

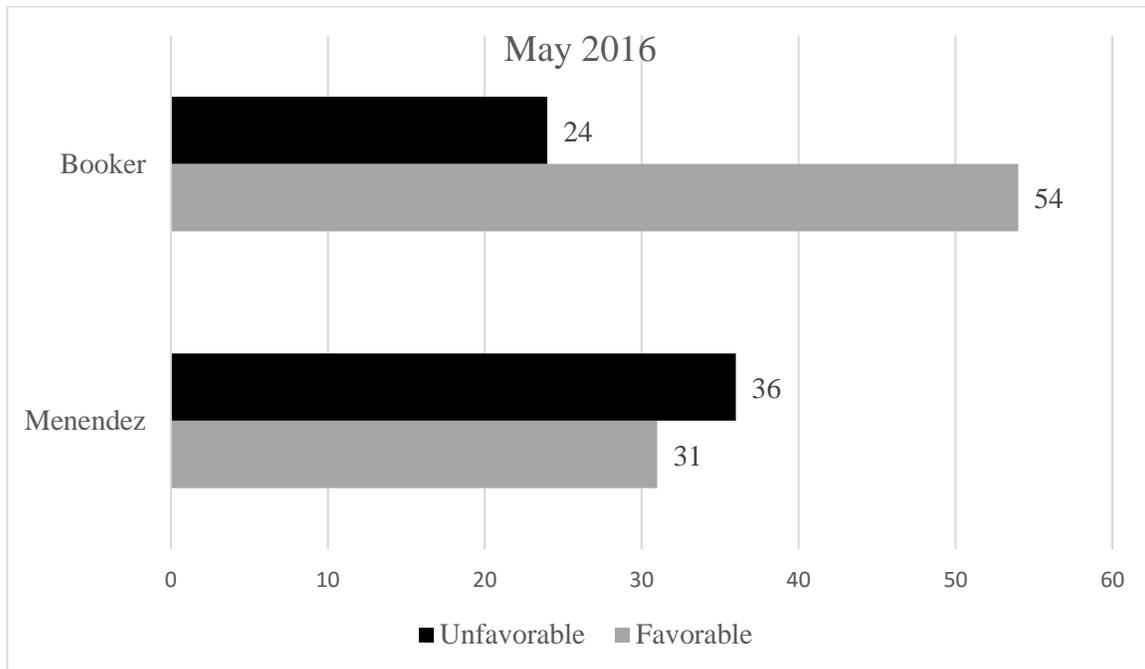
## AS MENENDEZ TRIAL BEGINS, FDU POLL REVISITS HOW HE FARES IN THE COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION

**Fairleigh Dickinson University, September 6, 2017** - With the federal trial for US Senator Robert Menendez set to begin, Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind revisits past surveys that have examined public attitudes toward New Jersey's senior senator.

New Jerseyans overall feelings toward Menendez have always been mixed. In 2012, more had a favorable than unfavorable opinion of Senator Menendez. However, in 2015, when the allegations for which he is to be tried in the coming weeks came to light, opinion turned decidedly against him, with 39 percent indicating an unfavorable opinion and 23 percent saying they view him favorably. Opinion stabilized a bit in 2016 with about equal numbers viewing him favorably and unfavorably.

By contrast, polling from last year on Senator Menendez's colleague, Cory Booker, found his favorable to unfavorable ratio more pleasing, with 54 percent giving him a thumbs up as compared with 24 percent who looked upon Senator Booker unfavorably.

"Senator Menendez will soon face a jury of his peers. However, in the court of public opinion, the good will between him and his constituents can be described as meager at best," said Krista Jenkins, professor of political science and director of the poll at FDU.



<b><u>Menendez: Trend</u></b>	Haven't heard	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
May 2016	19%	31%	36%	14%
November 2015	14%	31%	38%	17%
April 2015	18%	23%	39%	20%
March 2014	17%	30%	33%	19%
August 2012	20%	36%	23%	22%
May 2012	22%	32%	24%	23%

<b><u>Booker: Trend</u></b>	Haven't heard	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
May 2016	12%	54%	24%	10%
November 2015	10%	57%	24%	9%
April 2015	14%	47%	22%	18%
March 2014	13%	47%	23%	18%
June 2013	22%	52%	10%	17%
January 2013	25%	50%	13%	16%
August 2012	31%	48%	10%	14%
May 2012	33%	47%	6%	14%

PublicMind also asked residents what they think of the behavior for which he is alleged (April 2015). At the time, most believed he is guilty of the alleged bribery scheme that he carried out for seven years with an associate, but the public believed he is not unlike many other politicians. In the eyes of the public, Senator Menendez was unlucky by getting caught.

In April 2015 (<http://view2.fdu.edu/publicmind/2015/150430/>), more than half (58%) said they thought it likely that Senator Menendez is guilty as charged, with a full quarter (28%) who said it's very likely. The same survey found a majority who reportedly were paying attention to the news concerning the indictment of Senator Menendez (51%).

“Voters are rife with cynicism toward politicians these days. In the case of Senator Menendez, his alleged behavior with an associate simply seems to reinforce what New Jerseyans already believe – that power brings with it the potential to enrich yourself and others at the taxpayers’ expense,” said Jenkins.

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

*For more information, please call 201.692.7032*

Methodology – Data presented in this press release is a compilation of findings from surveys conducted over a number of years. All information (questions, question order, margins of error, sample methodology, etc.) for past press releases, including those referenced here, can be found on our website ([publicmind.fdu.edu](http://publicmind.fdu.edu)).

*PublicMind recently received an “A” rating from statistician Nate Silver’s FiveThirtyEight blog. The ratings measure both accuracy and bias for all major polling services in the United States, providing an update to similar research the poll watchers conducted in 2014. PublicMind’s “A” rating puts it in the top 14 of the more than 380 polling institutes reviewed and graded from A+ through F. PublicMind was found to have a 94 percent accuracy rate for predicting election results, and is one of only two A-rated polling institutes with zero bias to their rankings.*