



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on May 10, 2012

Four Out of 10 West Virginia Democrats Vote for Texas Inmate Over Obama

As an incumbent President running for reelection, you know you're in trouble when 40 percent of voters in your own party would rather replace you with a convicted extortionist. According to the [Associated Press](#), that is exactly what happened in Tuesday's West Virginia Democratic presidential primary, where President Barack Obama received just 60 percent of the vote. The rest went to Keith Judd, Inmate No. 11593-051 at the Federal Correctional Institution in Texarkana, Texas.



Judd is currently serving a 210-month sentence for making threats at the University of New Mexico in 1999. Nevertheless, he was able to get on the West Virginia Democratic ballot simply by paying a \$2,500 fee and filing a notarized form. That, in turn, produced an electoral outcome that could earn him a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. "But," writes the AP, "state Democratic Party Executive Director Derek Scarbro said no one has filed to be a delegate for Judd. The state party also believes that Judd has failed to file paperwork required of presidential candidates, but officials continue to research the matter, Scarbro said."

The 53-year-old candidate is an unusual character, to say the least. In his [Project Vote Smart biography](#) he claims to have attended Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Politics and to have earned "various degrees" in everything from theater to nuclear physics from other universities. He says he was a member of the Federation of Super Heroes from 1976 to 1982. He counts Homer T. Judd, the man who he states "designed the first Atomic Bomb and worked for the Atomic Energy Commissions [sic] 30 years," as his father and "Movie Star, Actor, Educator" Lillian Russell, who he fails to mention died in 1922, as his mother. He cites Richard Nixon as his favorite President because "he got us out of Vietnam, and began world peace with China and the Soviets," yet his father, the alleged atom bomb-maker, is his personal hero. He describes his religion as "Rastafarian-Christian."

His policy positions are similarly odd and contradictory. On the one hand, he recognizes that [ObamaCare is unconstitutional](#), that the Federal Reserve was in large measure [responsible for the housing bubble](#), and that ["the United States needs to clean up its own back yard, and stay out of others."](#) On the other hand, he thinks spending on practically everything except foreign aid should be "greatly increase[d]" while all taxes should be eliminated, with the government financing its operations by printing its own money.

Of course, hardly anyone pulling the lever for Judd did so on the basis of his personal characteristics or his policy statements. His was a protest vote; and as West Virginia Wesleyan College political science professor Robert Rupp told the [Charleston Gazette](#), "When voters go to cast a protest vote, they never know who they're voting for. It's who they're voting against."

This was confirmed anecdotally by the AP, which talked to Ronnie Brown, a 43-year-old electrician from



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Cross Lanes, and his 22-year-old daughter, Emily. Said Ronnie: “I voted against Obama. I don’t like him. He didn’t carry the state before and I’m not going to let him carry it again.” (Then-Sen. Hillary Clinton defeated Obama in the 2008 primary, and Sen. John McCain took the state in the general election.) He added that he had voted for “that guy out of Texas.”

Emily Brown, too, said, “I just want to vote against Barack Obama,” though she refused to vote for Judd because he’s “in prison.”

“Polls show some of [Obama’s] worst approval ratings in West Virginia,” the AP writes. Why? “Obama’s energy policies and the Environmental Protection Agency’s handling of mining-related permits have incurred the wrath of West Virginia’s coal industry,” explains the news service. Indeed, as *The New American’s* William F. Jasper recently [reported](#), the Obama administration, through the EPA, is engaged in an “all-out war on coal” that will cost “thousands of coal-mining jobs” as well as “hundreds of thousands of other jobs” and cause “electricity rates ... to skyrocket.” Little wonder, then, that residents of a state whose official rock is bituminous coal want to “throw the bum out” of the White House.

Even leading West Virginia Democrats have their reservations about Obama. Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin and Sen. Joe Manchin, both members of the President’s party, have declined to endorse Obama — a rare occurrence for an incumbent, especially one who just four years ago was hailed as the savior of his party.

While the outcome of West Virginia’s Democratic primary is cause for amusement among the general population, it is surely cause for concern at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. This is not, after all, the first state where a significant portion of the Democratic electorate has expressed its desire to have someone other than Obama as its standard-bearer in November, as the AP notes:

In Oklahoma, anti-abortion protestor Randall Terry got 18 percent of the primary vote. A lawyer from Tennessee, John Wolfe, pulled nearly 18,000 votes in the Louisiana primary. In Alabama, 18 percent of Democratic voters chose “uncommitted” in the primary rather than vote for Obama.

Not for nothing did Democratic strategist James Carville [warn](#) his fellow partisans that “there is an earthquake” coming this November. Obama, Carville maintained, does not have the election “in the bag”; and if Democrats “don’t get on the offense,” he argued, they “are going to lose.”

When 4 out of 10 Democrats in a state would prefer a convicted felon to their own man in the White House, it’s a pretty safe bet that Carville is right — and that Obama knows it.



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