to 39 percent for Hugin in the poll of 598 likely voters. Three percent support Libertarian Murray Sabrin while 6 percent want another candidate or are undecided.

Menendez opens up double-digit lead over Hugin in U.S. Senate Race in N...



The results mark a turnaround for the Democrat, who led by only two points in a Stockton poll released Oct. 1. Then, Menendez was supported by just 80 percent of Democrats; that number has climbed to 87 percent. Hugin still leads among independents, but Menendez has gained six points among that voting group, with the percentage spread moving from 44-to-31 to 44-to-37. Hugin's Republican support remains largely unchanged from 88 percent earlier to 90 percent.

The Stockton Polling Institute of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University interviewed 598 adult residents of New Jersey who were screened as likely voters. Live interviewers called landline and cell telephones Oct. 25-31, 2018. The poll's margin of error is +/- 4.0 percentage points.

Democrats outnumber Republicans in New Jersey by 900,000 registered voters. Several results in the poll point to opposition to Trump and the Republican majority in Congress as prime motivators for voters in the Senate race. Asked to pick the main factor in deciding their votes from a list of choices, 35 percent choose "President Donald Trump" and 36 percent choose "Control of the Senate." Only 19 percent choose corruption charges against Bob Menendez that ended in a mistrial, and only 4 percent choose Bob Hugin's actions regarding drug prices as CEO of a pharmaceutical company. Ninety-five percent of Democrats say Trump or Senate control is motivating their votes.

Thirty-seven percent say Trump is doing a good or excellent job as president, with 10 percent rating him as fair and 52 percent as poor. A 55-percent majority say the next senator from New Jersey should generally oppose Trump's agenda, while 37 percent say he should support it.

"Even though his name is not on the ballot, President Trump's presence appears to be at the top of the ticket in New Jersey," said Michael W. Klein, interim executive director of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy. "Our poll indicates that New Jersey's voters oppose the president, and the best way to express that opposition at the ballot box is to re-elect Senator Menendez, despite any misgivings they might have about the senator himself."

Health care is named by 15 percent as the top issue in this election, with immigration named by 10 percent. Taxes, including income and property taxes, are cited by 12 percent as the top issue. Ten percent cite President Trump as the issue, and 5 percent cite giving Democrats control in Congress. In a generic House race question, 56 percent want the Democrat to win in their congressional district with 36 percent supporting the Republican.

An unrelentingly negative advertising blitz in the Senate race has taken its toll on both candidates' images. Only 23 percent view Menendez favorably, with 44 percent holding unfavorable views. Only 25 percent have favorable views of Hugin, with 34 percent unfavorable. But even those results hold a silver lining for Menendez: He had been viewed negatively by 54 percent in the Oct. 1 poll. More people – from 6 percent on Oct. 1 to 20 percent – now say they are uncertain what to think of him. Meanwhile, Hugin's favorable ratings declined and his negative ratings went up in the past month.

Menendez holds a small lead among male voters but has a 15-percentage-point edge among women. The candidates are tied among white voters, while Menendez holds strong leads among racial and ethnic minority voters. Menendez leads in northern New Jersey counties, where most of the population resides, and Hugin leads in South Jersey.

A state bond act question is also on the Nov. 6 ballot. The proposal would have the state borrow \$500 million to provide grants to schools, school districts and county colleges for construction, expansion, equipment, school security and school water system projects. In the poll, 63 percent support the bond act. 26 percent oppose it and 11 percent are unsure.

John Froonjian, who manages the Stockton Polling Institute, noted that past Stockton polls have overstated support for bond acts. "People may tell survey interviewers they support spending for a good cause but turn more frugal in the voting booth," Froonjian said. He said that based on past experience, he expects the level of support may be lower in the actual vote.

For full poll results, go to Poll Results (<https://stockton.edu/hughes-center/polling/polling-results-2018.html>)

About the Hughes Center

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy (www.stockton.edu/hughescenter) at Stockton University serves as a catalyst for research, analysis and innovative policy solutions on the economic, social and cultural issues facing New Jersey, and promotes the civic life of New Jersey through engagement, education and research. The center is named for William J. Hughes, whose distinguished career includes service in the U.S. House of Representatives, Ambassador to Panama and as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Stockton. The Hughes Center can be found on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUZ2StL36unDd0jyfOaFkNg>), and can be followed on Facebook @StocktonHughesCenter (<https://www.facebook.com/StocktonHughesCenter>), Twitter @hughescenter (<https://twitter.com/HughesCenter>) and Instagram @ stockton_hughes_center (https://www.instagram.com/stockton_hughes_center/) .

Methodology

The poll of New Jersey adults screened as likely voters was conducted by the Stockton Polling Institute of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy Oct. 25-31. Live interviewers who are mostly Stockton University students called cell phones and landlines from the Stockton University campus. Braun Research supplemented the field work by completing 200 telephone interviews. Overall, 71 percent of interviews were conducted on cell phones and 29 percent on landline phones. A total of 744 registered voters were interviewed, and 598 were screened as likely voters based on criteria including self-professed intention to vote on a scale of 1 to 10, having voted in New Jersey's 2017 election, how closely voters are following the election, identification of their local polling place or having applied for or received a mail or absentee ballot. Both cell and landline samples included a mix of voter list and random digit dialing (RDD) sample. Data are weighted based on U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year data for New Jersey on variables of age, ethnicity, education level, sex and region. The poll's margin of error is +/- 4.0 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. MOE is higher for subsets. The Stockton Polling Institute is a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

New Jersey statewide poll 2
Stockton Polling Institute
Oct. 24-30, 2018
Weighted and screened frequencies

Q1. There will be an election in New Jersey on November 6th. If the election for U.S. senator from New Jersey were held today, would you vote for:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bob Menendez, the Democrat	271	45.3	48.5	48.5
	Bob Hugin, the Republican	220	36.7	39.4	87.8
	NOT SURE/DON'T KNOW	29	4.8	5.1	92.9
	Or some other candidate?	19	3.1	3.3	96.3
	Murray Sabrin, the Libertarian	15	2.6	2.7	99.0
	REFUSE	4	.6	.7	99.7
	NOBODY	2	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	559	93.4	100.0	
Missing	System	40	6.6		
Total		598	100.0		

Q1A. If you had to pick a candidate for U.S. Senate today, would you lean even a little toward

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bob Menendez, the Democrat	12	2.0	34.7	34.7
	NOT SURE/DON'T KNOW	8	1.4	24.9	59.6
	Bob Hugin, the Republican	4	.7	12.0	71.6
	Or some other candidate?	4	.7	11.9	83.5
	REFUSE	3	.5	8.1	91.7
	Murray Sabrin, the Libertarian	2	.3	5.6	97.3
	NOBODY	1	.2	2.7	100.0
	Total	34	5.7	100.0	
Missing	System	564	94.3		
Total		598	100.0		

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