



For immediate release... **Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2011**

2 pp.

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Too Soon to think about Vice Presidential Candidates? For some . . . but not others.

While some Republicans and independents aren't thinking about Republican vice-presidential nominees (36%), many others have suggestions at the ready. According to a new national poll of registered voters by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind™, Senator Marco Rubio, Rep. Michele Bachmann, and former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich top the list, each getting 60 mentions or more out of 740 voters asked, or about 8 percent.

"The surprise is that Rubio has so many mentions without any prompt," said Peter Woolley, a political scientist and director of the poll. "The question we asked was open ended. He was not mentioned in any previous question."

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie gets half that number of mentions for Vice President, or about 4 per cent, to come in fifth, just behind former Gov. Mitt Romney.

In generic terms, however, women top the list. In addition to 60 mentions for Michele Bachmann, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton gets 16, former Gov. Sarah Palin gets 13, former Sec. of State Condoleezza Rice gets 5, Sen. Olympia Snowe of Maine gets 1, and "a woman" gets 14, to comprise 15% of all responses

"The Republican Party is trending older and whiter and more male," said Woolley. "Clearly some voters are looking for a little more contrast. Some know they will have to appeal to a broader group of people to win the White House."

Marco Rubio, who gets the most mentions, is a child of Cuban immigrants, but precious few Republicans or independents make mention of selecting a "Latino" (2), or "a minority" (2) or an African American (1) as the Republicans' presidential running mate.

"The reason we include independents in this study is because they make the difference between winning and losing," said Woolley. "Choosing a running mate is either about shoring up the base or appealing to important blocks of voters outside the base."

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 740 registered Republican and independent voters nationwide was conducted by both landlines and cell phones from Nov. 29 through Dec. 5, 2011, and has a margin of error of +/-3.5 percentage points.

Methodology, questions, and tables on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>
For more information, please call 201.692.7032

Question Wording and Order

US1-4, D1, USP1a-b released 12.7.11.

USP2. And, no matter who is the Republican nominee for President, if you could pick the Vice Presidential nominee who would it be.... OPEN END, PRECODE, SPECIFY ANY OTHER?

Methodology, Questions, and Tables

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from Nov. 29 through Dec. 5, 2011, using a randomly selected national sample of 740 registered Republican and independent voters (399 Republicans and 341 independents) contacted on both landlines and cell phones. The margin of error for a sample of 740 randomly selected respondents is +/- 3.6 percentage points. 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 is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. Landline households are supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone-only-households, interviewed in the same time frame. In addition, 200 Republican households were oversampled by random selection among listed, registered Republicans.

And, no matter who is the Republican nominee for President, if you could pick the Vice Presidential nominee who would it be?	
<i>name or characteristic</i>	<i># of mentions</i>
Marco Rubio	61
Michele Bachmann	60
Newt Gingrich	60
Mitt Romney	38
Chris Christie	29
Herman Cain	25
Ron Paul	24
a moderate	22
Rick Santorum	19
Rick Perry	17
Hillary Clinton	16
a woman	14
Sarah Palin	13
a conservative	11
Jon Huntsman	11
Paul Ryan	6
John McCain	6
Condoleezza Rice	5
someone young	4
Donald Trump	3
Mitch Daniels	3
a southerner	2
Hispanic/Latino	2
a minority	2
Haley Barbour	2
John Boehner	1
Olympia Snowe	1
Bob Graham	1
Mike Huckabee	1
an African American	1
Colin Powell	1
Bill Clinton	1
Joe Lieberman	1
Rudy Giuliani	2
Jeb Bush	1
a Christian man	1
Rush Limbaugh	1
Glenn Beck	1
Bobby Jindal	1
George Pataki	1
Ross Perot	1
Scott Walker	1
Bob McDonnell	1
don't know	266