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Back to Back Polls Show Menendez Up Double Digits Over Kyrillos

By Steven Shepard
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A second poll in as many days shows Sen. **Robert Menendez**, D-N.J., with a solid lead over Republican state Sen. **Joe Kyrillos**, with the new survey, from [Quinnipiac University](#), showing Menendez at his highest-ever approval rating and approaching the critical 50-percent threshold among registered voters.

Menendez leads Kyrillos, 49 percent to 34 percent, according to the Quinnipiac poll, which was released early Wednesday. Fourteen percent of voters are undecided. Among the crucial bloc of independent voters, Menendez leads, 44 percent to 33 percent.

A [Rutgers-Eagleton poll](#) released Tuesday showed Menendez doubling up Kyrillos, 44 percent to 22 percent. In that survey, 26 percent of voters were undecided.

The Kyrillos camp touted the results of the Rutgers-Eagleton poll Tuesday, calling Menendez's 44-percent plurality in that poll "**Jon Corzine** territory," a reference to the Garden State's former Democratic governor, who struggled to budge his poll numbers from the mid-40s before losing to Republican Gov. **Chris Christie**, a Kyrillos ally.

Meanwhile, the Quinnipiac University poll shows Menendez with his highest approval rating ever in their surveys: 48 percent of voters approve of the job Menendez is doing, while just 31 percent disapprove. That is a significant improvement from last month, when 42 percent approved of Menendez's job performance, and 39 percent disapproved.

Each Senate candidate is likely to have an important surrogate in the race. Menendez is likely to be bolstered by President **Obama** at the top of the ticket; Obama leads former Massachusetts Gov. **Mitt Romney** in the state by 10 points. And the Obama/**Biden** ticket even leads a potential Romney/Christie ticket by six percentage points.

Kyrillos, meanwhile, is likely to rely on his ties to Christie, who remains popular in the state. A 55-percent majority of voters approve of the job Christie is doing in Trenton, while just 38 percent disapprove. Christie has posted a job-approval rating over 50 percent in Quinnipiac's polls since October. Christie is up for reelection in 2013.

The Quinnipiac poll was conducted Feb. 21-27, surveying 1,396 registered voters. The margin of error is +/- 2.4 percentage points.

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