



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on May 20, 2012

## Ron Paul Coup in Minnesota GOP

Texas Congressman Ron Paul emerged from the Minnesota state Republican Party convention in St. Cloud with a clean sweep, winning nearly all the national convention delegates available for his presidential campaign in addition to a party endorsement of the Paul-aligned U.S. Senate candidate Kurt Bills. According to the Minneapolis *Star-Tribune*, Paul's campaign [organized](#) at the precinct, congressional, and state levels to win the 13 delegates chosen May 19 at the state convention. One Paul-aligned prospective delegate graciously stepped aside — resulting in Paul garnering 12 of the 13 available slots — so local Congresswoman and former presidential candidate Michele Bachmann could attend the Tampa national convention as a delegate.



Overall, including delegates won prior to the state convention, the Paul campaign has claimed 32 of the 40 national delegates selected in Minnesota, a state where Paul had handily [lost](#) the caucus to Rick Santorum.

But winning over GOP presidential delegates is only part of Paul's agenda. He intends to influence local political races, in addition to independents and Democrats. "There is a revolution in ideas going on," Representative Paul [told](#) the audience to raucous applause in a May 18 evening speech, "and isn't a narrow revolution. It isn't just a conservative group in the Republican Party. It's much, much bigger than this. I am convinced that we have good support in the Republican Party for liberty ideas. But I am convinced ... for every vote we get in the Republican primaries that there are at least two votes who are independent or even Democrats who will look at these serious principles of limited government, personal liberty, less war and doing something with the Federal Reserve system."

While Paul's presidential nomination by the GOP is not likely to happen, his movement has seen stunning successes in congressional primaries and nomination of state party leadership. "I was glad to see my son win," Paul [told](#) the audience. "And I'd be glad to see Kurt Bills win." Bills had received the endorsement of Congressman Ron Paul as well as the endorsement of Paul's son, Kentucky Senator Rand Paul. Minnesota State House Speaker Kurt Zellers had also thrown his political weight behind Bills.

Rep. Bills' endorsement by the Minnesota GOP convention had been expected, but not not his overwhelming victory against better-funded opponents. According to the Minnesota's *Bemidji Pioneer* for May 19: "It wasn't close among the 2,000 state convention delegates: Bills won with 64 percent of state party convention vote, well ahead of 21 percent for Dan Severson and 15 percent for Pete Hegseth."

Even establishment GOP officials [applauded](#) the Bills endorsement. "Congratulations to Kurt Bills on



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receiving the Republican endorsement to run for U.S. Senate,” Minnesota GOP Chairman Pat Shortridge and Deputy Chairwoman Kelly Fenton wrote in a press release after the endorsement. “Minnesota conservatives are united behind Kurt and are willing to work hard on his behalf to ensure we send someone to Washington who is willing to make the tough decisions necessary to getting our country back on track.”

Bills, a high school economics teacher and first-term state representative, will still have to survive a three-way August 14, 2012 primary against establishment candidates former State Representative Dan “Doc” Severson and Iraq War veteran Pete Hegseth (a [Council on Foreign Relations member](#) and contributor to the neoconservative magazine *National Review*).

“What America needs is a good dose of ECON 101, and I’m going to bring that to Washington,” Bills stated after the party endorsement. Bills labeled incumbent Democratic Party Senator Amy Klobuchar, who had a \$5-million campaign war chest at the end of March and no serious primary opposition, an Obama “clone.”

In related news, the Ron Paul presidential campaign continued its grassroots efforts to maximize its delegate influence at the Tampa GOP national convention by organizing to pick up delegates in Michigan this weekend. “The rules were rigged against us in Michigan,” Ron Paul campaign spokesman Doug Wead [wrote](#) on his blog, “but still we won national delegates.” Ron Paul had finished a distant third in the February 28 primary in Michigan, after presumed nominee and former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney and former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum. Wead claimed the Paul campaign had secured six or more delegates, even though Paul’s primary vote percentages guaranteed him no delegates at all.



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