

Rutgers - Eagleton Poll

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MENENDEZ HOLDS FOUR PERCENT EDGE IN SENATE RACE

SUPPORT FOR CIVIL UNIONS, NOT FOR GAY MARRIAGE

As the campaign for the U.S. Senate heads into its final days, Democrat Robert Menendez leads Republican Tom Kean, Jr. among likely voters by a margin of 46 percent to 42 percent in a race where voters hold negative political and personal views of both candidates.

The latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, conducted Oct. 29 through 31, also found that a majority of Garden State residents – 54 percent – agreed with the recent New Jersey Supreme Court decision requiring the State Legislature to extend the legal rights of married couples to gay and lesbian couples. But residents prefer the Legislature to allow civil unions instead of gay marriages by a margin of 40 percent to 29 percent.

THE SENATE RACE

Menendez's four-point lead is just within the margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4.4 percent for the sample of 500 likely voters. The poll found that unfavorable views of both candidates increased substantially from the last Rutgers-Eagleton Poll Sept. 24-26. Forty-two percent of likely voters view Menendez unfavorably, up from 27 percent in September, and 34

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percent view him favorably. Thirty-four percent of voters hold an unfavorable view of Kean, up 13 points from September, and 40 percent view him favorably. Twenty-eight percent don't think either candidate is more honest and trustworthy than the other, up 12 points since September. Forty-five percent said Kean's campaign ads have been unfair, compared to 37 percent for Menendez.

The poll asked voters to consider the personal qualities of Kean and Menendez in deciding which candidate voters would prefer to have over for dinner, coach a child in sports, or manage the family finances. One-fifth to nearly one-third of likely voters said neither, depending on the question. Voters did, however, prefer Kean over Menendez on each question, with about one-third choosing Kean in each instance.

"The candidates' attacks and counter-attacks are taking their toll," said Murray Edelman, distinguished scholar at the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling. "It is a sad commentary on politics today that we think so poorly of the candidates whom we will be electing to represent us."

Most damaging for Kean is that 37 percent now associate him very closely with the policies and actions of the Bush administration, an increase of 20 points from the September poll. Also, only 36 percent of likely voters approve of Bush's handling of his job as president. Thirty-four percent of voters associate Menendez very closely with Governor Jon Corzine, who appointed Menendez to succeed him in the Senate in January. But Corzine is much more popular than Bush in New Jersey, with a job approval rating of 54 percent among likely voters.

"As in other Senate races this year, Bush appears to be a major drag on the Republican candidate," Edelman said.

Voters learned more about the candidates in the past month, although there is still room for improvement. Fifty-eight percent know that Menendez is a U.S. senator, up 11 points from September. But 8 percent think that Kean is also a U.S. senator.

Kean is seen as more honest and trustworthy than Menendez by a margin of 39 percent to 24 percent. Voters, however, were more likely to say Menendez has the experience needed to represent New Jersey in the Senate, 50 percent to Kean's 31 percent, and more likely to stand up to his own party leaders when he disagrees with them, 48 percent to Kean's 34 percent. In addition, by a margin of 49 percent to 33 percent, New Jerseyans believe that Menendez is more likely than Kean to share their views on the war in Iraq.

"Kean's increasing inability to communicate his independence from Bush is particularly hurting him because of the unpopularity of Bush and the war," Edelman said.

Both campaigns have been successful at promoting their key themes. When voters were asked what issue was most important to them in deciding for whom to vote, the most frequent answer was the war in Iraq and the war on terror, at 17 percent, and ethics and personal integrity, at 14 percent.

"Criticism of the Bush administration's conduct of the war is a key part of Menendez's campaign rhetoric, while Kean has repeatedly attacked Menendez on ethics," Edelman observed. "To some extent, each candidate has had an effect on voters' views about what matters most in this election."

GAY MARRIAGE AND THE NEW JERSEY SUPREME COURT

When all adults were asked how the State Legislature should carry out the recent New Jersey Supreme Court ruling on the marriage rights of same-sex couples, 40 percent said lawmakers should pass a law allowing civil unions, and 29 percent said the Legislature should

allow same-sex marriage. Another 16 percent volunteered that the Legislature should refuse to follow the court's ruling to extend the legal rights of married couples to same-sex couples.

When asked about amending the New Jersey Constitution to define marriage as being only between a man and a woman, 54 percent of adults said they would support such an amendment and 38 percent said they would oppose it.

“While there is substantial support for civil unions, it is hard to imagine a scenario where the Legislature moves in the direction of gay marriage,” Edelman said.

Nearly half of the likely voters who said they would support Kean disagreed with the court's decision, while more than two-thirds of Menendez supporters said they agreed. Voters backing Kean were more likely to favor civil unions over gay marriage by a margin of 54 percent to 11 percent. Forty-three percent of Menendez supporters backed civil unions, and 35 percent favored same-sex marriage. Seventy-three percent of Kean supporters favored amending the state Constitution to define marriage as being only between a man and a woman, while half of Menendez voters opposed such an amendment.

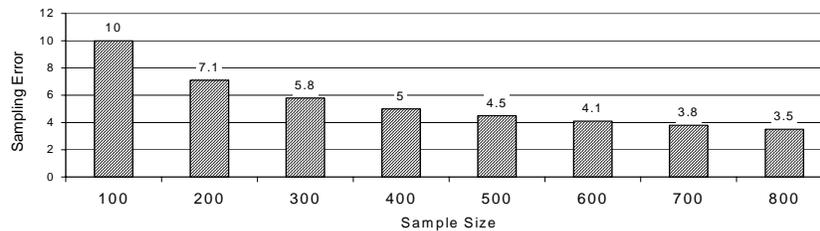
“These numbers indicate that a ruling by the New Jersey Supreme Court legalizing gay marriage could have been an election bonanza for Kean,” Edelman said. “But the current ruling is really not an issue in the campaign.”

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP 161-1) NOVEMBER 2, 2006

The latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted Oct. 29-31, 2006 with a scientifically selected random sample of 809 New Jersey adults. This sample yielded 695 adult residents registered to vote in New Jersey, and 500 adult residents considered likely to vote. Unless otherwise noted, most of the figures in this release are based on the statewide sample of likely voters. Sampling and data collection were conducted by Schulman, Ronca, & Bucuvalas, Inc (SRBI).

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. The sampling error for a sample of 809 adults is ± 3.4 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey adults were found to have a favorable opinion of a senatorial candidate, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.6 and 53.4 percent (50 ± 3.4) had all New Jersey adults been interviewed, rather than just a sample. The margin of sampling error for 695 registered voters is ± 3.7 percent; the margin of sampling error for 500 likely voters is ± 4.4 percent. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. The following chart shows the relationship between sample size and sampling error. Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects. This background memo contains the verbatim wording of all questions featured in the release.

Sample Size and Sampling Error



Please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the following people. If you haven't heard of them or don't have an opinion of them, just tell me and we'll move on (PF1-PF2) [ROTATE PF1-PF2]

| October 2006 Registered and Likely Voters | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------------|---------------|------------|-------|-----|
| | Favorable | Unfavorable | Haven't heard | No opinion | DK/RF | (n) |
| Menendez | | | | | | |
| Oct. 2006 Likely voters | 34% | 42% | 5% | 17% | 3% | 500 |
| Oct. 2006 Registered voters | 29% | 36% | 9% | 22% | 4% | 695 |
| Sept. 2006 Likely voters | 32% | 27% | 13% | 24% | 4% | 404 |
| Sept. 2006 Registered voters | 27% | 23% | 21% | 26% | 3% | 660 |
| March 2006 Registered voters | 23% | 13% | 25% | 32% | 7% | 676 |
| Kean Jr. | | | | | | |
| Oct. 2006 Likely voters | 40% | 34% | 3% | 20% | 3% | 500 |
| Oct. 2006 Registered voters | 32% | 29% | 11% | 24% | 4% | 695 |
| Sept. 2006 Likely voters | 33% | 21% | 11% | 33% | 2% | 404 |
| Sept. 2006 Registered voters | 27% | 18% | 19% | 33% | 3% | 660 |
| March 2006 Registered voters | 26% | 13% | 21% | 32% | 8% | 676 |

As you may know, there will be an election for the United States Senate from New Jersey in November. How much interest do you have in this election – a lot, some, a little, or none at all? (RL2)

| | A lot | Some | A little | None | DK/RF | (n) |
|-----------------------|-------|------|----------|------|-------|-----|
| October 2006 | | | | | | |
| Likely voters | 68% | 30% | 2% | --- | --- | 500 |
| Registered voters | 45% | 29% | 16% | 10% | 1% | 695 |
| September 2006 | | | | | | |
| Likely voters | 58% | 31% | 8% | 2% | 1% | 404 |
| Registered voters | 38% | 35% | 19% | 8% | 1% | 660 |

If the election for the U.S. Senate were held today, for whom would you vote (ROTATE) Robert Menendez, the Democrat, Tom Kean Jr., the Republican, or some other candidate for Senate? (S1)
[Includes "Leaners" from S1a]

| | | 2006 Senate Race | | | | | (n) |
|------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|------------|
| | | Menendez | Kean, Jr. | Other Candidate | Would Not Vote | DK/RF/Undecided* | |
| Oct. 2006 | Likely voters | 46% | 42% | --- | --- | 13% | 500 |
| | Registered voters | 46% | 37% | --- | 1% | 15% | 695 |
| Party ID | Democrat | 84% | 6% | --- | --- | 9% | 172 |
| | Republican | 8% | 84% | --- | 1% | 8% | 141 |
| | Independent | 38% | 47% | 1% | --- | 13% | 152 |
| Gender | Male | 47% | 44% | 1% | --- | 9% | 241 |
| | Female | 44% | 40% | --- | --- | 15% | 259 |
| Race | White | 39% | 48% | --- | --- | 12% | 416 |
| | Non-white | 67% | 21% | --- | --- | 12% | 71 |
| Age | 18-29 | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| | 30-49 | 44% | 40% | --- | --- | 15% | 166 |
| | 50-64 | 49% | 40% | 1% | 1% | 10% | 187 |
| | 65+ | 41% | 49% | --- | --- | 10% | 129 |
| Education | High school or below | 41% | 43% | 1% | 1% | 15% | 108 |
| | Some college and above | 49% | 41% | --- | --- | 11% | 389 |
| Region | North | 48% | 37% | 1% | --- | 14% | 225 |
| | Central | 40% | 52% | --- | 1% | 7% | 136 |
| | South | 48% | 42% | --- | --- | 10% | 130 |
| Sept. 2006 | Likely voters | 45% | 44% | 1% | -- | 10% | 404 |
| Sept. 2006 | Registered voters | 40% | 42% | 3% | 2% | 15% | 660 |
| June 2006 | Registered voters | 42% | 38% | 1% | 2% | 17% | 699 |
| March 2006 | Registered voters | 40% | 35% | 2% | 3% | 20% | 676 |

Note: All demographic cross-tabulations are for likely voters.

**Breakouts: For likely voters, Don't Know/Undecided=10%, Refused=3%; For registered voters, Don't Know/Undecided=12%, Refused=3%.*

***Subgroup contains fewer than 50 respondents.*

Are you very sure about voting for [FILL NAME – Q.S1/Q.S1a]; or might you change your mind before Election Day? (S2)

| | Very sure | Might change | DK/RF | (n) |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|-------|-----|
| October 2006 | | | | |
| Likely voters | 80% | 18% | 3% | 500 |
| Menendez likely voters | 77% | 20% | 3% | 211 |
| Kean, Jr. likely voters | 82% | 15% | 3% | 203 |
| September 2006 | | | | |
| Likely voters | 60% | 36% | 4% | 404 |
| Menendez likely voters | 60% | 36% | 4% | 197 |
| Kean, Jr. likely voters | 60% | 37% | 4% | 203 |

Note: Totals for Menendez and Kean, Jr. voters do not include respondents who said they have already cast an absentee ballot for one of the two candidates.

What is the most important issue to you personally in determining whom to vote for? (S11) [DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE ANSWER – PROBE FOR MOST IMPORTANT.]

| Issues in the 2006 Senate Campaign | Percentage of voters reporting issue as most important | |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| | October 2006 Likely voters | September 2006 Likely Voters |
| The economy/jobs | 5% | 6% |
| Iraq/war on terror | 18% | 12% |
| Corporate Responsibility | 3% | 1% |
| Taxes and tax reform | 8% | 9% |
| Property taxes | 11% | 21% |
| Social security/retirement | 1% | 1% |
| Morals/ethics/personal integrity | 14% | 10% |
| Health care | 2% | 2% |
| Environment | 1% | 1% |
| Education | 4% | 8% |
| Abortion/choice | 1% | 1% |
| Crime | 2% | 2% |
| No issue/party | 3% | 1% |
| Other | 19% | 16% |
| DK/RF/Nothing | 9% | 8% |
| (n) | (500) | (404) |

e to find out how much you have heard or read about the candidates for Senate so far. I'm going to read you a list of public offices and as I read each one, please tell me if Robert Menendez now holds or has ever held this position? (G3) [ROTATE G3 WITH G4] [ROTATE LIST]

| Menendez | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|-----|-------|-----|
| | Yes, he now holds or has held this position | No | DK/RF | (n) |
| October 2006 | | | | |
| Likely voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 58% | 21% | 21% | 500 |
| October 2006 | | | | |
| Registered voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 49% | 21% | 31% | 695 |
| September 2006 | | | | |
| Likely voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 47% | 26% | 26% | 404 |
| September 2006 | | | | |
| Registered voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 36% | 28% | 37% | 660 |
| March 2006 | | | | |
| Registered voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 26% | 31% | 43% | 676 |

Correct responses are in bold type.

We would like to find out how much you have heard or read about the candidates for Senate so far. I'm going to read you a list of public offices and as I read each one, please tell me if Tom Kean, Jr. now holds or has ever held this position? (G4) [ROTATE G3 WITH G4] [ROTATE LIST]

| Kean | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|------------|-------|-----|
| | Yes, he now holds or has held this position | No | DK/RF | (n) |
| October 2006 | | | | |
| Likely voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 8% | 70% | 22% | 500 |
| October 2006 | | | | |
| Registered voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 11% | 57% | 32% | 695 |
| September 2006 | | | | |
| Likely voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 6% | 67% | 27% | 404 |
| September 2006 | | | | |
| Registered voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 9% | 55% | 36% | 660 |
| March 2006 | | | | |
| Registered voters | | | | |
| United States Senator | 8% | 48% | 44% | 676 |

Correct responses are in bold type.

CA1. Just relying on your sense of the personal qualities of the candidates, and not their party labels, which one of the candidates (ROTATE AND READ OPTIONS #1-2), would you prefer to... (READ AND ROTATE) [IF SOME OTHER CANDIDATE, ASK:] If you had to choose between...?

POLL 161 / Oct. 2006
Senate Race - Likely Voters

| Which one of the candidates would you prefer to? | Menendez | Kean, Jr. | Neither (Vol.) | Both (Vol.) | DK/RF (Vol.) | (n) |
|---|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Have over for dinner | 30% | 36% | 21% | 8% | 5% | 500 |
| Coach your child, or a child you know, in sports | 20% | 37% | 22% | 1% | 20% | 500 |
| Manage your family finances | 21% | 36% | 30% | --- | 13% | 500 |

POLL 156 / Oct. 2005
Gubernatorial Race - Likely Voters

| Which one of the candidates would you prefer to? | Corzine | Forrester | Neither (Vol.) | Both (Vol.) | DK/RF (Vol.) | (n) |
|---|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Have over for dinner | 33% | 27% | 22% | 7% | 11% | 638 |
| Coach your child, or a child you know, in sports | 23% | 33% | 18% | 3% | 23% | 638 |
| Manage your family finances | 43% | 23% | 18% | 3% | 13% | 638 |

How closely do you associate Republican Tom Kean, Jr. with the policies and actions of the administration of President George W. Bush? (S6) [ROTATE S6 and S7]

| | Very closely, | Somewhat closely, or | Not closely at all? | DK/RF | (n) |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------|-----|
| Oct. 2006 | | | | | |
| Likely voters | 37% | 45% | 14% | 4% | 500 |
| Registered voters | 32% | 43% | 16% | 10% | 695 |
| Sept. 2006 | | | | | |
| Likely voters | 17% | 40% | 26% | 18% | 404 |
| Registered voters | 14% | 37% | 29% | 20% | 660 |
| June 2006 | | | | | |
| Registered Voters | 12% | 38% | 26% | 24% | 699 |
| March 2006 | | | | | |
| Registered Voters | 12% | 31% | 28% | 29% | 676 |

How closely do you associate Democrat Robert Menendez with the policies and actions of the administration of Governor Jon Corzine? (S7)

| | Very closely, | Somewhat closely, or | Not closely at all? | DK/RF | (n) |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------|-----|
| Oct. 2006 | | | | | |
| Likely voters | 34% | 39% | 17% | 10% | 500 |
| Registered voters | 27% | 40% | 18% | 15% | 695 |
| Sept. 2006 | | | | | |
| Likely voters | 23% | 34% | 21% | 22% | 404 |
| Registered voters | 17% | 33% | 23% | 26% | 660 |
| June 2006 | | | | | |
| Registered Voters | 18% | 32% | 21% | 29% | 699 |
| March 2006 | | | | | |
| Registered Voters | 20% | 30% | 22% | 29% | 676 |

Regardless of how you plan to vote in the Senate election, please just tell me whether you think each of the following statements applies more to Tom Kean Jr. or Robert Menendez. First (RANDOMIZE) ... Kean or Menendez (S8)

| | Likely voters | Kean, Jr. | Menendez | Both/Same/ Neither | DK/RF | (n) |
|----------------|---|-----------|----------|-----------------------|-------|-----|
| October 2006 | Is honest and trustworthy | 39% | 24% | 28% | 9% | 500 |
| September 2006 | | 34% | 26% | 16% | 24% | 404 |
| October 2006 | Has the experience needed to effectively represent New Jersey in Washington D.C. | 31% | 50% | 13% | 6% | 500 |
| September 2006 | | 28% | 42% | 9% | 21% | 404 |
| October 2006 | Is more likely to stand up to the leaders of his own party when he disagrees with them. | 34% | 48% | 11% | 7% | 500 |
| September 2006 | | 33% | 40% | 8% | 19% | 404 |
| October 2006 | Shares your views on the war in Iraq | 33% | 49% | 8% | 10% | 500 |

[RANDOMLY ROTATE C1 AND C2]

C1. In your view, have Tom Kean, Jr.'s campaign ads been fair or unfair or haven't you seen any of his ads?

C2. In your view, have Robert Menendez's campaign ads been fair or unfair or haven't you seen any of his ads?

| October 2006 Likely Voters | Fair | Unfair | Haven't Seen Ads | DK/RF | (n) |
|----------------------------|------|--------|---------------------|-------|-----|
| Kean Jr.'s campaign ads | 26% | 45% | 18% | 11% | 500 |
| Menendez's campaign ads | 37% | 37% | 18% | 9% | 500 |

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President? (B1)

| | Approve | Disapprove | DK/RF | (n) |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------|-------|-----|
| Oct. 2006 Likely voters | 36% | 60% | 4% | 500 |
| Oct. 2006 Registered voters | 33% | 62% | 5% | 695 |
| Sept. 2006 Registered voters | 32% | 60% | 8% | 660 |
| June 2006 Registered voters | 31% | 62% | 7% | 699 |
| Mar. 2006 Registered voters | 31% | 63% | 7% | 676 |
| Feb. 2005 Registered voters | 46% | 50% | 4% | 678 |
| Oct. 2004 Registered voters | 46% | 49% | 6% | 664 |
| Jan. 2004 Registered voters | 50% | 45% | 6% | 679 |
| Sept. 2003 Registered voters | 56% | 38% | 6% | 628 |
| May 2003 Registered voters | 62% | 31% | 8% | 773 |
| Jan./Feb. 2003 Registered voters | 58% | 30% | 12% | 301 |
| Sept. 2002 Registered voters | 71% | 24% | 6% | 596 |
| Feb./Mar. 2002 Registered voters | 82% | 15% | 4% | 622 |
| Apr. 2001 Registered voters | 57% | 34% | 9% | 606 |
| Jan. 2001 Registered voters | 43% | 21% | 37% | 636 |

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Jon Corzine (pronounced Cor-zyne) is handling his job as Governor? (J1)

| | Approve | Disapprove | DK/RF | (n) |
|------------------------------|---------|------------|-------|-----|
| Oct. 2006 Likely voters | 54% | 31% | 15% | 500 |
| Oct. 2006 Registered voters | 51% | 32% | 17% | 695 |
| Sept. 2006 Registered voters | 50% | 34% | 16% | 660 |
| June 2006 Registered voters | 45% | 35% | 20% | 699 |
| Mar. 2006 Registered voters | 41% | 36% | 23% | 676 |

GA1. The New Jersey Supreme Court has ordered the State Legislature to pass a law granting gay and lesbian couples the same legal rights as married couples. Do you [ROTATE] agree or disagree with the court decision?

| | Agree | Disagree | DK/RF | (n) |
|-------------------------|-------|----------|-------|-----|
| All adults | 54% | 37% | 8% | 809 |
| Registered voters | 54% | 38% | 9% | 695 |
| Likely voters | 54% | 36% | 9% | 500 |
| Kean, Jr. likely voters | 39% | 49% | 11% | 215 |
| Menendez likely voters | 69% | 23% | 8% | 227 |

GA2. The State Legislature can respond to the court decision by [ROTATE FOLLOWING TWO OPTIONS] allowing gay and lesbian couples to enter into civil unions that have the same legal rights as married couples, or by allowing gay and lesbian couples to get married. Which do you think the Legislature should do?

| | Civil Unions | Marriage | Refuse to follow court ruling (Vol.) | Other (Vol.) | DK/RF | (n) |
|-------------------------|--------------|----------|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-----|
| All adults | 40% | 29% | 16% | 5% | 10% | 809 |
| Registered voters | 43% | 28% | 16% | 4% | 8% | 695 |
| Likely voters | 48% | 24% | 16% | 4% | 8% | 500 |
| Kean, Jr. likely voters | 54% | 11% | 23% | 5% | 7% | 215 |
| Menendez likely voters | 43% | 35% | 11% | 3% | 8% | 227 |

GA3. The court decision has prompted some state legislators to propose amending the New Jersey Constitution to define marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Would you [ROTATE] support or oppose that amendment?

| | Support | Oppose | DK/RF | (n) |
|-------------------------|---------|--------|-------|-----|
| All adults | 54% | 38% | 8% | 809 |
| Registered voters | 57% | 37% | 7% | 695 |
| Likely voters | 57% | 35% | 7% | 500 |
| Kean, Jr. likely voters | 73% | 21% | 6% | 215 |
| Menendez likely voters | 42% | 50% | 8% | 227 |