



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on June 3, 2011

Bachmann Plan to Debate in NH Hints at Presidential Bid

Tea Party favorite Michele Bachmann (R-Minn., left) has provided a series of hints that she is considering a presidential bid, and her announcement that she will be participating in the next presidential debate in New Hampshire this month virtually confirms Bachmann's intent to be a presidential candidate for the 2012 nomination. The debate, set to take place on June 13 in Manchester, N.H., is expected to boast a series of prominent candidates, including Tim Pawlenty, Rick Santorum, Newt Gingrich, Herman Cain, Mitt Romney, and Ron Paul. Bachmann will reportedly be among these contenders, says Bachmann aide Any Parrish.



Congresswoman Bachmann plans to announce her 2012 this month in Iowa, the state that hosts the leadoff presidential caucuses. *The Blaze* reports:

She has been laying campaign groundwork in Iowa by hiring senior political staff and scouting campaign office space. She has also traveled to the early primary states of New Hampshire and South Carolina.

Former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney declared his intent to launch a presidential bid just days ago in New Hampshire, where former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin appeared as part of her bus tour of patriotic sites in the Northeast.

Current polls show that [generic](#) Republican contenders are currently trailing behind President Obama. The latest Pew Research Center poll shows Obama ahead of a generic Republican opponent, 48 percent to 37 percent. The *Los Angeles Times* put this figure into perspective:

At a comparable period, April 2003, President George W. Bush had a 48% to 34% lead over a generic Democrat. Bush had a 72% approval rating at the time while Obamas is 52%.

The Times notes that much of the problem is that there is no generic candidate, nor any candidate who seemingly unites the different conservative streams in the party: economic, social, and libertarian. An *Associated Press*/Gfk Poll conducted last month does show that just 41 percent of Republican voters are satisfied with the potential candidates for the GOP nomination, while 45 percent are dissatisfied.

According to CBS News, however, the lack of Republican voters enthusiasm for the current candidates is [not unusual](#) at this stage of the game. Citing a number of historical examples of voter initial voter dissatisfaction that eventually transformed into full-blown support of a particular candidate, CBS News notes that the current apathy amongst Republican voters is not necessarily a predictor of defeat in 2012:

In mid-October 1991, only 18 percent of Democratic primary voters were satisfied with their candidates, according to a CBS News/*New York Times* Poll, while 64 percent wanted someone



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else to enter the race. At the time, incumbent Republican President George H.W. Bush had a 67 percent approval rating and looked unbeatable. Democrats grew more satisfied with their field as the campaign heated up, but a sizable number continued to want more choices.

While Obama maintains an 11-point lead over a generic opponent, however, when weighed against specific candidates, that lead shrinks. A May 31 RCP average [reveals](#) that President Obama maintains a 7.3 percent lead over Romney, an 8 percent lead over Texas Congressman Ron Paul, a 14.1 percent lead against former Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty, a 16 percent lead over former Utah Governor John Huntsman, Jr. and former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, an 18.3 percent edge over Bachmann, and a 19.5 percent lead over Sarah Palin.

Bachmann's presidential considerations are reportedly straining an already tense relationship between Bachmann and Pawlenty. Though some have attempted to call the two potential candidates from Minnesota friendly rivals, *Politico* [reports](#) that Bachmann did not support Pawlenty in his gubernatorial run in 2002:

Pawlenty ultimately won, setting the stage for years of mostly below-the-radar conflict between the two Republicans on issues ranging from tax breaks for rural counties to education policy and cigarette taxes. She bucked him repeatedly during his first term, rained on his parade in January by unexpectedly releasing her presidential trial balloon on the eve of his much-ballyhooed book tour, and is at present poised to take him on directly in Iowa, an early presidential state that will be key to both their fortunes.

Pawlenty dealt with Bachmann as little as possible while governor because she was difficult to work with, according to three former Pawlenty staffers.

We actually kept her at arms length because if youre dealing with a bomb thrower, it was very precarious building this coalition of folks and earning the trust of the public, said a conservative who worked in the states department of education when Bachmann and Pawlenty were at odds over the implementation of the No Child Left Behind law. When that happens, you cant afford to have a wrecking ball come in and mess up what youre doing.

Minnesota residents are apparently well-aware of the rivalry between the two, comparing it to the 1968 battle in Minnesota between Democratic Senator Eugene McCarthy and Vice President Hubert Humphrey, a one-time Minneapolis mayor.

According to Phil Krinkie, former legislator and current head of the Taxpayers League, support for each candidate is well defined.

If you measured it today, where Congresswoman Bachmann might have more support among some of the grassroots activists, Governor Pawlenty might have more support of the rank-and-file Republicans the long-term donors and supporters of the state organization, he said.

The June 13 debate should prove to be interesting as Pawlenty and Bachmann will be squaring off, alongside a number of other worthy contenders. It is set to air live on CNN from 8 to 10 p.m.



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