

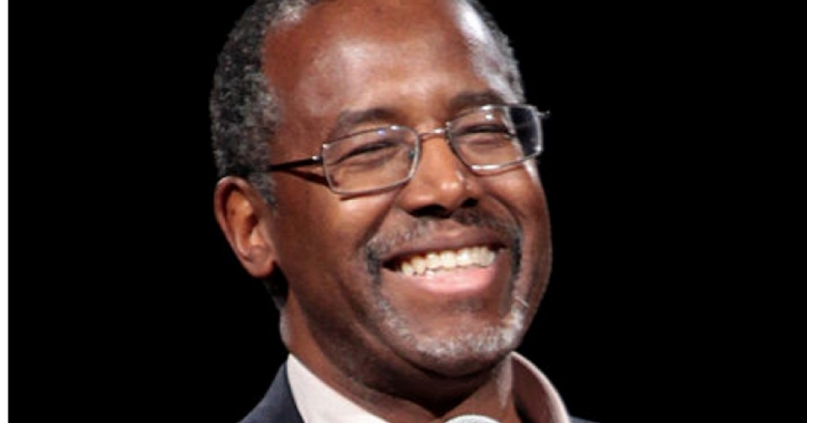


Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on May 5, 2015

Dr. Ben Carson: Campaign for President “Won’t Be Politically Correct”

Dr. Ben Carson (shown) already has the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Now he wants the presidency.

“I’m Ben Carson, and I’m a candidate for president of the United States,” the celebrated neurosurgeon and conservative commentator told a cheering crowd of supporters in his hometown of Detroit Monday in the formal announcement of his long anticipated bid for the Republican presidential nomination.



A former director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Carson, 63, retired on July 1, 2013 and quickly became a rising star on the lecture circuit, preaching a conservative message of limited government and personal responsibility. Talk of his potential as a presidential candidate spiked with the fiery speech he delivered at the National Prayer Breakfast in 2013, denouncing political correctness and ripping the ObamaCare health insurance program in the presence of a grim-faced President Obama.

At the Values Voter Summit that year, Carson went further, calling ObamaCare “the worst thing that has happened in this nation since slavery.”

Though he has never before run for any office, Carson is now seeking the nation’s highest political office, while insisting he is “not a politician.”

“I’m probably never going to be politically correct because I’m not a politician,” he said. “I don’t want to be a politician. Because politicians do what is politically expedient — I want to do what’s right.”

Carson’s announcement Monday was another indication of both how crowded and how diverse the field of GOP presidential contenders is likely to be, at least in the early stages of the nomination battle. His official entry into the race came the same day that former Hewlett Packard CEO Carly Fiorina, the only female contender, announced her candidacy and the day before former Baptist minister and Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee formally launched his campaign. With Senators Ted Cruz of Texas, Rand Paul of Kentucky, and Marco Rubio of Florida already declared candidates, the GOP field doubled in roughly 24 hours, with yet another dozen or more hopefuls still “testing the waters” and counting the dollars in contributions and pledges from friends and supporters.

Former U.S. Senator and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is generally regarded as the presumptive Democratic nominee, though U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) announced last week that he too is seeking the Democratic nomination for president.

Aside from being the only African-American in the race, Carson has much in his biography that sets him apart from others in the field. Despite a childhood of poverty in Detroit, he graduated from Yale and the University of Michigan Medical School. He was promoted to director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins at age 33, becoming the youngest physician to head a major division there. He was the first



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surgeon to perform a successful operation to separate twins conjoined at the head. He received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, from President George W. Bush in 2008 and was the subject of a TV movie the following year, with the part of Carson played by Academy Award-winning actor Cuba Gooding, Jr.

Carson is the author of several books, including the autobiographical *Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story*, first published in 1990 and republished in 2009; *Think Big* (1992); *Take the Risk* (2008); *America the Beautiful: What Made this Nation Great* (2011); and two books published last year: *One Vote: Make Your Voice Heard* and *One Nation: What We Can All Do to Save America's Future*.

Though he has generated an enthusiastic following among conservatives, Carson has critics on the Right as well, including [free-market devotees](#) who object to his statements in support of government price controls on health insurance. His belief, stated [in an interview with talk-show host Glenn Beck](#), that people in large cities should not have semi-automatic weapons may be a source of trouble for the candidate with opponents of gun control. And despite his opposition to "political correctness," Carson apologized earlier this year for having suggested that homosexuality is, for some at least, a choice, rather than an inherent trait.

"A lot of people who go into prison, go into prison straight and when they come out they're gay," Carson said in an interview with CNN's Chris Cuomo. "So, did something happen while they were in there? Ask yourself that question."

He soon after [posted his apology](#) on [his Facebook page](#), saying, "I do not pretend to know how every individual came to their sexual orientation. I regret that my words to express that concept were hurtful and divisive. For that I apologize unreservedly to all that were offended." Carson added: "I support human rights and Constitutional protections for gay people, and I have done so for many years. I support civil unions for gay couples, and I have done so for many years. I support the right of individual states to sanction gay marriage, and I support the right of individual states to deny gay marriage in their respective jurisdictions."

It may be a testament to the power of the "gay" lobby, even within the Republican ranks, that someone who was bold enough to rip ObamaCare in the presence of President Obama would feel called upon to apologize for words that might be regarded by "gay people" as "hurtful and divisive." It might also be an insight as to how much weight "political correctness" will really have in the 2016 presidential race, even among those who claim to be unaffected by it.

Photo of Ben Carson: Gage Skidmore



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