



DATE: February 13, 2024
 TO: Interested parties
 FROM: Ben Lazarus, TargetSmart
 RE: NJ-08 Democratic primary poll

Congressman Rob Menendez holds a comfortable lead over challengers Ravi Bhalla and Kyle Jasey, according to our recent poll of likely Democratic primary voters in New Jersey’s Eighth Congressional District¹. Menendez captures 46 percent of the vote to Bhalla’s 24 percent and Jasey’s 6 percent, while

Full Horserace

Rob Menendez	46%
Ravi Bhalla	24%
Kyle Jasey	6%
Someone else	4%
Undecided	19%

4 percent indicate they will support another candidate, and 19 percent remain undecided. A two-way calculation between Congressman Menendez and his principal rival Bhalla shows Menendez with a near two-to-one advantage over the Hoboken mayor, 66 to 34 percent.

Two Way Horserace

Rob Menendez	66%
Ravi Bhalla	34%

Despite the negative media that followed federal indictments against Congressman Menendez’s father Senator Bob Menendez, Democratic primary voters across CD-8 view Congressman Menendez favorably on net today (33 percent favorable to 27 percent

unfavorable) and overwhelmingly approve of the job he is doing in Congress (51 percent approve to 25 percent disapprove).

Additionally, CD-8 primary voters hold a series of nuanced and fair-minded views about the unique familial situation that sets the stage for Congressman Menendez’s first bid for re-election. As shown in the table here, few primary voters believe that Congressman Menendez should be held accountable for the actions of Senator Menendez, while most believe he is his own person who should be judged on his record and not punished for his father’s actions. Moreover, voters overwhelmingly acknowledge that Congressman Menendez has not been accused of any crimes.

Statement

% Agree

The son should not have to pay for the sins of the father, and people should judge Congressman Rob Menendez based on his record, not on the actions of Senator Bob Menendez.	77%
Congressman Rob Menendez is his own person and should not be punished for the actions of his father Senator Bob Menendez.	73%
In this country you are innocent until proven guilty, Senator Bob Menendez has not been convicted of anything, and Congressman Rob Menendez hasn’t been accused of any crimes.	72%
Congressman Rob Menendez should be held accountable for the actions of his father Senator Bob Menendez.	16%

The conventional wisdom that Congressman Menendez faces an uphill battle as a consequence of the situation surrounding his father is misplaced based on the findings of this research. This poll shows that Congressman Menendez is a popular incumbent with a strong base of support, and he is the clear frontrunner to win the Democratic nomination in CD-8 come June.

¹ Live telephone poll; bi-lingual English/Spanish, language of choice methodology; registered Democrats in New Jersey CD-08; fielded January 25-February 1, 2024; n=400 effective sample size; +/- 4.9% margin of error for overall sample; margin of error varies for subgroups; due to rounding, some frequencies may not total to exactly 100%