

Franklin Pierce University / WBZ Poll

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January 6, 2008

POLLING

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Republican Presidential Primary

RINDGE, NH – With the 2008 New Hampshire Presidential Primary this Tuesday, and following Mike Huckabee's victory in last week's Iowa caucuses, Senator John McCain appears to have strengthened his lead over former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney. Today, McCain leads with 38 percent of the vote, while Romney trails him with 29 percent. Mike Huckabee saw a modest bounce in support, from five percent on January 2nd to nine percent today, but he remains a distant third behind the two leading candidates. Support for former mayor Rudy Giuliani reached its lowest levels this election cycle, from an all-time high of 28 percent in March to just eight percent today.

Overview

The findings outlined in this report are based on the latest Franklin Pierce University / WBZ Poll, conducted by RKM Research and Communication in collaboration with faculty and student interviewers at Franklin Pierce University. The Franklin Pierce University / WBZ Poll is sponsored by Franklin Pierce University and WBZ. The project represents a collaboration that provides Franklin Pierce University students unique learning opportunities to participate in the polling process and gain real-world experience working with an independent marketing research firm.

Methodology

The poll is based on interviews with 409 likely Republican Presidential Primary voters. All respondents interviewed in this study were part of a fully representative sample. The survey was administered by telephone, January 4 – 6, 2007. The survey of 409 respondents has a maximum margin of sampling error of +/- 4.9%.

John McCain maintained his lead over Mitt Romney.

If the Republican presidential primary were held today, McCain would receive 38 percent of the vote, compared to 29 percent for Romney, nine percent for Huckabee and eight percent for Giuliani. As shown in the table below, Romney's support increased from 22 percent in March and 27 percent in June to 30 percent in September and 31 percent on January 2nd. Support for Romney declined slightly to 29 percent. After a strong showing in September (23%), Giuliani's support in the current poll fell into the single digits (8%), behind Mike Huckabee (9%). McCain (38%) has gained 24 points since September and now occupies the top spot. McCain's support in today's poll is his highest showing since polling began.

Support for Mike Huckabee increased slightly following his strong performance in the Iowa caucuses, but he still remains a distant third behind John McCain and Mitt Romney.

If the Republican presidential primary election were held today, who would you vote for?

| | January 6, 2008 | January 2, 2008 | Sept. 17, 2007 | June 6, 2007 | March 14, 2007 |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| John McCain | 38% | 37% | 14% | 17% | 29% |
| Mitt Romney | 29% | 31% | 30% | 27% | 22% |
| Mike Huckabee | 9% | 5% | 2% | 3% | 2% |
| Rudy Giuliani | 8% | 10% | 23% | 18% | 28% |
| Ron Paul | 7% | 6% | 3% | 1%* | 1% |
| Fred Thompson | 2% | 2% | 8% | 9% | 0% |
| Duncan Hunter | 0% | 1%* | 1% | 1%* | 1% |
| Undecided | 7% | 9% | 12% | 19% | 9% |

*=Less than 1%

According to R. Kelly Myers, "Mike Huckabee's success in Iowa is not likely to lead to a surge in New Hampshire, which has fewer social conservatives. But it could help McCain because it revealed weaknesses in Romney's campaign at this early stage in the primary season. Still, it remains possible that Romney will make the race competitive, because 35 percent of Republican primary voters still say they could change their mind between now and Tuesday."

While candidate support is becoming more firm, approximately one-third of Republican primary voters could still change their mind between now and January 8th.

After indicating their candidate choice, voters were then asked if their choice is firm, or if they could change their mind sometime between now and the primary election on January 8th. According to Myers, “the results indicate that, while voters are becoming less uncertain, the Republican presidential primary remains fluid. With just two days to go, 35 percent of Republican voters said that they could change their mind before the primary.” Among likely voters who support McCain, 67 percent indicated that it is a firm choice, up from 64 percent on January 2nd. Among likely voters who support Romney, 62 percent indicated that it is a firm choice, up from 54 percent on January 2nd. Firm support for Giuliani increased the most, up from 38 percent on January 2nd to 61 percent today.

Is that a firm choice, or could you change your mind between now and the primary election?

| | McCain | | Romney | | Giuliani | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | <i>January 6, 2008</i> | <i>January 2, 2008</i> | <i>January 6, 2008</i> | <i>January 2, 2008</i> | <i>January 6, 2008</i> | <i>January 2, 2008</i> |
| Firm choice | 67% | 64% | 62% | 54% | 61% | 38% |
| Could change mind | 32% | 36% | 36% | 44% | 39% | 62% |

The vast majority of Republican primary voters believe that Mike Huckabee did well in the Iowa caucuses.

Voters were asked which candidate performed well in the Iowa caucuses. Seventy-seven percent said that Huckabee did well, while 35 percent said that Romney did well, 19 percent said that McCain did well and three percent said that Thompson did well.

As far as you know, which Republican presidential candidate did well in the Iowa caucuses?

| | January 6, 2008 |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Mike Huckabee | 77% |
| Mitt Romney | 35% |
| John McCain | 19% |
| Fred Thompson | 3% |
| Rudy Giuliani | 1%* |
| Duncan Hunter | 1%* |
| Ron Paul | 0% |
| Undecided | 12% |

*=Less than 1% | Total Mentioned

Perceptions of who did well in the Iowa caucuses are strongly related to vote preference. Among voters who believe that John McCain did well, 65 percent would vote for him and 17 percent would vote for Romney. Similarly, support for Romney is much higher (47%) among those who think he did well in the Iowa caucuses, although many of these voters would still support McCain (29%). Significantly, though, voters who think Mike Huckabee did well in the Iowa caucuses do not support him in large numbers. Only 11 percent of them would vote for him if the primary election were held today. This represents a significant boost in support, but not enough to make Huckabee a likely strong contender in the New Hampshire contest.

If the Republican presidential primary election were held today, who would you vote for?

| | Said ... did well in the Iowa caucuses | | | |
|---------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| | <i>Mike Huckabee</i> | <i>John McCain</i> | <i>Mitt Romney</i> | <i>Fred Thompson</i> |
| John McCain | 37% | 65% | 29% | 29% |
| Mitt Romney | 29% | 17% | 47% | 14% |
| Mike Huckabee | 11% | 1% | 5% | 0% |
| Rudy Giuliani | 7% | 9% | 8% | 7% |
| Ron Paul | 7% | 1% | 3% | 14% |
| Fred Thompson | 2% | 3% | 1% | 21% |
| Duncan Hunter | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Undecided | 6% | 5% | 7% | 14% |

McCain's favorability remains high, while Romney's and Giuliani's favorability continues to decline.

It is interesting to track each candidate's favorability rating in order to better understand how the contest is shaping up over time. In March, Giuliani (66%) and McCain (63%) had the highest net favorability ratings, with Romney in third place (51%). Following the debate on June 5th, Romney rose to the top, assuming a five-point lead over Giuliani in this category. The September poll showed that Romney maintained his lead in net favorability (64%), with Giuliani (57%) and McCain (54%) following closely behind. On January 2nd, Romney's (47%) and Giuliani's (35%) net favorability both fell around 20 points, trailing that of McCain (74%). The picture is largely the same today, with McCain leading in net favorability (68%) and Romney (40%) and Giuliani (20%) continuing to decline. Notably, Mike Huckabee's net favorability spiked 10 points following the Iowa caucuses, up from 11 percent on January 2nd to 21 percent today.

Do you have a somewhat or very favorable opinion of ... ?

| | January 6, 2008 | | | January 2, 2008 | Sept. 17, 2007 | June 6, 2007 | March 14, 2007 |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | <i>Favorable</i> | <i>Unfavorable</i> | <i>Net Favorability</i> | <i>Net Favorability</i> | <i>Net Favorability</i> | <i>Net Favorability</i> | <i>Net Favorability</i> |
| John McCain | 82% | 14% | 68% | 74% | 54% | 37% | 63% |
| Mitt Romney | 67% | 27% | 40% | 47% | 64% | 65% | 51% |
| Mike Huckabee | 52% | 31% | 21% | 11% | 17% | 16% | 6% |
| Rudy Giuliani | 56% | 36% | 20% | 35% | 57% | 60% | 66% |
| Duncan Hunter | 13% | 22% | -9% | -5% | 2% | 3% | 2% |
| Fred Thompson | 31% | 42% | -11% | -7% | 29% | 32% | |
| Ron Paul | 26% | 51% | -25% | -17% | -20% | -12% | 2% |

The results suggest that positions on issues are increasingly important no matter which candidate voters support.

Respondents were asked the reasons why they would vote for their first-choice candidate. The results are shown below for the top three Republican candidates.

Which of the following best describes why you would vote for ... ?

| | Giuliani | | | | McCain | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | <i>January 6, 2008</i> | <i>January 2, 2008</i> | <i>Sep 17, 2007</i> | <i>June 6, 2007</i> | <i>January 6, 2008</i> | <i>January 2, 2008</i> | <i>Sep 17, 2007</i> | <i>June 6, 2007</i> |
| Electability | 12% | 13% | 10% | 3% | 5% | 3% | 4% | 4% |
| Position on issues | 46% | 30% | 34% | 38% | 32% | 22% | 29% | 30% |
| Best experience | 21% | 25% | 23% | 10% | 23% | 26% | 25% | 22% |
| Lead in new direction | 9% | 20% | 27% | 0% | 12% | 15% | 11% | 0% |
| Character | 9% | 10% | 7% | 5% | 28% | 31% | 29% | 26% |

| | Romney | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | <i>January 6, 2008</i> | <i>January 2, 2008</i> | <i>Sep 17, 2007</i> | <i>June 6, 2007</i> |
| Electability | 4% | 8% | 5% | 5% |
| Position on issues | 45% | 37% | 42% | 36% |
| Best experience | 19% | 19% | 5% | 11% |
| Lead in new direction | 19% | 23% | 29% | 0% |
| Character | 10% | 8% | 13% | 18% |

Significantly, positions on important issues was the most important factor for Giuliani (46%), Romney (45%) and McCain (32%) supporters. This is striking, because it suggests that voters are becoming more focused on specific issues as the primary election approaches and they solidify their support for specific candidates. Additionally, voters are drawn to Giuliani's candidacy based on perceptions of his experience (21%). Romney voters are also likely to vote for him because of perceptions of his experience (19%) and perceptions of his ability to lead in a new direction (19%). McCain voters are also likely to vote for him because of perceptions of his character (28%) and perceptions of his experience (23%).

Variations in Support

The following table shows variations in support for the Republican candidates compared over time.

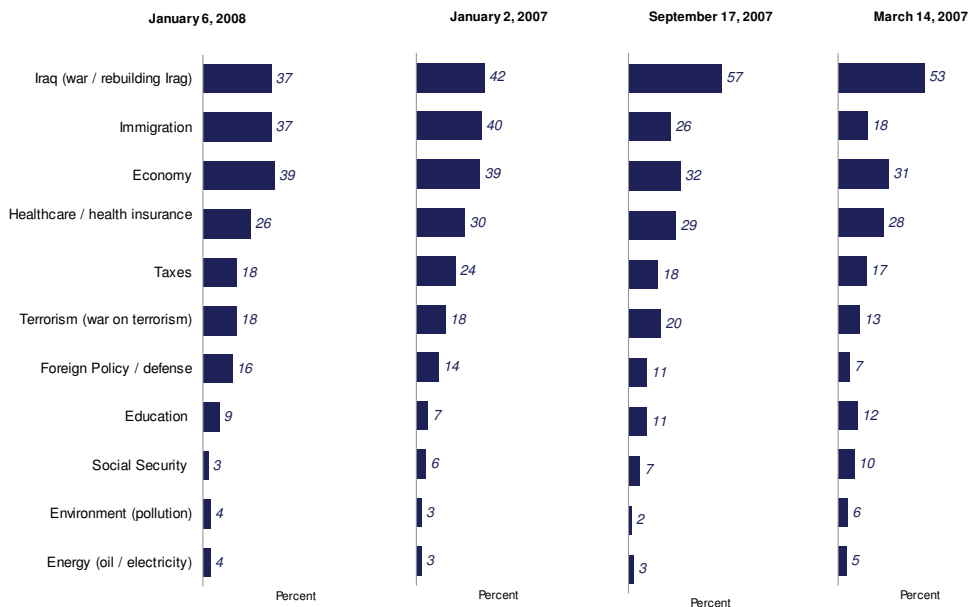
| | McCain (38%) | | | | Romney (29%) | | | | Giuliani (8%) | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------|-------|------|--------------|--------|-------|------|---------------|--------|-------|------|
| | Jan. 6 | Jan. 2 | Sept. | June | Jan. 6 | Jan. 2 | Sept. | June | Jan. 6 | Jan. 2 | Sept. | June |
| Party Registration | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Republican</i> | 70 | 67 | 66 | 81 | 78 | 81 | 66 | 82 | 82 | 77 | 72 | 67 |
| <i>Independents</i> | 30 | 33 | 34 | 19 | 22 | 19 | 34 | 18 | 18 | 23 | 28 | 33 |
| Ideology | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Liberal</i> | 7 | 4 | 13 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 13 | 8 | 3 |
| <i>Moderate</i> | 54 | 49 | 41 | 56 | 32 | 27 | 29 | 31 | 49 | 42 | 44 | 53 |
| <i>Conservative</i> | 39 | 46 | 46 | 41 | 61 | 67 | 67 | 68 | 42 | 45 | 45 | 44 |
| Gender | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Male</i> | 53 | 58 | 49 | 54 | 46 | 51 | 52 | 55 | 45 | 60 | 63 | 53 |
| <i>Female</i> | 47 | 42 | 51 | 46 | 54 | 49 | 48 | 45 | 55 | 40 | 37 | 47 |
| Age | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>18-34</i> | 3 | 2 | 4 | 13 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 13 | 6 | 0 | 10 | 11 |
| <i>35-54</i> | 36 | 29 | 45 | 38 | 32 | 35 | 47 | 43 | 33 | 55 | 51 | 48 |
| <i>55-64</i> | 27 | 30 | 17 | 25 | 24 | 21 | 15 | 26 | 21 | 25 | 22 | 23 |
| <i>65+</i> | 34 | 39 | 34 | 24 | 40 | 40 | 33 | 18 | 39 | 20 | 16 | 18 |
| Annual Income | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i><\$35K</i> | 8 | 8 | 13 | 19 | 8 | 11 | 10 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 11 |
| <i>\$35-50K</i> | 15 | 16 | 9 | 9 | 27 | 16 | 18 | 17 | 18 | 9 | 21 | 2 |
| <i>\$50-75K</i> | 34 | 33 | 30 | 16 | 25 | 21 | 22 | 28 | 37 | 23 | 24 | 28 |
| <i>\$75-100K</i> | 12 | 18 | 19 | 30 | 15 | 22 | 18 | 17 | 12 | 24 | 18 | 25 |
| <i>>\$100K</i> | 31 | 25 | 29 | 26 | 25 | 30 | 32 | 31 | 27 | 38 | 30 | 34 |

These results indicate that Romney appeals most strongly to conservative voters. Sixty-one percent of Romney voters consider themselves “conservative.” Only 42 percent of Giuliani voters, and 39 percent of McCain voters, describe themselves as conservatives, while each candidate draws stronger support from moderates. McCain supporters are more likely to be male (53%), while Romney (54%) and Giuliani (55%) supporters are more likely to be female. The recent poll shows that support for Giuliani, Romney and McCain is similar among senior citizens. Forty percent of Romney voters, 34 percent of McCain voters and 39 percent of Giuliani supporters are 65 or older.

The Iraq war, immigration and the economy are all important issues for many Republican primary voters.

Voters were asked which three policy issues will be most important to them in deciding who to vote for in the Republican primary. The results closely mirror what voters said on January 2nd. According to Myers, “the war in Iraq, immigration and the economy are the top issues for Republican voters, with healthcare, taxes and terrorism also being mentioned.” Thirty-seven percent of voters mentioned the Iraq war or rebuilding Iraq, 37 percent mentioned immigration, 39 percent mentioned the economy, 26 percent mentioned health care or health insurance and 18 percent mentioned taxes.

Which policy issues will be most important to you in deciding who to vote for in the NH primary?



Among: Republicans | compared over time | total mentioned

John McCain and Mitt Romney are now in a statistical tie when voters are asked who they think will ultimately win the Republican nomination.

When asked which candidate they think will ultimately win the Republican nomination, 29 percent identified Romney, down from 34 percent on January 2nd. Twenty-eight percent identified McCain, up from 25 percent on January 2nd and four percent in September. Only five percent of voters identified Giuliani, down from nine percent on January 2nd and 29 percent in September. These results indicate that McCain and Romney are now both contenders for the Republican nomination in voters' minds.

Which candidate do you think will end-up winning the Republican nomination?

| | January 6, 2008 | January 2, 2008 | Sept. 17, 2007 | June 6, 2007 | March 14, 2007 |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Mitt Romney | 29% | 34% | 26% | 23% | 12% |
| John McCain | 28% | 25% | 4% | 13% | 26% |
| Rudy Giuliani | 5% | 9% | 29% | 21% | 28% |
| Mike Huckabee | 5% | 3% | 1% | 1%* | 1%* |
| Ron Paul | 1% | 1% | 1%* | 0% | 0% |
| Fred Thompson | 1% | 1%* | 8% | 7% | |
| Duncan Hunter | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Undecided | 32% | 28% | 31% | 33% | 32% |

*=Less than 1%

Perceptions of who did well in the Iowa caucuses relate to perceptions of who will ultimately win the nomination. Voters who think McCain did well are more likely to think that McCain will end up winning the nomination (44%), while voters who think Romney did well are more likely to think that Romney will win the nomination (41%).

Which candidate do you think will end-up winning the Republican nomination?

| | Said ... did well in the Iowa caucuses | | | |
|---------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| | <i>Mike Huckabee</i> | <i>John McCain</i> | <i>Mitt Romney</i> | <i>Fred Thompson</i> |
| Mitt Romney | 31% | 23% | 41% | 21% |
| John McCain | 28% | 44% | 22% | 50% |
| Mike Huckabee | 6% | 4% | 4% | 0% |
| Rudy Giuliani | 3% | 5% | 6% | 0% |
| Ron Paul | 1% | 0% | 1% | 7% |
| Duncan Hunter | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Fred Thompson | 1%* | 0% | 1% | 7% |
| Undecided | 31% | 24% | 26% | 14% |