# A Christie Presidential Entry Hurts Pawlenty, Bachmann

If he chose to enter the race for the Republican nomination for president, New Jersey gov. Chris Christie would be tied for second place with Sarah Palin, according to a recent national survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind. Both candidates would still trail former Massachusetts gov. Mitt Romney by a wide margin.

With Christie included among the names of candidates given to Republican voters, he wins 9%, a statistical dead heat with Palin, another potential but unannounced candidate, who is preferred by 11% of Republicans.

But the design of the study also shows whose Republican voters Christie would be taking: The inclusion of Christie as a candidate leads to significant drops in support for Minnesota Rep. Michele Bachmann (from 9% to 5%) and former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty (from 6% to 3%).

"These results show the strength of Christie's current position with the Republican electorate," said Dan Cassino, the director of experimental research for the PublicMind poll, and a professor of political science at Fairleigh Dickinson University "He draws support almost equally from the Tea Party base that likes Bachmann and from Pawlenty's more moderate voters."

Christie's name was included in the list of possible candidates for half of the voters in the survey, allowing pollsters to determine the effect that his candidacy would have on support for other candidates. The same procedure was followed with Palin, allowing pollsters to determine where her supporters would be drawn from if she chooses to enter the race.

"Any election contest is a zero-sum game: When someone new gets in, it's sure to hurt someone else. This design allows us to see exactly who that someone is," said Cassino.

Palin's 11% support comes mostly at the expense of former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, who loses seven points – dropping from 12% to 5% – when the former Alaska governor's name is in the running.

"It's been widely assumed that Palin is sharing a constituency with Michele Bachmann – but the numbers just don't back that up," said Cassino. "Bachmann's numbers hardly budge when Palin is included as a candidate."

Christie has maintained that he will not seek the Republican nomination in 2012, though that has not stopped many Republicans from attempting to persuade him otherwise.

"So long as he's polling well, and the base hasn't solidified behind anyone else, they'll keep on trying to pull him in," said Cassino.

Romney and Bachmann are tied as the second choice of Republican voters, with 13% who named someone else as their first choice picking Romney as their

backup, while 12% make Bachmann their second pick.  Christie is the second choice of 8%, solidly in the middle of the pack, but his support comes almost entirely from voters who otherwise would have made Romney their second choice.

"As the race develops, the field is going to winnow down quickly, and a lot of people are going to be looking to their second choice," said Cassino. "Good numbers in the second choice question will help candidates take advantage when their opponents fall away."

When offered as a choice, Palin is the second choice of 16%, not statistically distinguishable from Romney's 14%. Some of that support is drawn from libertarian favorite and Texas Representative Ron Paul, but most of it comes from voters who otherwise wouldn't have a second choice: when she is included as a second choice, only 19% of respondents say that they do not have a preference for a backup candidate. When Palin is not included, 35% say they have no second choice.

"This field is by no means settled," said Cassino. "If Christie or Palin decides to run, it shakes up the whole group – and the leader among Republicans is still 'I don't know.'"

The Fairleigh Dickinson University survey was carried out by telephone from June 1 through June 7 using a randomly selected national sample of 509 Republican voters. It has a margin of error of +/-4.5 percentage points.

## Question Wording and Order

INSTRUCTION: at random respondents get 1 of 4 lists—1a-dd---includes all, includes Christie but not Palin, includes Palin but not Christie, includes neither Palin nor Christie.]

USP1a. In 2012 there will be an election for President of the United States.  To run as the Republican candidate for President, who would you prefer….READ AS NECESSARY, ROTATE LIST?

Michele Bachmann
Chris Christie
Sarah Palin
Mitt Romney
Tim Pawlenty
Newt Gingrich
Herman Cain
Ron Paul
Rick Santorum
Don't know (vol):   ASK "Which way do you lean?" IF lean "don't know" SKIP USP2.

USP1aa. And who would be your second choice…READ AS NECESSARY, ROTATE?

[ELIMINATE CHOICE FROM ABOVE]

READ/ROTATE

**Methodology, Questions, and Tables**

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from June 1 through June 7, 2011, using a randomly selected national sample of 509 self-identified Republicans and Republican "leaners," of whom 279 self-identified Republicans and leaners were drawn from random digit dialing (RDD), and an oversample of 230 Republicans were randomly selected from registered voter lists. The margin of error for a sample of 509 randomly selected respondents is +/- 4.5%age points. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers. PublicMind interviews are conducted by Opinion America of Cedar Knolls, NJ, with professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection of is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a land-line phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected. Landline households are supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone-only-households, interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender among the voting population.

| To run as the Republican candidate for President, who would you prefer…. [includes those who lean towards a candidate] | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Candidate | Overall | No Christie | Christie Listed | No Palin | Palin Listed |
| Michele Bachmann | 7% | 9% | 5% | 8% | 6% |
| Chris Christie | -- | -- | 9% | -- | -- |
| Sarah Palin | -- | -- | -- | -- | 11% |
| Mitt Romney | 27% | 26% | 29% | 28% | 26% |
| Tim Pawlenty | 4% | 6% | 3% | 5% | 4% |
| Newt Gingrich | 9% | 10% | 7% | 12% | 5% |
| Herman Cain | 8% | 9% | 8% | 8% | 9% |
| Ron Paul | 5% | 6% | 5% | 6% | 4% |
| Rick Santorum | 2% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 3% |
| Don't know | 27% | 27% | 27% | 27% | 27% |

| And who would be your second choice… [includes those who lean towards a candidate] | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Candidate | Overall | No Christie | Christie Listed | No Palin | Palin Listed |
| Michele Bachmann | 12% | 13% | 10% | 12% | 11% |
| Chris Christie | -- | -- | 8% | -- | -- |
| Sarah Palin | -- | -- | -- | -- | 16% |
| Mitt Romney | 13% | 17% | 11% | 13% | 14% |
| Tim Pawlenty | 7% | 9% | 5% | 8% | 6% |
| Newt Gingrich | 9% | 10% | 9% | 9% | 9% |
| Herman Cain | 6% | 9% | 4% | 5% | 8% |
| Ron Paul | 8% | 7% | 9% | 10% | 5% |
| Rick Santorum | 5% | 8% | 3% | 4% | 7% |
| Don't know | 28% | 21% | 34% | 35% | 19% |