



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on May 17, 2012

Ron Paul: Will His Supporters Jump Onto the Romney Bandwagon?

The reports of Ron Paul's demise are greatly exaggerated. A spokesman for the campaign has repeatedly affirmed that Ron Paul isn't going away and that he has neither ended nor suspended his campaign for the presidency. In fact, the Texas congressman's drive to accumulate delegates at the state Republican conventions seems to be gaining momentum.



Although the Paul camp has acknowledged "Governor Romney has what is very likely an insurmountable lead," they are fighting on and will undoubtedly leverage their increasing cache of committed delegates to strengthen their platform-influencing position in Tampa in August.

It has been observed that "it's way too late to keep Paul from having a sizable presence at the Republican National Convention." It's also way too late to believe that the Paul bloc of the Republican Party will go gentle into that good night and to stand idly by as the Romney wing converts its candidate's policy pronouncements into the GOP platform for 2012.

A writer at the *Washington Post* reckons that Ron Paul will push for votes "on a few platform issues" but ultimately settle for "platform committee losses" on most of his key policy stances with "one or two minor victories" as a consolation prize.

With all due respect, the *Washington Post* doesn't seem to be paying attention to the state convention chaos that has erupted nationwide as Romney surrogates try to muzzle the vociferous and informed platoons of Ron Paul backers.

To most observers, however, the passion and power of the Paul supporters is undeniable. They will fight hammer and tongs for their man even though he is quick to quell unfounded rumors that it is his secret wish to see the Convention in Tampa become the scene of a no-holds-barred internecine grudge match.

"It certainly isn't for the reason of disrupting the convention," Paul informed CNN last week. The prime directive for the libertarian-leaning Federal Reserve buster isn't move the agenda toward a more limited government, constitutionalist position and to "maximize the number of delegates" he has won in several state conventions.

Just how sizable is the Ron Paul delegate count? The state party rules that govern the nominating conventions make such a calculation difficult (not to mention the shenanigans factor as [witnessed in Nevada, Maine, Oklahoma, and Arizona](#)), but the *New York Times* estimates it at 104.

While totaling the delegate column may be tricky, it's easy to see that no matter how many state delegates speak up for Ron Paul at the convention, the movement is growing stronger and is already



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impossible to silence.

While the delegate strategy as enunciated by Ron Paul 2012 spokesmen is the official plan heading into Tampa, many of the rank and file of the loyal Paul army of supporters still believe their hero has a chance to win the nomination and go on to replace Barack Obama at the White House.

As evidence of the optimistic outlook of these faithful, take a statement from Kurt Wallace of the website DailyPaul.com:

"The goal is to win," Wallace said. "I don't think they're thinking 'Let's get in there and disrupt the process and be a thorn in the side of the Republican Party.' It really is a pure intention to get the man that they support elected."

Exhibit B is the dedication demonstrated by Josh Tolley. Tolley is manifesting his commitment to the cause by organizing an event in Tampa to coincide with the Republican National Convention.

In a statement to Talking Points Memo, Tolley says he is hopeful that upwards of 100,000 fellow Ron Paul devotees will show up at his Liberty Festival. He reckons that if enough people gather outside the venue then perhaps GOP officialdom will relent and give Ron Paul the megaphone he has inarguably earned.

Tolley admits, though, that the Republican Establishment likely has other plans.

"Right now a lot of Ron Paul supporters are hoping Rand Paul gets to run in 2016, but what they're not realizing is the establishment is grooming a new crop, whether it's Paul Ryan, Chris Christie or Marco Rubio," he said. "If Romney wins it only helps the Ron Paul movement in that it adds fuel to the fire. People will say, 'Here we go with another four years of not having liberty in the platform.'"

Following the projected trajectory of Ron Paul's supporters is simple. What is less discernible, however, is how all this would effect the Romney campaign.

There have been reports that the former Massachusetts governor likes Ron Paul and the two have struck up a sort of "friendship" behind the scenes.

Regardless of any fondness, however, there is little chance that Ron Paul would ever endorse Mitt Romney's run for the White House.

"I would never say never, but I do not believe that is likely," said Paul campaign spokesman Jesse Benton during a conference call with reporters.

When asked if he believed the thousands of Americans that have cast votes for Paul would change their allegiance to Romney, Benton said:

I think that is still up for grabs. I think that a lot of that is going to be determined by what plays out in the next several months up through Tampa. I think that, in a lot of ways, the ball is in the court of the Republican Party and in the court of Mitt Romney.

We're bringing forward an attitude of respect. We're also bringing forward specific things we believe in. Our people want to be respected in return. If our ideas are taken seriously and our people are treated with respect, the Republican Party has a chance to pick up a substantial number of their votes. On the flip side, if they treated the way they were in 2008, a lot of people are going to stay home and sit on their hands.

Benton undoubtedly knows his boss, but he might not be as accurate in his assessment of the men and



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women who have contributed to his campaign.

Reading the messages passed among the Paul army on Twitter makes it apparent that they aren't the sorts to "sit on their hands" and watch their republic be bartered away in exchange for "a say in the process."

These ardent advocates of liberty will never surrender and will never just hunker down and wait for the smoke to clear.

In fact, this burgeoning coalition of anti-war, small government, states' rights activists are convinced that the hour of its influence has arrived and that this chance to redirect the future of this republic back on to the constitutional path may be the last for many years.

Finally, what Mitt Romney, the Republican National Committee (who might be called upon to mediate in the case of Paul v. Romney), and the managers of the Ron Paul campaign themselves needs to understand is that those who see Ron Paul as the best hope for the survival of the Constitution and the American republic are not the typical "go along and get along" crowd that transfer allegiances based on the results of some convention ballot.

An article published earlier this week in The Atlantic rightly reckons that:

"If Romney wants to win the Paul vote, it seems, it won't be good enough to put an audit-the-Fed plank in the Republican Party platform. He'd have to actually embrace and campaign on Paul's issues, which could, in case it needs to be said, be a tricky proposition where the mass of the electorate is concerned."

These dedicated freedom activists know Ron Paul, they've worked for Ron Paul and they know that Mitt Romney is no Ron Paul.

Photo: In this Feb. 11, 2012 file photo, Republican presidential candidate Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas) speaks to his supporters : AP Images



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