Sen. Cory Booker leads in polls by 15-point margin

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Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ) will win in Tuesday’s Senate race, but maybe not by as much as expected, said David Redlawsk, director of the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling at the Rutgers Eagleton Institute of Politics.

This race does not have the same level of intensity as past Senate races, both because Jeffrey Bell is not a “big name
Republican” and nobody expects Booker to lose, Redlawsk said. People are less excited, and thus voter turnout is expected to be low.

Booker is “fairly centrist,” Redlawsk said, and he and Bell could not be further apart on most of the issues.

Social Issues

Booker is a strong supporter of abortion rights and marriage equality, Redlawsk said, adding that he is a strong supporter of civil rights in general.

According to NorthJersey.com, Booker believes people who love each other have the right to get married.

“We are a nation that is going to get so much further if we understand we all are equal under the law and need each other to be successful,” Booker said according to NorthJersey.com.

Redlawsk said he is not sure that Booker has spoken much about the legalization of marijuana, but Bell is a “certainly opposed” to it.

“It’s also not an issue that’s likely to be a big issue at the national level — it’s going to play out state by state,” he said.

Education

For students, Democrats are more student-friendly with regard to educational policies in terms of student loans, Redlawsk said. Though unsuccessful so far, Democrats in Congress have made efforts to cut student loan interest rates.

“I think the bigger picture for anybody voting is that you vote for the candidate who best represents the things that you want to see happen in this country, but don’t expect miracles to happen,” he said.

According to NorthJersey.com, Booker said the very fact that Congress has been paralyzed in the face of student loan rates that are set to double is “absolutely unacceptable.”

Economy

Everybody is in favor of jobs, Redlawsk said, but there are strong differences of opinion on the best way to create them.

Booker supports a significant increase in the minimum wage, believing that $10.10 per hour would help the economy.

Of the states that have increased the minimum wage, including Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware and Maryland, Redlawsk said there is no evidence that the economies in these states have suffered.

Health Care
Booker supports the Affordable Care Act, according to his campaign site. The act prevents health insurance plans from limiting or denying benefits to children under 19 due to pre-existing medical conditions, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website.

It also allows young adults under the age of 26 stay covered under their parent's health plan, according to the site.

Redlawsk said Bell would appeal the ACA, and that even though Booker supports it, he may or may not be able to do anything about that depending upon if the Republicans or Democrats are in control of Congress.