

Democrat Menendez Wins Re-Election To Senate, Networks Project

Democrat Bob Menendez beat Republican Bob Hugin and six other challengers in the 2018 US Senate race, networks have projected.

By [Eric Kiefer](#) | Nov 6, 2018 9:05 am ET | Updated Nov 7, 2018 1:00 pm ET



Democrat Bob Menendez beat his Republican challenger Bob Hugin, a former drug company executive, and six other candidates to win re-election to the US Senate, according to [NBC](#) and [ABC](#) projections.

[With 98.2 percent of the precincts reporting](#), Menendez had 1,470,379 votes, or 53.1 percent, to Hugin's 1,210,986 votes, or 43.8 percent, according to Politico.com, which also projected the race in Menendez's favor.

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Democrats were expected to do well across the state. **Read more:** [Real-Time Results: Election 2018 In New Jersey](#)

The New York Times [reported the following totals](#) for the other six candidates, with 94 percent of precincts in:

- Madelyn Hoffman (Green Party) – 20,376 votes (0.8%)
- Murray Sabrin (Libertarian Party) – 17,976 votes (0.7%)
- Tricia Flanagan (New Day NJ) – 13,630 votes (0.5%)
- Natalie Lynn Rivera (For The People) – 15,358 votes (0.6%)
- Kevin Kimple (Make It Simple) – 7,800 votes (0.3%)
- Hank Schroeder (Economic Growth) – 7,424 votes (0.3%)

Though Menendez has polled better recently, the Democrat has been dogged by corruption accusations for years. In the months leading up to Tuesday, Nov. 6, Hugin has spent millions of dollars reminding voters about Menendez's federal trial, which ended with a deadlocked jury last year.

Menendez was charged with conspiring with Salomon Melgen, a Florida ophthalmologist, in an alleged bribery and corruption scandal that involved gifts and campaign contributions.

Menendez, on the other hand, has attacked Hugin for running a company that allegedly gouged the public by charging high prices for cancer drugs.

- See related article: [2018 Election Results: Vote A Referendum On 'Trump's GOP](#)

Our pre-election coverage follows below. Learn more about posting announcements or events to your local Patch site [here](#).

2018 U.S. SENATE RACE: THE GOOD, BAD AND UGLY

It may prove interesting to see the results for third-party candidates such as the Green Party's Madelyn Hoffman and Murray Sabrin of the New Jersey Libertarian Party, which recently became the first third-party in state history to reach 10,000 registered voters.

- See related article: [Libertarians Standing Tall As Largest Third-Party In New Jersey](#)
- See related article: [3 Questions With New Jersey's US Senate Candidates](#)

However, most eyes will likely be on the unexpectedly close race between the frontrunners, Menendez and Hugin.

If Hugin wins, it would be a huge upset in a state that [hasn't seen a Republican elected as US senator since the 1970s](#). But to do so, the GOP nominee will have to overcome a huge home-field advantage in one of the nation's "bluest" states. As of October, New Jersey Democrats outnumbered Republicans by 921,531 registered voters... nearly a two-to-one margin.

- See related article: [New Jersey Democrats To GOP: We've Got You Outnumbered](#)

There are also 2.36 million unaffiliated voters in the Garden State who can swing the contest either way. And if you believe Hugin, there are also some on-the-fence Democrats who might choose to vote against their own party on Nov. 6.

- See related article: [These 7 Democrats Endorsed GOP's Bob Hugin For US Senate](#)

Even the [weather](#) is being analyzed as a possible factor in New Jersey's up-for-grabs Senate election. During a Monday rally in Toms River, [Hugin called forecasters' prediction of rain "Republican weather,"](#) the New York Times reported.

“This election is about who gets the vote out and who doesn't,” Hugin said. “And I hope it rains hard tomorrow.”

In the month leading up to the election, [multiple polls showed a tight battle between Menendez and Hugin](#), with some pollsters describing the race as a “statistical dead heat.” But on Nov. 2, Stockton University pollsters – who reported Menendez led by a mere two points on Oct. 1 – said that the Democratic icon has leaped to a 12-point lead over Hugin.

Neither Menendez or Hugin seem to be inspiring a lot of confidence among New Jersey voters, pollsters said.

According to Stockton University, heading into the weekend before the election, only 23 percent viewed Menendez “favorably,” with 44 percent holding “unfavorable” views. Only 25 percent had favorable views of Hugin as opposed to 34 percent unfavorable.

Hugin, who made waves as CEO of pharmaceutical giant, Celgene, has taken fire for running a company that allegedly gouged the public by charging exorbitant prices for cancer drugs. Hugin has also seen criticism for his past involvement with Princeton University's [Tiger Inn eating club](#), where he led efforts to keep the group all-male and all-heterosexual.

On the other hand, according to pollsters, Menendez's federal trial - which ended with a deadlocked jury last year - has left a sour taste in many voters' minds, including those from his own party. Menendez was accused of offering a friend political favors in exchange for lavish gifts and campaign contributions.

- See related article: [Most Democrats Think Sen. Menendez Should Resign If Convicted, Poll Says](#)

As election day approaches, neither Menendez or Hugin has been shy about [slinging mud at their opponent](#).

Hugin, who has reportedly [spent more than \\$10 million out of pocket](#) to produce a series of ads against Menendez, has posted videos that include:

- "[Disgraced](#)" – Blasts Menendez for his federal trial/bribery charges
- "[Taxes](#)" – Criticizes Menendez for "voting to raise taxes more than 90 times"
- "[Hypocrisy](#)." – Posed the question, "What about the underage girls who accused you?", a reference to [unproven accusations](#) that Menendez and his friend, Dr. Salomon Melgen, a wealthy Florida doctor, hired underage prostitutes while vacationing in the Dominican Republic.

Meanwhile, Menendez, with the aid of [fundraising campaign appearances from Democratic Party icons](#) such as Hillary Clinton, has countered with ads that include:

- "[Bob Hugin's Money Trail](#)" – Blasts Hugin for "writing checks" to Donald Trump, Jesse Helms, Paul Ryan, Mitch McConnell and Chris Christie
- "[Good](#)" – Accuses Hugin of siding with President Trump on killing Obamacare, "extreme Supreme Court picks" and "helping the powerful and leaving regular folks behind"
- "[Bob Hugin: Greed is Good](#)" – Criticizes Hugin for his "greedy Wall Street days" and "his time gouging dying cancer patients as Big Pharma CEO"

However, if Stockton University pollsters prove correct, the majority of New Jersey voters have something else that will be the deciding factor on election day... President Donald Trump.

"Even though his name is not on the ballot, President Trump's presence appears to be at the top of the ticket in New Jersey," said Michael Klein, interim executive director of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy, which conducted

the study. "Our poll indicates that New Jersey's voters oppose the president, and the best way to express that opposition at the ballot box is to re-elect Senator Menendez, despite any misgivings they might have about the senator himself."

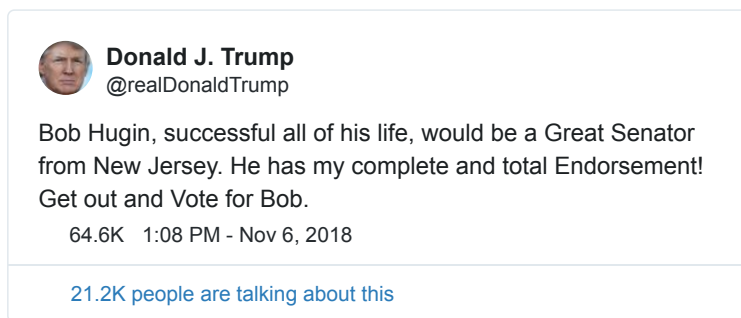
Stockton University pollsters stated:

"Asked to pick the main factor in deciding their votes from a list of choices, 35 percent choose 'President Donald Trump' and 36 percent choose 'Control of the Senate.' Only 19 percent choose corruption charges against Bob Menendez that ended in a mistrial, and only 4 percent choose Bob Hugin's actions regarding drug prices as CEO of a pharmaceutical company."

- See related article: [Menendez Leaps Over Hugin In Latest NJ Poll; 'Trump Effect' Looms](#)
- See related article: [NJ May Become Trump's Biggest Burden – Or Boost – On Primary Day](#)

Then, on Tuesday afternoon, President Donald Trump officially inserted himself into the election, offering some high-profile support for Hugin via Twitter (story continues below):

"Bob Hugin, successful all of his life, would be a Great Senator from New Jersey. He has my complete and total Endorsement! Get out and Vote for Bob."



On Election Day, Patch's Carly Baldwin spoke to several voters, some of whom said that Menendez's trial didn't play into their decision-making process... but Trump did.

"That did bother me, but not as much as I hate Trump," said a Democratic voter, who only wanted to be identified as Nick, 72. "And that doesn't bother me as much as Hugin being a big pharmaceutical executive and making millions off sick cancer patients. And Hugin raised thousands of dollars for Trump in New Jersey. He's a big Trump supporter."

"The corruption charges bother me, but Menendez is the lesser of two evils," said Dominick Rose, 36 who said he's begrudgingly voting for Menendez. "I didn't like either Hugin or Menendez but you have to pick one."

Michael Alarcon, 42, is a Republican who voted for Trump. He said he will be voting for Hugin because he thinks Trump has done a good job.

"Liberal Democrats screamed and yelled over the past two years and that's not how you govern. Instead, all that screaming and yelling is what has driven a lot of Republicans out to vote today," he predicted. "I think Trump has done an excellent job on the economy and on immigration."

Alarcon, who is Latino, was educated at Harvard University, works in finance, but declined to give details beyond that, saying readers would just stereotype him as a wealthy Republican.

ELECTION 18 AP VOTECAST

A SNAPSHOT OF VOTERS IN THE 2018 NEW JERSEY SENATE ELECTION

Results as of
9:22 a.m. EST, Nov. 7

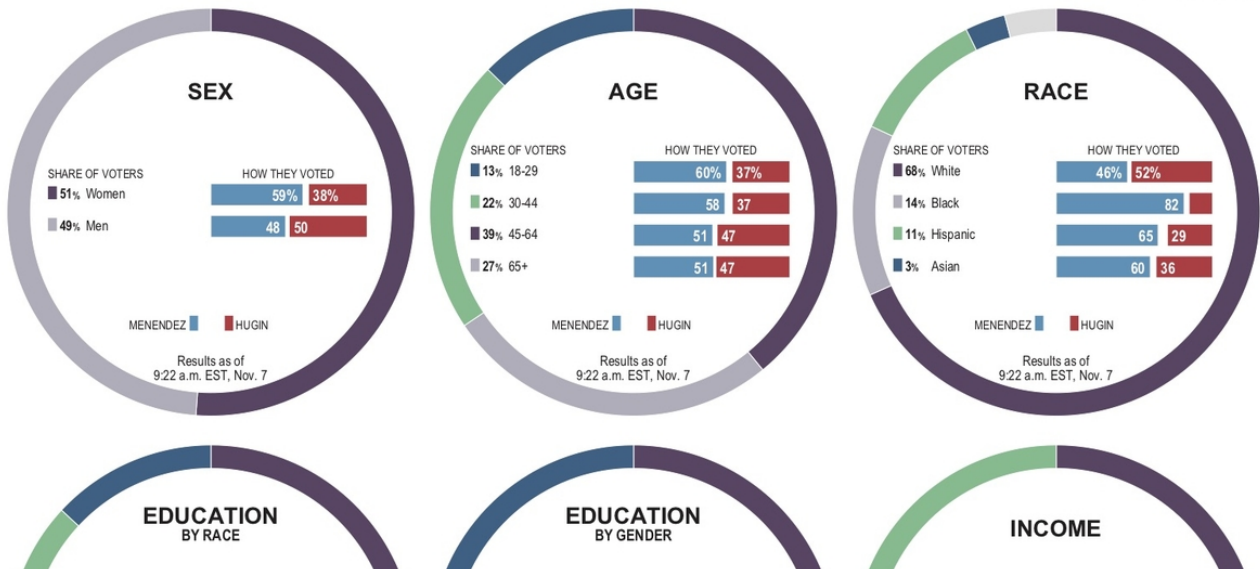


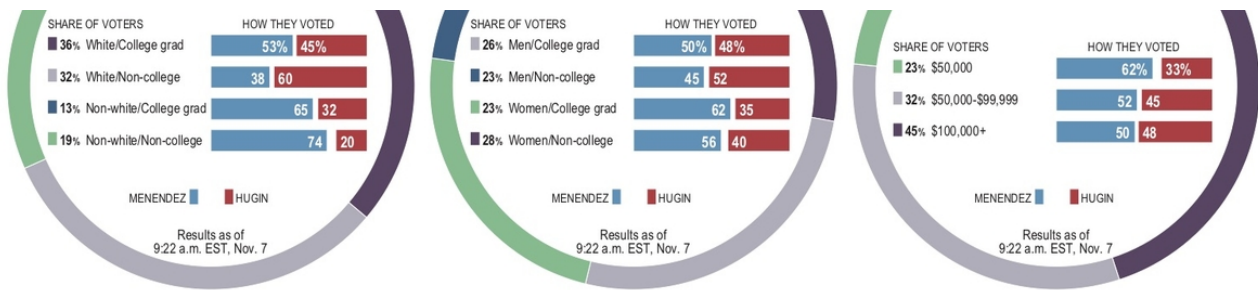
AP VoteCast is a survey of the American electorate in all 50 states conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago for The Associated Press and Fox News. The survey of 3,782 voters and 599 nonvoters in New Jersey was conducted Oct. 29 to Nov. 6, concluding as polls close on Election Day. It combines interviews in English or Spanish with a random sample of registered voters drawn from state voter files and self-identified registered voters selected from opt-in online panels. Participants in the probability-based portion of the survey were contacted by phone and mail, and had the opportunity to take the survey by phone or online. The margin of sampling error for voters is estimated to be plus or minus 2.2 percentage points. All surveys are subject to multiple sources of error, including from sampling, question wording and order, and nonresponse. Find more details about AP VoteCast's methodology at <http://www.ap.org/votecast>.

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REAL-TIME RESULTS

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