
Presidential Primary Survey: GOP in Three-way Race, Clinton leads Democrat Field

Contributed by Dennis Denno
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LANSING, Mich. — With the New Hampshire Primary and Iowa Caucus now complete, the next stop on the road to the White House is the Michigan January 15 Presidential Primary. With the nation's eyes now on the Great Lake state, a new survey of Michigan Presidential Primary voters shows Mike Huckabee with a one-point lead in the GOP race, and a tenuous Hillary Clinton lead over the second place finisher, "Uncommitted."

According to the latest Rossman Group/MIRS/Denno-Noor survey, the GOP contest in Michigan is now shaping up as a battle between Mike Huckabee (at 23 percent), Mitt Romney (at 22 percent) and John McCain (at 18 percent). Further back in fourth place, former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani continues to drop (eight percent). Trailing are Fred Thompson (at 4 percent), and Ron Paul (at 3 percent). Uncommitted scored 13 percent of the vote. Rounding out the field were Duncan Hunter (at one percent), Tom Tancredo (at less than one percent) and Sam Brownback (at zero percent) – thirteen percent favored "Uncommitted" while seven percent were "unsure."

"The Republican primary in Michigan is coming down to a three-way scrum between Mike Huckabee, Mitt Romney and John McCain" said Kelly Rossman-McKinney, CEO of The Rossman Group. "The real loser is Rudy Giuliani, who didn't even get to double digits here this time around. Proving that being first out of the gate doesn't get you to the finish line."

Meanwhile, among a Democratic field that does not include Barack Obama or John Edwards, Hillary Clinton (at 48 percent) is now looking over her shoulder at the threesome of "Uncommitted" (at 28 percent), "unsure" (at 11 percent) and "other" (at 10 percent). The other Democrats – Dennis Kucinich (at three percent), Christopher Dodd (at one percent) and Mike Gravel (at one percent) – lag considerably behind.

"I think the big stories shaping up in Michigan are Huckabee's leap to the top of the GOP field, and general dissatisfaction among Democratic Primary voters with the absence of marquis candidates on the ballot," said John T. Reurink, president of Michigan Information & Research Service Inc. (MIRS newsletter)."

The statewide survey was conducted by Denno-Noor Research in partnership with The Rossman Group and Michigan Information & Research Services, Michigan's leading daily legislative and state government newsletter. The Rossman Group was recently named Lansing's Most Effective Public Relations Firm by a survey of political insiders, and MIRS and was recently voted the preferred newsletter of Lansing's political insiders.

"I think it's significant that the uncommitted and undecided vote among Republicans is only 21 percent, while forty nine percent of the Democratic vote is uncommitted, unsure or looking for another candidate," said Denno-Noor President Dennis Denno."

"Hillary's numbers clearly reflect the concern Democrats have with their own primary field. They're so conflicted that not even half of them are sure they're going to vote for her – and she's the only serious contender on the ballot," added Rossman-McKinney. "I know an awful lot of men who are comfortable with a failure to commit but this is beyond the pale!"

Methodology: This survey was part of the Rossman Group/MIRS/Denno-Noor Quarterly Survey of the Michigan electorate. Six hundred respondents – three hundred Democratic and three hundred Republican Presidential Primary Voters – were surveyed between January 6 and January 7, and the participation was stratified based on census data and past voter behavior. A screen was employed to include only those participants who said they intended on voting, either at the polls or by absentee ballot, in the January 15, 2008 Presidential Primary Election. The margin of error for these ballot tests is plus/minus 5.8 percent.

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