



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

Ron Paul Campaign Gains Steam, Attracts Attention

Though his campaign has been largely ignored by the mainstream media, Rep. Ron Paul has been making some gains over the course of the last few months. In fact, the longtime Texas Congressman's momentum has prompted *The Blaze* to report: "Paul is having such a big impact on the race that some Republican operatives are convinced that he will play spoiler in important states, siphoning votes and attention from his rivals for months to come and helping determine the nominee."



According to that same article, Paul could prove particularly problematic for current GOP frontrunners Texas Governor Rick Perry and former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney.

In New Hampshire recently, Paul commented regarding claims that he could "spoil" the frontrunners' campaigns,

I have no idea what exactly "spoiler" means. If you're a participant and you have an influence and you win or come close and you influence the debate, I think that's pretty important. So I don't put a negative term on that as spoiling anything. Spoiling their fun? Maybe they need a little spoiling.

Michael Dennehy, the New Hampshire operative who led Senator John McCain's 2008 presidential campaign, also asserts that Paul may play this role in 2012, though he believes the Congressman may prove to have even more success than that:

There's no doubt in my mind that Ron Paul will get somewhere north of 10 percent, possibly even in the high teens, which will have a major effect and impact on the race and who wins — whether its Perry or Romney — in New Hampshire. I would go so far as to say he will play spoiler. I do not see his support waning below 10 percent.

It has been widely acknowledged on a number of blogs and websites that Ron Paul's campaign has been either begrudgingly reported on or entirely ignored by the mainstream media. Even liberal comedian Jon Stewart felt [compelled](#) to point out satirically the discrepancies in the reporting of the GOP presidential campaigns of Paul and those of his rivals, going as far as calling them out and demanding more fair attention be given to a candidate who should not be ignored.

Paul did [win](#) the CPAC presidential straw poll this year, as well as the [Republican Leadership Conference](#) straw poll and the [California Republican Party](#) straw poll — the latter two by landslide votes.

Still, Paul has been relegated to what the mainstream media and the Establishment have dubbed the "fringe," or "extreme" corner of the Republican Party. *The Blaze* has repeatedly reported on Paul's so-called "libertarian leanings," ultimately giving a false impression of his philosophies, which can best be



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described as constitutionalist, or perhaps paleo-conservative.

[Some](#) observers contend that this treatment of Paul exemplifies fear, and perhaps contempt, toward his campaign successes, of which there are many in addition to the aforementioned straw poll victories.

For example, Paul has proven to be an extraordinary fundraiser, having broken numerous Internet records for generating contributions. In 2008, he raised a shocking \$5 million in just 24-hours. Likewise, Paul's regular money bombs often see a staggering number of donations. According to his campaign, he has raised \$4.5 million in donations through June, and is expected to have received an additional \$5 million through the end of September. Also, Paul has received more donations from [military members](#) than have all other Republican contenders combined. Military donations to Paul's campaign have also surpassed those received by President Obama. Politifact.com reported:

We turned to the presidential candidates' latest campaign finance filings [compiled by](#) the Federal Election Commission, which breaks out donations by donors' employers. ... From April through June, Paul fielded more than \$25,000 from individuals who listed their employer as a branch of the military.

Combined, six other Republican presidential candidates listed donations from members of the military totaling about \$9,000. Our most-to-least breakdown: Herman Cain, \$2,850; Mitt Romney, \$2,750; Michele Bachmann, \$2,250; Newt Gingrich, \$500; and Tim Pawlenty and Rick Santorum, \$250 each.

On the Democratic side, Obama's campaign received more than \$16,000 in donations from members of the military.

Paul's supporters maintain hopes that he will earn the GOP presidential nomination. According to the [Associated Press](#), New Hampshire resident Kate Baker points to Paul's gaining momentum:

"Ron Paul is doing well enough [that] he has the possibility to win, particularly in key states. This time I can taste success," said Baker, who is the head of New Hampshire's Women for Ron Paul Coalition.

She adds that success is also in the fact that Paul's message is becoming more mainstream. "Look at how much the message is traveling right now. He's honest and consistent. That's the kind of person I can put my money and effort behind."

Observers have also noted that several of Paul's famous talking points are now coming out of the mouths of his rivals, most notably language regarding the Federal Reserve and the need for strict adherence to the Constitution.

Paul is pleased by this, however. "Nobody ever did this [before] and now it's not just me doing this. I think that's all good," he noted.

Overall, Paul's 2012 presidential campaign has reflected far more experience than his 2008 efforts. For instance, he was the first candidate to run television advertisements in New Hampshire. In Iowa, his campaign was so successful that he came in a very close second in the Ames straw poll, trailing just 152 votes behind winner Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.).

"The fact that we have so many county chairmen and precinct chairmen and all this all through Iowa, we never had that before," remarked Paul.

Paul's campaign has made use of a particularly effective tactic — one that paints him as the most



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electable candidate to defeat President Obama in 2012.

There are some indications that Paul's rivals are intimidated by him. For example, when Paul ran an ad against Texas Governor Rick Perry, calling him "Al Gore's Texas cheerleader" (a reference to Perry's endorsement of Gore), Perry reacted fiercely to the ad — something one would not expect from a frontrunner against a supposedly "fringe," "unviable" candidate.



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