

LOW TURNOUT LIKELY TO HELP BOOKER

As the Senate election between Democrat Cory Booker and Republican Steve Lonegan draws to a close, both sides are concentrating on getting out the vote. However, results from the latest Fairleigh Dickinson University PublicMind poll of registered voters show that higher turnout won't help the two candidates equally.

Although it is difficult to estimate turnout due to the historic nature of the election and its unique timing on a Wednesday in October — three weeks before a gubernatorial election — responses to certain survey questions suggest that turnout is likely to be light. Only 77 percent of registered voters even know that elections are coming up, and only 64 percent know that a Senate election is happening. Only a third (34 percent) of registered New Jersey voters can name both candidates in the Senate election without prompting, and just 57 percent know that Booker, considered a political celebrity, is in the race. Low turnout generally means that independent voters stay home — and Republican candidates in New Jersey need independent voters to overcome Democrats' advantage in raw numbers.

"The timing of the election, combined with everything going on in Washington right now, has really diverted attention from the Senate race," said Dan Cassino, a professor of political science at Fairleigh Dickinson University and an analyst for the poll. "That tells us that we're not going to see huge crowds at the polls on Wednesday — and that's likely to be good for Booker."

Limited attention to the race is taking its toll on voters' knowledge of both candidates. Fewer than half of Lonegan's supporters (49 percent) can name the Republican candidate without prompting. Booker, who has enjoyed higher name recognition throughout the race, does only a bit better, with just 62 percent of voters who profess to support him being able to name him as a candidate.

Pollsters use indicators like these — stated interest in the race, knowledge about the candidates, and so on — as some of the predictors of who will and who will not turn out at the polls on Election Day. In the unlikely event of a very high turnout election — one similar to the 2012 Presidential Election, in which a representative sample of registered voters turn out at the polls — Democratic candidate Cory Booker would be expected to easily best Republican Steve Lonegan. In such an election, in which it's expected that currently undecided voters would turn out for the candidates in about the same proportions as voters who've made up their minds, Booker would win by about 11 points. This result is largely

because of the partisan composition of New Jersey in a high turnout election: about 37 percent of the voters at the polls would be Democrats, and only 24 percent would be Republicans.

But, “very high turnout is not necessarily best for Booker,” said Cassino. “High turnout means that everyone comes out — and that includes a lot of Republicans.”

More likely is a moderate turnout, similar to what would be expected in a well-publicized statewide election. In this case, it’s expected that many voters not paying attention to the election would stay home. For a moderate turnout election, it is assumed that voters who say that they are not paying much attention to the race will not turn out at the polls, and these voters are disproportionately independents who lean towards supporting Lonegan. As a result, Booker’s margin in a moderate turnout election is a bit larger than in a high turnout election, and he’s likely to win by around 15 points, 56 to 41.

“So far, moderate Republicans haven’t been as engaged in this race, and that could be a problem for Lonegan,” said Cassino. “While Lonegan has a strong base among self-identified Republicans, he shows some weakness among moderate and independent Republicans that he needs to win.”

It’s also possible that turnout for the special election will be very low — excluding anyone who can’t name either of the candidates, or admits that they haven’t been following the election. Generally, this means that less interested voters — who come largely from the ranks of independent and moderate voters — don’t show up in the polls. As a result, the remaining voters are strong Republicans and strong Democrats, and the remaining independents tend to lean towards the Democratic Party. Under these conditions, Booker is expected to win by an even larger margin than in other scenarios.

“Bottom line is that there are more Democrats than Republicans in New Jersey,” said Cassino. “If only the strong partisans turn out, the Democrat is going to win — and win big.”

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 702 registered voters in New Jersey was conducted by telephone with both landline and cell phones from September 30 through October 5, 2013, and has a margin of error of +/-3.7 percentage points.

Methodology, questions, and tables on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>

Radio actualities at 201.692.2846

For more information, please call 201.692.7032

Methodology

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University’s PublicMind was conducted by telephone from September 30 through October 5, 2013 using a randomly selected sample of 702 registered voters who reside in New Jersey. One can be 95 percent confident that the error attributable to sampling has a range of +/- 3.7 percentage points. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals

refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers.

PublicMind interviews are conducted by Opinion America of Cedar Knolls, NJ, with professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a landline phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected.

Landline households are supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone respondents interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender.

Tables

Do you know if the state is holding any elections in October and November, or are you unsure?									
	Overall	Senate Choice			Party ID				
		Lonegan	Booker	Someone else	Democrat	Lean Democrat	Independent	Lean Republican	Republican
Yes	77%	85%	78%	85%	75%	78%	75%	78%	81%
No	3%	2%	2%	0%	2%	1%	3%	4%	3%
Don't know	21%	13%	20%	15%	22%	20%	22%	18%	15%

Which offices are on the ballot in the upcoming election or elections?									
	Overall	Senate Choice			Party ID				
		Lonegan	Booker	Someone else	Democrat	Lean Democrat	Independent	Lean Republican	Republican
Senate	64%	71%	64%	50%	63%	63%	67%	69%	65%
Governor	12%	13%	11%	13%	11%	12%	13%	13%	12%
State legislature	2%	1%	2%	6%	1%	4%	0%	2%	2%
Don't know	22%	15%	22%	31%	26%	21%	20%	17%	20%

How closely are you following the upcoming race for the US Senate in New Jersey?									
	Overall	Senate Choice			Party ID				
		Lonegan	Booker	Someone else	Democrat	Lean Democrat	Independent	Lean Republican	Republican
Very closely	15%	18%	18%	15%	16%	15%	10%	8%	21%
Somewhat	32%	39%	33%	25%	30%	33%	36%	40%	30%
Just a little	27%	23%	26%	35%	28%	25%	29%	30%	26%
Not at all	24%	19%	21%	25%	23%	27%	23%	20%	23%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%

Do you know the names of those running [for Senate]?									
	Overall	Senate Choice			Party ID				
		Lonegan	Booker	Someone else	Democrat	Lean Democrat	Independent	Lean Republican	Republican
Just Booker	23%	16%	31%	14%	30%	27%	19%	19%	15%
Just Lonegan	3%	5%	1%	5%	2%	0%	1%	2%	6%
Both	34%	44%	31%	19%	27%	24%	42%	40%	41%
Other	2%	2%	2%	10%	1%	7%	5%	1%	1%
Don't know	38%	33%	35%	52%	40%	42%	33%	37%	37%

If the election for Senate was held today, for whom would you vote?			
	High Turnout	Moderate Turnout	Low Turnout
Republican Steve Lonegan	43%	41%	39%
Democrat Cory Booker	54%	56%	58%
Someone else	3%	3%	3%

Regardless of who you might vote for, do you consider yourself ... [If Independent] Which way do you lean?			
	High Turnout	Moderate Turnout	Low Turnout
Democrat	37%	36%	40%
Lean Democrat	11%	11%	11%
Independent	15%	15%	10%
Lean Republican	13%	13%	7%
Republican	24%	25%	32%

Exact Question Wording and Order

US1 and US2 released October 11, 2013

NJ1 through NJ3 released October 11, 2013

NJ4 through NJ5, NJ8 released October 8, 2013

NJ9 through NJ12 released October 8, 2013

LVSCR4 How closely are you following the upcoming race for the US Senate in New Jersey?

- 1 Very closely
- 2 Somewhat closely
- 3 Just a little
- 4 Not at all
- 9 DK

LVSCR5 How closely are you following the upcoming race for the governor in New Jersey?

- 1 Very closely
- 2 Somewhat closely
- 3 Just a little
- 4 Not at all
- 9 DK

LVSCR6 How would you rate your chances of voting in October's senate election?

- 1 Definitely will
- 2 Probably will
- 3 Probably will not
- 4 Definitely will not
- 9 DK

LVSCR6 How would you rate your chances of voting in November's governor's election?

- 1 Definitely will
- 2 Probably will
- 3 Probably will not
- 4 Definitely will not
- 9 DK

NJ8 If the election for Senate was held today, for whom would you vote? Republican Steve Lonegan or Democrat Cory Booker? [Randomize names]

- 1 Republican Steve Lonegan
- 2 Democrat Cory Booker
- 3 Someone else
- 8 Don't Know (vol)
- 9 Refused(vol)

Sample characteristics – Registered voters

Gender

Male	49
Female	51

Age

18-29	12
30-44	26
45-59	32
60+	27
Refused	3

Race/Ethnicity

White	68
Black/African-American	12
Latino or Hispanic	10
Asian	5
Other/refused	5

Public employee household

Yes	23
No	75
Unsure/refused	2

Party identification

Democrat/Lean Democrat	46
Independent/DK/refused	19
Republican/Lean Republican	35