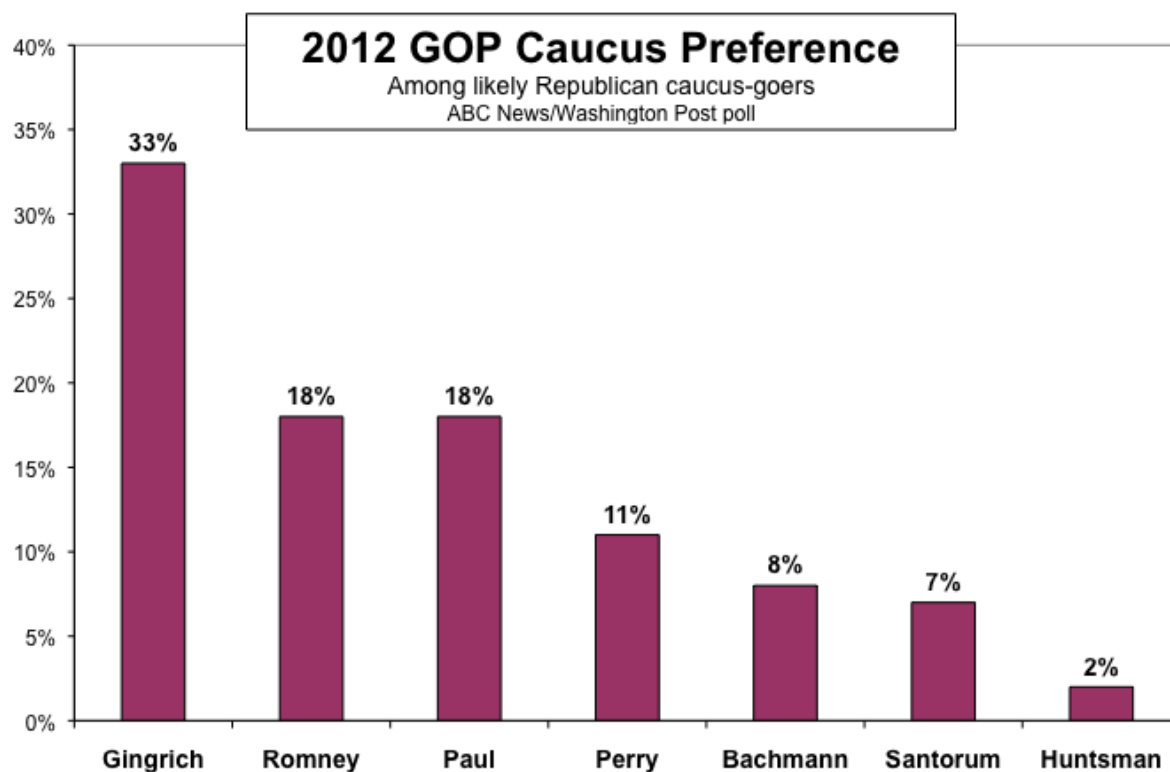


Iowa Conservatives Rally to Gingrich, Citing Experience, “Core GOP Values”

Newt Gingrich has leapt to a sizable lead in preferences for the Iowa Republican caucuses, drawing on a rally from conservatives, positive views of his political experience and a sense he best represents “core Republican values” to push Mitt Romney into a trailing tie with Ron Paul.

Gingrich also scores evenly with Romney as the candidate best able to defeat Barack Obama, a mantle Romney long has sought. And this ABC News/Washington Post poll finds Gingrich ahead of the GOP field in trust to handle the economy, the top issue in Iowa, as it is nationally.

Given these views, 33 percent of likely Republican caucus-goers currently favor Gingrich for the GOP nomination, with 18 percent apiece for Romney and Paul. Rick Perry garners 11 percent support; Michele Bachmann, 8; Rick Santorum, 7; and Jon Huntsman, 2 percent.



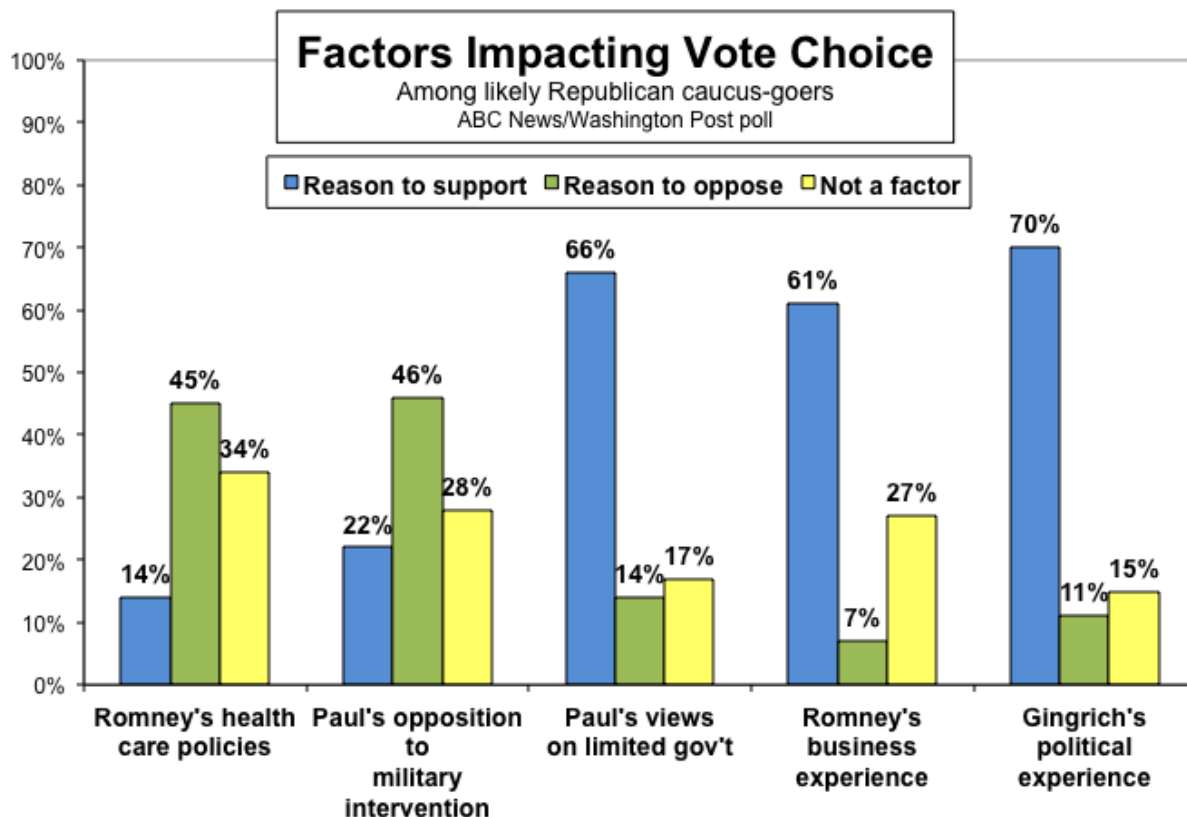
There's room for movement. Just over half of likely caucus-goers, 52 percent, say there's a chance they may yet change their minds before the Jan. 3 event. Indeed about one in four, 27

percent, says there's a "good chance" they'll switch their first preference – more than enough to shift the standings if the bulk of them were to move in the same direction.

In Iowa, as nationally, Gingrich's fortunes reflect the restlessness of conservative Republicans as they've sought an alternative to Romney. Support for Romney craters to just 11 percent among "very" conservatives – a dominant group in the caucuses, accounting for more than four in 10 likely participants. Romney inches to 19 percent support among "somewhat" conservatives in Iowa, still trailing Gingrich. Only among moderates (and the few liberals) does Romney pull into competition. But they're far too few in number to make up for his conservative shortfall.

Romney's also vulnerable in another area: He faces a significant loyalty gap, in which his supporters are disproportionately likely to say they may change their minds. Paul's backers, by contrast, are highly loyal; Gingrich's fall between the two.

ADVANTAGE – This poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), suggests that Gingrich holds the advantage to some extent because he lacks the negatives that are pulling back his top two rivals – for Romney, his record on health care and weak ratings on standing up for his beliefs; for Paul, his isolationist views and doubts about his electability.



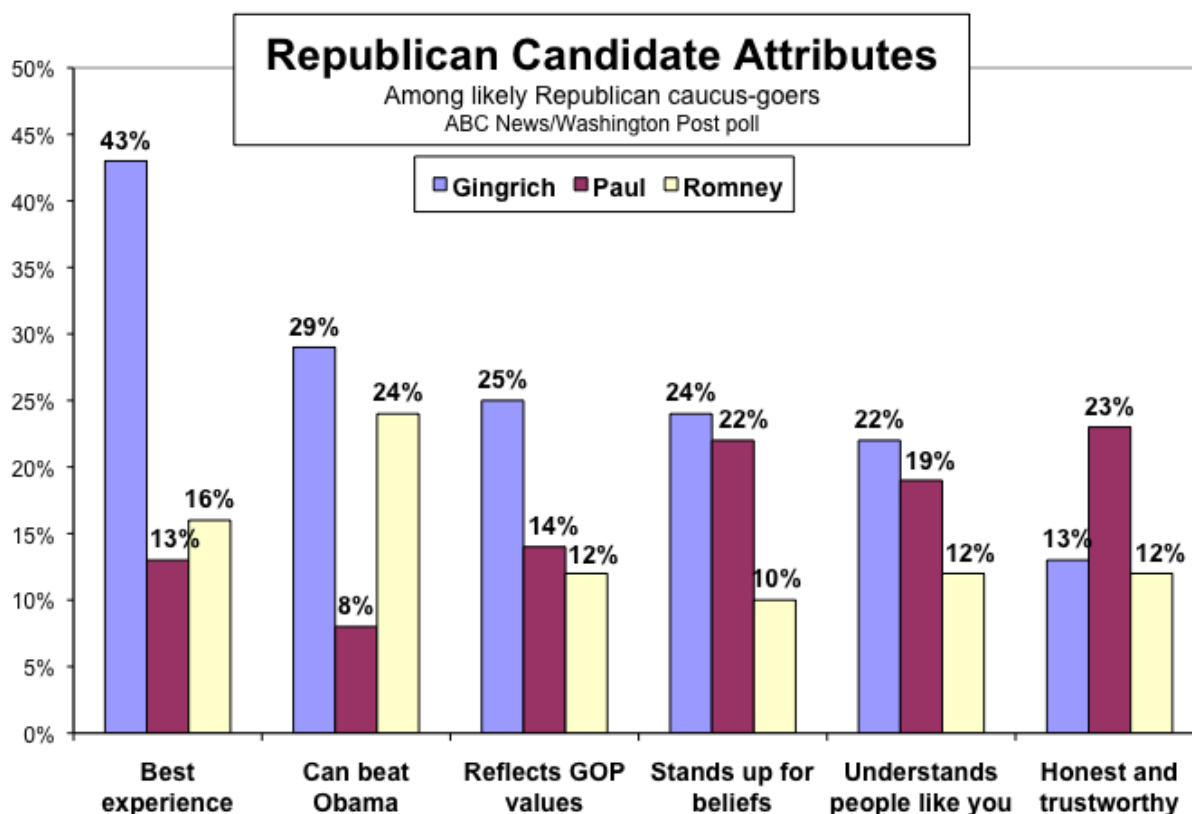
All three candidates have popular attributes – Gingrich his political experience (70 percent call it a major reason to support him), Paul his views on limited government (66 percent call this a

strong draw) and Romney his business experience (61 percent say it's a major positive). But 45 percent also see Romney's legacy of mandatory health care in Massachusetts as a major reason to oppose him for the nomination, and 46 percent say the same about Paul's opposition to U.S. military interventions overseas.

Gingrich, by contrast, has no negative approaching that magnitude among likely caucus-goers in this survey – neither his views on immigration nor his marital history, seen as major shortcomings by just 15 and 16 percent, respectively.

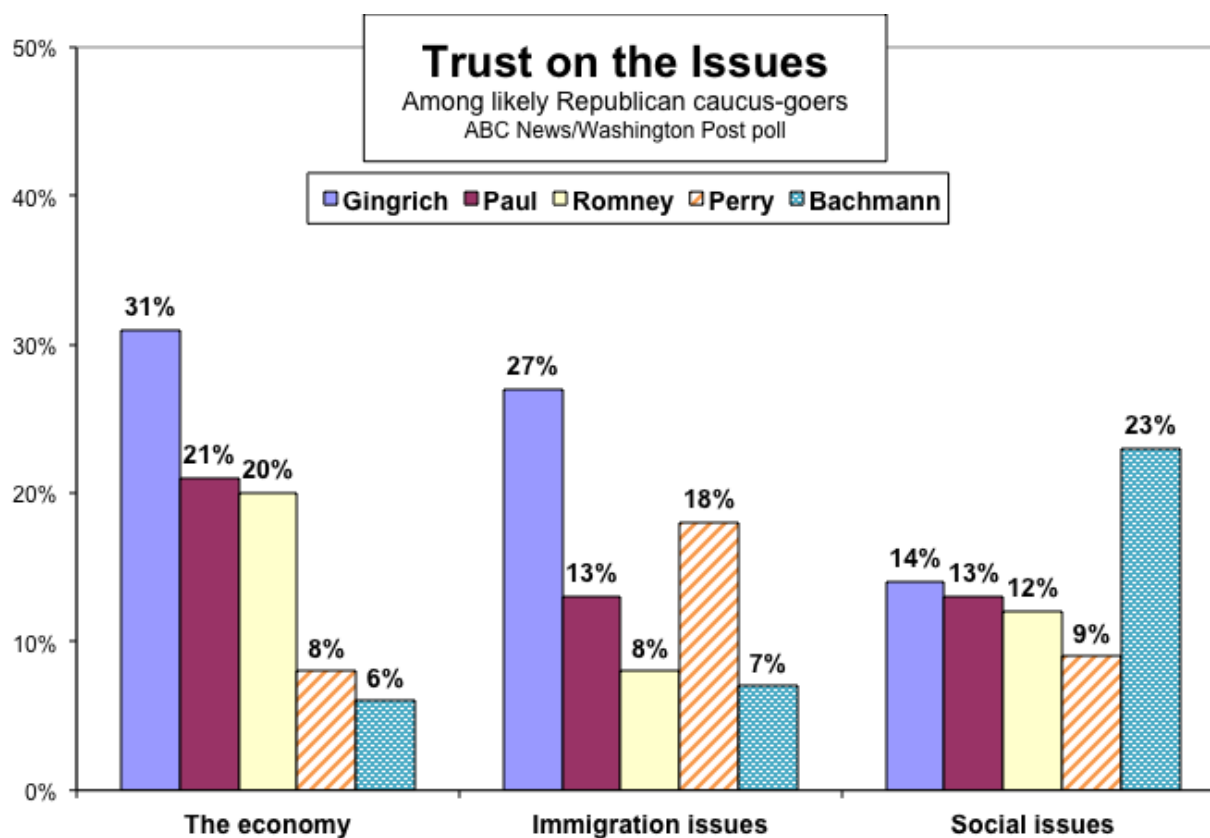
Slightly fewer than four in 10 likely caucus-goers call the economy and jobs the most important issue in their vote; for nearly three in 10 more, it's the federal budget deficit. Gingrich leads in both groups, but Romney's second among economy voters, while Paul's No. 2 among those focused on the deficit.

ATTRIBUTES and ISSUES – On personal attributes, Gingrich and Paul alike lead Romney by 2-1 margins as the candidate who's most likely to “stand up for what he or she believes” – suggesting resonance in the charges that Romney's been inconsistent on the issues. Both similarly lead Romney on empathy, as the candidate who “best understands the problems of people like you.” Indeed on these attributes Romney is numerically in fourth place, also behind Bachmann (albeit not by a statistically significant margin).



Gingrich, meanwhile, walks away with views that he's got the best experience to be president; 43 percent say so, followed by a vastly lower 16 percent for Romney, 13 percent for Paul. And 29 percent pick Gingrich as having the best chance to defeat Obama. Twenty-four percent give Romney the best shot; Paul lags badly here, with just 8 percent.

Gingrich, as noted, leads in trust to handle the economy, selected by 31 percent of likely caucus-goers, with Paul and Romney running essentially evenly behind him, at 21 and 20 percent, respectively. Gingrich also leads in trust to handle immigration, perhaps surprisingly, given his less orthodox views on the issue. He's weaker in trust to handle social issues such as abortion and gay marriage; on this more Iowans prefer Bachmann over the rest of the GOP field.



Paul, for his part, leads Gingrich and Romney as the “most honest and trustworthy” candidate, and, as noted, runs evenly with Romney in trust to handle the economy, behind Gingrich. Paul’s support, however, is disproportionately high among younger Iowans, a group whose turnout always is a question mark, especially at the historically lightly attended caucuses. Romney, by contrast, does better with seniors – again as has been the case in national polls – a more reliable turnout group.

While turnout is a wildcard, Gingrich leads not only among likely caucus-goers, but also among a larger group, potential caucus participants. In this population Gingrich has 28 percent support; Romney, 18 percent; Paul, 16; Perry, 12; Bachmann, 10, Santorum, 4; and Huntsman, 2 percent.

Gingrich's rise follows the implosion of Herman Cain's campaign; he withdrew from the race Saturday following claims Nov. 28 by a single mother, Ginger White, that they'd had a 13-year affair. (Cain denied it.) This survey, the first conducted entirely after White's charges were made public, computed vote preference by allocating Cain's supporters to their second choice.

When Cain is included as a candidate, he has just 4 percent support from likely caucus-goers, a complete collapse from his 23 percent in a Des Moines Register poll in late October. National polls have tracked the same drop-off for Cain, as well as, earlier, short-lived GOP rallies for Bachmann and Perry. The question for Gingrich is whether he can hold that ground.

In one measure of candidate potential, relatively few likely caucus-goers rule out any of the candidates. Just under a quarter, 23 percent, say they definitely would not support Bachmann for the nomination; 18 percent say the same about Romney, 16 percent about Paul. Significant majorities, then, are not flatly rejecting any of these or the other candidates. Notably, among very conservatives, just 23 percent rule out Romney, meaning he may still have a chance in this group were Gingrich to stumble badly in the weeks ahead.

Bachmann's problems seem to focus on ability, not likeability. She's rated competitively on qualities such as empathy, honesty, GOP values and standing up for her beliefs, and, as noted, on dealing with social issues. But she falls far short on handling the economy and immigration, having the best experience and in being seen as best able to defeat Obama in November.

RELIGION – Religious belief was a strong factor in 2008, when evangelical Christians in Iowa flocked to Mike Huckabee, and enough expressed concerns about Romney's Mormon belief to make a difference. It looks like less of an issue now. Some likely caucus-goers, 15 percent, call Romney's religion a major reason to oppose him; 4 percent call it a major reason to support him, while 78 percent say it's not a major factor either way. Gingrich, in any case, leads across religious groups. Ideology, issues and attributes look like much bigger differentiators.

OUTREACH and ATTENTION – One surprising result is that Gingrich leads in Iowa despite a shortfall in personal outreach. Three in 10 likely caucus-goers say they have been contacted in person by a representative of the Romney, Paul, Perry and/or Bachmann campaigns. Fewer, 19 percent, say they've been contacted by the Gingrich campaign, similar to Santorum (15 percent) and ahead only of Huntsman (7 percent.) Yet Gingrich leads – raising the question of whether Iowa's reputation as a bastion of retail politics is entirely deserved.

Attention to the contest is substantial: Among all potential Republican caucus-goers, 83 percent say they're following the campaign closely; among likely caucus-goers this jumps to 94 percent. Seventy-six percent of likely caucus-goers also describe themselves as satisfied with their choice of candidates (compared with 63 percent of all potential caucus-goers.) And 92 percent of likely caucus goers describe themselves as enthusiastic about the candidate they currently support.

Many fewer, though, are “very” enthusiastic, 36 percent, 9 points fewer than at this time four years ago.

The debates have attracted substantial audiences, with 68 percent of likely-caucus goers (and 53 percent of potential participants) saying they’ve watched. Gingrich’s advantage expands among debate watchers, as well as among those who are very closely following the campaign.

A WORD ON TURNOUT – Turnout in the Republican Iowa caucuses is usually about a mere 5 percent of the adult population – about 120,000 people in 2008, or roughly the capacity of Michigan Stadium. That makes identifying likely caucus-goers difficult.

This survey was conducted via random-sample telephone interviews (landline and cell phone alike) of the full Iowa adult population, winnowing down both to potential caucus-goers, then further identifying likely participants. Potential caucus-goers account for 21 percent of the general population; likely caucus-goers, 8 percent.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post survey was conducted by landline and cell phone Nov. 30-Dec. 4, 2011, among a random sample of 858 potential and 356 likely Iowa Republican caucus-goers. The results have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4 points for potential caucus-goers and 6 points for likely participants. This survey was produced for ABC News by Langer Research Associates of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

Media contacts: Media Contacts: [David Ford](#), (212) 456-7243, and [Julie Townsend](#), (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow.

*= less than 0.5 percent. PV signifies potential caucus-goers; LV, likely caucus-goers.

1-3 screening questions.

4. How closely are you following the 2012 presidential campaign: very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not closely at all?

| | | ---- Closely ----- | | | ---- Not closely ----- | | | No |
|----------------------------|----|--------------------|------|-------|------------------------|---------|--------|---------|
| | | NET | Very | Smwt. | NET | Not too | At all | opinion |
| 12/4/11 | PV | 83 | 37 | 46 | 16 | 11 | 5 | * |
| 12/4/11 | LV | 94 | 54 | 40 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| 12/17/07 | LV | 95 | 51 | 44 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| 11/18/07 | LV | 93 | 48 | 44 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| 7/31/07 | LV | 88 | 35 | 53 | 12 | 10 | 2 | 0 |
| *2011 “2012.” 2007 “2008.” | | | | | | | | |

5. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the choice of candidates for the Republican nomination for president - are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

| | | ----- Satisfied ----- | | | --- Dissatisfied --- | | | No |
|---------|----|-----------------------|------|----------|----------------------|----------|------|---------|
| | | NET | Very | Somewhat | NET | Somewhat | Very | opinion |
| 12/4/11 | PV | 63 | 15 | 48 | 34 | 21 | 13 | 3 |
| 12/4/11 | LV | 76 | 24 | 52 | 22 | 16 | 7 | 1 |

6. If the Republican caucus were being held today, and the candidates were: (Michele Bachmann), (Herman Cain*), (Newt Gingrich), (Jon Huntsman), (Ron Paul), (Rick Perry), (Mitt Romney), (Rick Santorum), who would you support? Which candidate are you leaning toward?

12/4/11 - NET LEANED PREFERENCE

| | Potential caucus-goers | Likely caucus-goers |
|------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Newt Gingrich | 28 | 33 |
| Mitt Romney | 18 | 18 |
| Ron Paul | 16 | 18 |
| Rick Perry | 12 | 11 |
| Michele Bachmann | 10 | 8 |
| Rick Santorum | 4 | 7 |
| Jon Huntsman | 2 | 2 |
| Other | 1 | * |
| None of these | 4 | 1 |
| Would not vote | * | 0 |
| No opinion | 4 | 3 |

*Cain supporters were reallocated based on their second choice.

7. Will you definitely support (NAMED CANDIDATE) as your first choice, or is there a chance you could change your mind and support someone else as your first choice? IF CHANCE CHANGE MIND: (would you say there's a good chance) you'll change your mind, or (is it pretty unlikely)?

| | | Definitely support | -Chance change mind - | | | No |
|---------|----|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------|------|---------|
| | | | NET | Unlikely | Good | opinion |
| 12/4/11 | PV | 35 | 61 | 26 | 35 | 4 |
| 12/4/11 | LV | 45 | 52 | 26 | 27 | 3 |

PV Gingrich supporters:

| | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|---|
| 12/4/11 | 37 | 59 | 26 | 34 | 4 |
|---------|----|----|----|----|---|

PV Romney supporters:

| | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|---|
| 12/4/11 | 28 | 70 | 31 | 39 | 2 |
|---------|----|----|----|----|---|

PV Paul supporters:

| | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|---|
| 12/4/11 | 50 | 48 | 17 | 30 | 2 |
|---------|----|----|----|----|---|

8. How enthusiastic are you about supporting (NAMED CANDIDATE) - very enthusiastic, fairly enthusiastic, not too enthusiastic, or not enthusiastic at all?

| | | --- Enthusiastic -- | | | ---- Not enthusiastic ---- | | | No |
|---------|----|---------------------|------|--------|----------------------------|---------|------------|---------|
| | | NET | Very | Fairly | NET | Not too | Not at all | opinion |
| 12/4/11 | PV | 78 | 24 | 54 | 21 | 17 | 5 | 1 |
| 12/4/11 | LV | 92 | 36 | 56 | 8 | 7 | 1 | * |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|----|----|----|---|---|---|---|
| 12/17/07 LV | 94 | 45 | 49 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| 11/18/07 LV | 91 | 34 | 57 | 8 | 8 | 1 | 1 |

PV Gingrich supporters:

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|
| 12/4/11 | 81 | 27 | 54 | 18 | 16 | 2 | 1 |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|

PV Romney supporters:

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|
| 12/4/11 | 73 | 15 | 58 | 27 | 23 | 4 | 0 |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|

PV Paul supporters:

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|
| 12/4/11 | 81 | 30 | 51 | 19 | 11 | 8 | 0 |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|

9. Are there any of these candidates you would definitely not support for the Republican nomination for president? (MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED.)

| | 12/4/11 | |
|------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| | Potential caucus-goers | Likely caucus-goers |
| Michele Bachmann | 24 | 23 |
| Herman Cain | 22 | 18 |
| Mitt Romney | 15 | 18 |
| Newt Gingrich | 10 | 12 |
| Ron Paul | 12 | 16 |
| Rick Perry | 12 | 15 |
| Jon Huntsman | 8 | 11 |
| Rick Santorum | 6 | 8 |
| None of these | 31 | 26 |
| No opinion | 4 | 4 |

10. Which of the following is the single most important issue in your choice for the Republican candidate for president? Is it (the economy and jobs), (the federal budget deficit), (immigration), (taxes), (social issues like abortion and gay marriage), (the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan), or something else?

| | 12/4/11 | |
|--|---------------------------|------------------------|
| | Potential caucus-goers | Likely caucus-goers |
| Economy and jobs | 44 | 38 |
| Federal budget deficit | 25 | 28 |
| Social issues like abortion and gay marriage | 11 | 15 |
| Taxes | 6 | 4 |
| Immigration | 3 | 3 |
| Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan | 2 | 2 |
| Social Security/Medicare/elderly care | 1 | * |
| Something else (SPECIFY) | 5 | 7 |
| All of them | 2 | 1 |
| No opinion | 1 | 1 |

11. Regardless of who you may support, which of the Republican candidates do you think (ITEM)?

Full item wording:

- best understands the problems of people like you
- is the most honest and trustworthy
- has the best experience to be president
- has the best chance to defeat Barack Obama in the general election
- best reflects the core values of the Republican Party
- is most likely to stand up for what he or she believes in

12/4/11 - Summary table, potential Republican caucus-goers*

| | Understands | Honest | Experience | Defeat | Values | Stand up |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------|------------|--------|--------|----------|
| Michele Bachmann | 16 | 16 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 16 |
| Newt Gingrich | 17 | 11 | 42 | 27 | 23 | 21 |
| Jon Huntsman | 1 | 2 | 1 | * | 1 | 1 |
| Ron Paul | 17 | 19 | 10 | 6 | 12 | 19 |
| Rick Perry | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 11 |
| Mitt Romney | 10 | 14 | 18 | 24 | 15 | 11 |
| Rick Santorum | 3 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| Other | * | 0 | * | * | * | * |
| All of them | 2 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 5 |
| Any 2 or more equally | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| None of them | 11 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 3 |
| No opinion | 10 | 10 | 9 | 12 | 15 | 7 |

12/4/11 - Summary table, likely Republican caucus-goers*

| | Understands | Honest | Experience | Defeat | Values | Stand up |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------|------------|--------|--------|----------|
| Michele Bachmann | 15 | 17 | 2 | 2 | 13 | 13 |
| Newt Gingrich | 22 | 13 | 43 | 29 | 25 | 24 |
| Jon Huntsman | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Ron Paul | 19 | 23 | 13 | 8 | 14 | 22 |
| Rick Perry | 8 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 9 | 9 |
| Mitt Romney | 12 | 12 | 16 | 24 | 12 | 10 |
| Rick Santorum | 5 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 6 |
| Other | * | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| All of them | 3 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 6 |
| Any 2 or more equally | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| None of them | 7 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| No opinion | 7 | 6 | 6 | 11 | 12 | 5 |

*Those picking Cain were reallocated based on their second choice on each attribute.

12. Regardless of who you may support, which of the Republican candidates do you trust most to handle (ITEM)?

Full item wording:

- a. The economy
- b. Immigration issues
- c. Social issues, such as abortion and gay marriage

12/4/11 - Summary table, potential Republican caucus-goers*

| | Economy | Immigration | Social issues |
|-----------------------|---------|-------------|---------------|
| Michele Bachmann | 8 | 8 | 22 |
| Newt Gingrich | 27 | 20 | 13 |
| Jon Huntsman | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Ron Paul | 16 | 11 | 11 |
| Rick Perry | 9 | 21 | 9 |
| Mitt Romney | 20 | 9 | 14 |
| Rick Santorum | 1 | 3 | 7 |
| Other | 0 | 0 | * |
| All of them | * | * | * |
| Any 2 or more equally | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| None of them | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| No opinion | 8 | 18 | 15 |

12/4/11 - Summary table, likely Republican caucus-goers*

Economy Immigration Social issues

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----|----|----|
| Michele Bachmann | 6 | 7 | 23 |
| Newt Gingrich | 31 | 27 | 14 |
| Jon Huntsman | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Ron Paul | 21 | 13 | 13 |
| Rick Perry | 8 | 18 | 9 |
| Mitt Romney | 20 | 8 | 12 |
| Rick Santorum | 2 | 4 | 12 |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| All of them | 0 | * | 1 |
| Any 2 or more equally | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| None of them | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| No opinion | 5 | 15 | 10 |

*Those picking Cain were reallocated based on their second choice on each issue.

13. For each item I name, please tell me if it is a major reason to (support) that candidate, a major reason to (oppose) that candidate, or not a major factor?

12/4/11 - Summary table, potential Republican caucus-goers

| | Major reason to support | Major reason to oppose | Not a major factor | No op. |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| a. Mitt Romney's policies on health care when he was governor of Massachusetts | 18 | 33 | 36 | 13 |
| b. Mitt Romney's religious beliefs | 8 | 13 | 74 | 5 |
| c. Mitt Romney's business experience | 57 | 7 | 30 | 6 |
| d. Newt Gingrich's political experience | 61 | 13 | 22 | 4 |
| e. Newt Gingrich's marital history | 3 | 16 | 76 | 5 |
| f. Newt Gingrich's position on illegal immigration | 34 | 16 | 35 | 15 |
| g. Ron Paul's views on limited government | 55 | 14 | 24 | 7 |
| h. Ron Paul's opposition to U.S. military interventions overseas | 27 | 36 | 30 | 6 |

12/4/11 - Summary table, likely Republican caucus-goers

| | Major reason to support | Major reason to oppose | Not a major factor | No op. |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| a. Mitt Romney's policies on health care when he was governor of Massachusetts | 14 | 45 | 34 | 7 |
| b. Mitt Romney's religious beliefs | 4 | 15 | 78 | 2 |
| c. Mitt Romney's business experience | 61 | 7 | 27 | 5 |
| d. Newt Gingrich's political experience | 70 | 11 | 15 | 4 |
| e. Newt Gingrich's marital history | 1 | 16 | 79 | 3 |
| f. Newt Gingrich's position on illegal immigration | 38 | 15 | 36 | 10 |
| g. Ron Paul's views on limited government | 66 | 14 | 17 | 3 |
| h. Ron Paul's opposition to U.S. military interventions overseas | 22 | 46 | 28 | 4 |

14. Have you personally been contacted by a representative of any of the campaigns, either by phone or in-person, asking you for your support, or not? IF YES: Which ones? (ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS)

| | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 12/4/11 | |
| | Potential | Likely |
| | caucus-goers | caucus-goers |
| Yes, total | 45 | 58 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|----|----|
| Yes, Michele Bachmann | 26 | 32 |
| Yes, Mitt Romney | 21 | 31 |
| Yes, Ron Paul | 21 | 29 |
| Yes, Rick Perry | 20 | 30 |
| Yes, Herman Cain | 17 | 23 |
| Yes, Newt Gingrich | 13 | 19 |
| Yes, Rick Santorum | 10 | 15 |
| Yes, Jon Huntsman | 5 | 7 |
| Yes, Other (SPECIFY) | 3 | 3 |
| No, None of them | 51 | 40 |
| No opinion | 4 | 2 |

15. Have you watched any of the debates among the Republican candidates for president that have been held recently, or not?

| | Yes, have watched | No, have not watched | No opinion |
|------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 12/4/11 PV | 53 | 47 | * |
| 12/4/11 LV | 68 | 32 | 0 |

16. On another subject, what is your view of the Tea Party political movement - would you say you support it strongly, support it somewhat, oppose it somewhat or oppose it strongly?

| | ----- Support ----- | | | ----- Oppose ----- | | | No |
|------------|---------------------|----------|----------|--------------------|----------|----------|---------|
| | NET | Strongly | Somewhat | NET | Somewhat | Strongly | opinion |
| 12/4/11 PV | 69 | 26 | 43 | 23 | 14 | 9 | 8 |
| 12/4/11 LV | 77 | 35 | 42 | 17 | 11 | 7 | 6 |

*** END ***