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2008 WISCONSIN PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

On February 19, 2008, Wisconsin voters will have an opportunity to express their preference for the various candidates seeking the presidential nomination. The Wisconsin presidential preference primary, in which the voters select the delegates who will attend the national nominating conventions, is advisory and not binding on the respective political parties. It is also an “open” primary, in which voters are not required to declare a party affiliation prior to voting.

This brief describes the procedure for developing the primary ballot and the Appendix to the brief provides materials to assist the state nominating committee in identifying possible presidential candidates for the 2008 presidential primary.

Note: 2007 Wisconsin Act 1 created a Government Accountability Board to assume the duties of the Elections Board and the Ethics Board. The Government Accountability Board is currently hiring staff and will not supercede the Elections Board until after division administrators are hired, by which time the actions described in this brief relating to selecting candidates to appear on the ballot for Wisconsin’s Presidential Preference Primary will be completed.

II. THE NOMINATION PROCESS

Preparation of the presidential preference primary ballot normally begins with the convening of a state nominating committee to determine the candidates who will appear on the ballot. The 2008 committee will meet on December 11, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in the State Capitol.

Section 8.12 (1) (b), Wisconsin Statutes, requires the committee to place on the ballot “the names of all candidates whose candidacy is generally advocated or recognized in the national news media throughout the United States . . .” The committee has the “sole discretion” to determine which candidates fit the statutory criteria. The committee may, in addition, place the names of other candidates on the ballot.

Establishing the Nominating Committee. Representation on the nominating committee is based on a political party being both “recognized” and “certified” by the state. A “recognized political party” is defined by statute as one that qualifies for a separate ballot or ballot column by receiving a specified number of votes at the last general election or by securing a specified number of petition signatures.

The narrower definition of “certification” is provided in Section 8.12 (1) (a) of the statutes:

[T]he state chairperson of each recognized political party listed on the official ballot at the last gubernatorial election whose candidate for governor received at least 10% of the

total votes cast for that office may certify to the [government accountability board] that the party will participate in the presidential preference primary.

The standard of 10% of total votes cast for governor is a more stringent requirement, which was enacted by 1985 Wisconsin Act 304 and applied initially to the 1988 presidential preference primary election. Prior to that change, recognized political parties needed only 1% of votes cast for *any* statewide office to participate on the nominating committee. Limiting the nominating committee's membership to certified parties tends to restrict the committee to representatives of the Democratic and Republican parties. An exception was the 2004 primary, when the Libertarian Party qualified for certified status by virtue of Ed Thompson's 10.6% showing in the 2002 gubernatorial election.

A party must indicate that it will participate in the presidential primary by filing an official certification with the Elections Board no later than 5 p.m. on November 20, 2007. Both the Democratic Party of Wisconsin and the Republican Party of Wisconsin, which were the only two recognized political parties eligible for certification for the 2008 election, certified by the deadline.

Section 8.12 (1) (b) of the statutes dictates that the nominating committee consists of the following members:

1. For each party filing a certification, the state chairperson (or designee) and one national committeeman and one national committeewoman designated by the chairperson.
2. The president and minority leader of the senate (or designees).
3. The speaker and minority leader of the assembly (or designees).
4. One additional member, selected by the nominating committee, who serves as committee chairperson. David Anstaett is expected to fill this role in 2007.

Nominating Committee for the 2008 Presidential Preference Primary

Position	Democratic Party	Republican Party
State Party Chairperson	Joe Wineke	Reince Priebus
National Party Committeeman	Jason R. Rae	Steven King
National Party Committeewoman	Sen. Lena C. Taylor	Mary Buestrin
Senate President	Sen. Fred Risser	
Senate Minority Leader		Sen. Scott L. Fitzgerald
Assembly Speaker		Rep. Michael D. Huebsch
Assembly Minority Leader	Rep. James E. Kreuser	

The committee must certify to the Elections Board no later than the Friday following its initial meeting (December 14, 2008) the names of all candidates it has selected to appear on the presidential preference ballot.

Candidate Notification and Disclaimers. After the nominating committee has certified a slate of nominees, the Elections Board notifies each person whose name has been placed in nomination and informs the person that his or her name will appear on the Wisconsin presidential preference ballot unless a disclaimer is filed. The disclaimer must state without qualification that the nominee is not and does not intend to become a candidate for the office of President of the United States at the forthcoming presidential election. It must be received by the Elections Board no later than 5 p.m. on the first Tuesday in January of the presidential election year. (Because Tuesday, January 1 is a legal holiday, the deadline in 2008 will be Wednesday, January 2.)

Nomination via the Petition Method. If the nominating committee does not include in the candidate listing the name of a person actively seeking the nomination of one of the parties represented on the committee, that person, or any state group organized on that person's behalf, may still obtain a ballot position by submitting petitions under Section 8.12 (1) (c), Wisconsin Statutes. The petition may be circulated no sooner than the second Tuesday in December of the year before the presidential election (December 11, 2007). The deadline for filing petitions with the Elections Board is no later than 5 p.m. on the first Tuesday in January. (Because Tuesday, January 1 is a legal holiday, the deadline in 2008 will be Wednesday, January 2.) The petition must be signed by at least 1,000, but not more than 1,500, qualified electors in each of Wisconsin's eight congressional districts. An individual petition paper cannot include signers from more than one congressional district, and each petition paper must conform to the requirements of Section 8.40, Wisconsin Statutes.

III. POSSIBLE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Media Reports. At the request of the legal counsel for the Government Accountability Board, the Legislative Reference Bureau has selected media reports contained in the Appendix, which describe the possible candidates in the 2008 Presidential Election. The articles are arranged in alphabetical order by party affiliation and the individual’s decision about seeking nomination. The results of the LRB review are summarized below with the beginning page of each person’s section:

Selected Media Reports About 2008 Candidates

Democratic Party			Republican Party		
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Joseph R. Biden, Jr.	Declared	5	John H. Cox	Declared	22
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Christopher J. Dodd	Declared	9	Mike Huckabee	Declared	25
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Dennis J. Kucinich	Declared	15	John S. McCain	Declared	29
Barack Obama	Declared	16	Ron Paul	Declared	30
Bill Richardson	Declared	19	Mitt Romney	Declared	31
Evan Bayh	Withdrawn	20	Thomas Gerald Tancredo	Declared	33
Thomas J. Vilsack	Withdrawn	21	Fred Dalton Thompson	Declared	34
			Samuel Dale Brownback	Withdrawn	35
			James S. Gilmore III	Withdrawn	35
			Tommy G. Thompson	Withdrawn	36

Qualification for Matching Funds. Another measure indicating presidential candidacy is whether the individual has raised the minimum amount of contributions to qualify for federal matching campaign funds. To receive matching funds, a presidential candidate must raise a minimum of \$100,000, with a minimum of \$5,000 collected in each of 20 states. No individual contribution may be greater than \$250.

As of December 1, 2007, the Federal Election Commission had reported matching funds were approved for the following candidates in the 2008 presidential election:

2008 Candidates Who Have Qualified for Federal Matching Campaign Funding

Democratic Party	Republican Party
Christopher Dodd	John McCain
John Edwards	Tom Tancredo

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

BIDEN (Declared)

New York Times, January 8, 2007***Biden Joins List of Presidential Contenders***

By The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 7 — Senator Joseph R. Biden Jr. of Delaware on Sunday became the fourth Democrat to formally announce plans to run for president next year.

"I am running for president," Mr. Biden said toward the end of an appearance on "Meet the Press" on NBC.

"I'm going to be Joe Biden, and I'm going to try to be the best Biden I can be," he said. "If I can, I got a shot. If I can't, I lose."

He said he would file paperwork by the end of the month to establish an exploratory committee to gather support for his bid.

Mr. Biden, who was first elected to the Senate in 1972, also sought the presidential nomination in 1988. But he dropped out of the race after ad-

mitting that he had used speeches by other politicians without attribution, and after reports that he had plagiarized while in law school.

Mr. Biden, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, joins a widening field of Democratic presidential hopefuls. The others who have officially announced their candidacies are former Senator John Edwards of North Carolina, Representative Dennis J. Kucinich of Ohio and Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa.

Other potential Democratic contenders include Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York and Barack Obama of Illinois. Among Republicans, Senator John McCain of Arizona, former Gov. George E. Pataki of New York and Rudolph W. Giuliani, the former New York City mayor, are prominent.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

CLINTON (Declared)

Christian Science Monitor, January 22, 2007

Clinton is 'in,' but crowd grows

HILLARY CLINTON is first in the polls for '08, but the competition stiffens almost daily.

By **LINDA FELDMANN**
STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON - Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton enters the 2008 presidential race uniquely positioned to make a top-flight run at becoming America's first woman president.

The Democrat from New York brings to the table 14 years of experience at Washington's highest political levels, as both a two-term first lady and now six years as a US senator. She appears set to raise all the funds she needs, enjoys near-universal name recognition, and has at her side one of the nation's most astute political operatives, her husband, former President Clinton.

But Senator Clinton, who launched her exploratory committee on Saturday with

the declaration of "I'm in," faces serious hurdles to reaching her goal. Last week's entry of Sen. Barack Obama (D) of Illinois into the contest



CLINTON: The New York senator has said 'I'm in, and I'm in to win.'

adds a charismatic, fresh persona to the mix, and makes Clinton's nomination far from a foregone conclusion. While Clinton has already withstood

intense public scrutiny of her life and record, she will face questions again, in addition to charges that she is humorless and calculating. And as a Democratic woman seeking to become commander in chief at a time of war, she must prove her bona fides on defense as she seeks to distance herself from an unpopular war that she initially supported.

A crowded race to the White House

The field for both major parties has been growing almost daily, of late. This weekend alone, two other candidates

particular challenges to her: "How do we bring the war in Iraq to the right end?" she asked. "How can we make sure every American has access to adequate health care?"

Iraq is the No. 1 issue for voters, and the liberal, activist base of the Democratic Party has long been frustrated by Clinton's centrist approach, beginning with her to decision in October 2002 to vote in favor of a congressional resolution authorizing US military action in Iraq. She has stepped away from that position, and last month said if she knew then what she knows now, she would not have voted yes. But she has not pushed her opposition to the Iraq war as far as other Democratic

she has jumped in, the political world can move to the next phase, an actual publicly announced campaign - as can she. But the arc of her effort may be hobbled by the fact that she is hardly a fresh face.

Then there's the family dynasty issue. Some voters may resist the idea of a succession of presidents that goes "Bush, Clinton, Bush, Clinton" - especially since the second Bush presidency has struggled so profoundly of late.

Still, Clinton brings the test of time to the equation. After 14 years in the national spotlight, the chances that she will wither or make a major mistake seem lower than with her chief rival, Obama. As

Democratic presidential derby Those jockeying for the White House in 2008:



Hillary Rodham Clinton
New York senator

Announced Saturday a run for the White House and is considered the front-runner.



John Edwards
Former N.C. senator

The 2004 Democratic vice-presidential nominee is considered part of the top tier of presidential contenders.



Barack Obama
Illinois senator

Announced he was running Jan. 16; promotes himself as the candidate for a new kind of politics.



Tom Vilsack
Iowa governor

Launched a bid Nov. 9; he was the first to file but is trailing other candidates in polls.



Mike Gravel
Former Alaska senator

Established himself during two terms as a critic of the Vietnam War, and government secrecy.



Joe Biden
Delaware senator

Has said he is running, but has not yet filed paperwork with the Federal Election Commission.



Dennis Kucinich
Ohio representative

Launched his second bid Jan. 12, fueled by frustration with his party's effort to end the Iraq war.



Chris Dodd
Conn. senator

The 26-year Senate veteran has strong ties with labor unions; advocates fiscal accountability for corporations.



Bill Richardson
N.M. governor

Has extensive experience in Washington and the world stage as he seeks to become the first Hispanic president.

announced: New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson (D) and Sen. Sam Brownback (R) of Kansas. For the Democrats, a field that includes a woman, an African-American (Senator Obama), and a Hispanic (Governor Richardson) as contenders sends the message of diversity that the party has long cultivated.

Most noteworthy, perhaps, is that the Democrats can boast a woman and an African-American as their top two candidates. A Washington Post-ABC News poll taken Friday night showed Clinton with the support of 41 percent of Democrats and Obama with 17 percent. But with the first nominating contests still a year away, those numbers remain fluid. Political analysts note that the third candidate in the Post-ABC poll (with 11 percent), former Sen. John Edwards (D) of North Carolina, is well organized in the early states, and could upset the race with a strong finish in the first contest, the Iowa caucuses.

In Clinton's announcement video, posted Saturday morning on her campaign website, www.HillaryClinton.com, the senator deployed a technique she used successfully in her first Senate campaign - a pledge to begin by listening. She did not roll out a series of policy prescriptions, but rather stated that she was "beginning a conversation." Starting Monday evening, for three nights in a row, Clinton will conduct live video Web discussions with voters.

Of the many issues she raised on her written Web statement, two will present

candidates, including Mr. Edwards and Rep. Dennis Kucinich of Ohio, who is also running again.

Last June, at a convention of liberal activists, Clinton was booed. In contrast, Obama was cheered by the same crowd, even though he has also hewed to the center on Iraq. Clinton's apparent status as a lightning rod of criticism may speak to her long tenure on the national stage and careful positioning on a range of issues that makes some progressives skeptical (though not unwilling to vote for her in the general election, many say, if she wins the nomination).

"Clinton fatigue?"

One of the many hurdles Clinton must face on the road to the White House has been dubbed "Clinton fatigue." Wrapped into that is her husband's turbulent eight years as president, including his marital infidelity and various investigations. In the White House, Hillary Clinton quickly established herself as the most powerful and controversial first lady in history, setting up shop in the West Wing and taking on the assignment of crafting a plan for national healthcare reform that failed to get off the ground.

Adding to the sense of fatigue is the years of speculation that Clinton may run for president herself some day. Now that

senators, both must spend the entire next year casting each vote carefully just to remain viable for the nomination, then doing the same for the runup to the November 2008 general election.

If Sen. John McCain (R) of Arizona wins his party's nomination, he will face the same challenge. But if the nominee is one of the "formers" running on the GOP side - such as former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani or former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney - he will be free of the pressure to cast votes.

One dimension of the Clinton campaign that carries both risks and positives is her gender. A female nominee may make the already difficult South even harder to contest, with the exception of battleground state Florida. How the Mountain West, where the Democrats have made gains in recent elections, and the Midwest react to a woman nominee is an open question.

On the plus side for Clinton, she has a "very strong connection to the women's movement, which is an important base in the Democratic Party," says Andrew Polsky, a political scientist at Hunter College in New York.

■ Staff writer Art Pinkus contributed to this report.

For the Democrats, the field includes a woman, an African-American (Senator Obama), and a Hispanic (Governor Richardson).

DEMOCRATIC PARTY
DODD (Declared)
Wall Street Journal, January 23, 2007

POLITICS & ECONOMICS

Experienced Dodd Toils To Win Notice in '08 Bid

Democrat Says He No Longer Can Stay in 'Bleachers'

By JACKIE CALMES

WASHINGTON—At her first public event after declaring for president last weekend, New York Sen. Hillary Clinton drew a horde of cameras and reporters. For months before Illinois Sen. Barack Obama got into the 2008 race, fire marshals were turning fans away from his packed houses.

Meanwhile, another Democratic hopeful, Connecticut Sen. Chris Dodd, travels the country, a year before the first nominating votes, "hoping someone will show up," he quips.

around the globe have been squandered under the Bush administration. "I've got to try—at this time—because the nation's situation is too worrisome to me."

In politics, it is a truism that timing is everything. Yet politicians have their own clocks, as the contrast between the silver-haired, 62-year-old senator and the 45-year-old Mr. Obama suggests. Mr. Obama has said he didn't intend to run; the outpouring last fall at book-signings for his second bestseller, and the emergence of an Internet draft, spurred advisers to tell Mr. Obama he had to seize the moment.

Mr. Dodd, on the other hand, has been on the political scene so long that he can recall when one of his young campaign drivers was Mark Warner, who went on to be Vir-

In 1995 and 1996, the same years he was serving as President Clinton's chairman of the Democratic Party, in the Senate Mr. Dodd was chief sponsor of two business measures that drew Mr. Clinton's vetoes, and the wrath of his party's special interests. The first was a bill to limit securities lawsuits that high-technology companies wanted, and trial lawyers didn't; Mr. Dodd got Congress to override that Clinton veto. The second was a bill restricting product-liability suits, also opposed by trial lawyers; Mr. Clinton's veto stood.

Mr. Dodd's experiences are typical of the early days of a presidential campaign, which often are humbling, even demeaning, for all but the rare Clinton-like celebrities and Obama-like phenomenon. His colleague Mr. Obama has been a senator for two years. Mrs. Clinton is starting her second term. Mr. Dodd has been in the Senate for more than a quarter-century and was in the House for six years before that. He is chairman of the Senate Banking Committee. And he is an asterisk in early 2008 presidential polls.

Yet ask many Democratic activists whom they would personally most like to see as president, and Mr. Dodd's name comes up often—including from some committed to other candidates, no-

Dark Horse

Christopher Dodd

Born: May 27, 1944

Education: B.A., Providence College, 1966

J.D., University of Louisville, 1972

Service:

1966-68: Peace Corps

1969-75: Army Reserve

Political Highlights:

1974: Elected to U.S. House of Representatives

1980: Elected to U.S. Senate

1995-96: Co-chairman, Democratic National Committee

2007: Declared candidacy for '08 Democratic presidential nomination



Mr. Dodd argues that he can persuade voters that his experience is an asset.

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In politics, it is a truism that timing is everything. Yet politicians have their own clocks, as the contrast between the silver-haired, 62-year-old senator and the 45-year-old Mr. Obama suggests. Mr. Obama has said he didn't intend to run; the outpouring last fall at book-signings for his second bestseller, and the emergence of an Internet draft, spurred advisers to tell Mr. Obama he had to seize the moment.

Mr. Dodd, on the other hand, has been on the political scene so long that he can recall when one of his young campaign drivers was Mark Warner, who went on to be Vir-

ginia's governor and last year explored a presidential campaign himself—before deciding this wasn't his time. Likewise, Mr. Dodd has weighed and ruled out presidential bids before, as evidenced by eBay's recent offer of an old campaign button featuring a dark-haired Dodd. In the past, he says, he believed being single was a liability, especially given something of a playboy image; or he had to defer when fellow Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman was running, or his Washington experience was a disqualifier in years voters preferred outsiders.

Now Mr. Dodd is married, the father of two young daughters. And despite the current "Obama-mania" for his less-seasoned colleague, Mr. Dodd argues that with the nation roiled by war, terrorism and economic globalization, he can persuade voters that his experience is an asset. "Certainly the last six years has reminded people that maybe, maybe, experience has value—not that anyone's ever really ready for this job," Mr. Dodd says.

Having voted in 2002 to authorize President Bush to use force against Iraq, he now says Congress and the nation were

misled. Last week, he proposed legislation to block Mr. Bush from sending more troops without new congressional authorization. As it happened, the media's focus that day was on the antiwar moves of his Democratic rivals, Sens. Clinton, Obama and Joe Biden of Delaware. Mr. Biden has been a senator even longer than Mr. Dodd—since 1973—and faces some of the same doubts as he runs for president. But as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, his foreign policy pronouncements grab greater attention.

Mr. Dodd ranks just under Mr. Biden on that committee and has been prominent in foreign-policy debates for two decades; in the 1980s, he was a main target for Republicans' attacks as he came to define the Democratic opposition to the Reagan administration's interventions in Central America's conflicts. He knows numerous world leaders and met with those in Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Israel last month.

The liberal gets credit for popular laws for workers' family and medical leave, child care and Head Start, and testing of prescription drugs for children. Yet he has a moderate record on business issues, reflecting Connecticut's corporate presence.

In 1995 and 1996, the same years he was serving as President Clinton's chairman of the Democratic Party, in the Senate Mr. Dodd was chief sponsor of two business measures that drew Mr. Clinton's vetoes, and the wrath of his party's special interests. The first was a bill to limit securities lawsuits that high-technology companies wanted, and trial lawyers didn't; Mr. Dodd got Congress to override that Clinton veto. The second was a bill restricting product-liability suits, also opposed by trial lawyers; Mr. Clinton's veto stood.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY
EDWARDS (Declared)
New York Times, December 27, 2006

Strategy Not Drama, in 'I Intend to Run in '08'

By ADAM NAGOURNEY

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25 — On Thursday, John Edwards is planning to announce what has been clear to much of the world since the end of the last presidential election: He is running for president in 2008. A similar declaration is expected shortly from Gov. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts, followed, in all probability, by Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton, Barack Obama and John McCain.

For all the very orchestrated hoopla about to be heaped on American voters over the next few weeks, presidential announcements have become, more often than not, vestigial remnants of the way presidential politics were once conducted (or at least the way they are remembered).

Rather than being big moments in which candidates lay down ideological markers and discuss what they would do as president, announcements are more of a pro forma exercise of the obvious. Campaigns grab at a political opportunity for attention with events that, ultimately, are of relatively small consequence.

For Mrs. Clinton, Mr. Romney, Mr. Edwards and Mr. McCain, it would be noteworthy, after all they have done, if they were to announce that they were not running. Mr. Edwards's 2008 campaign arguably began on Election Day 2004, when he lost as his party's vice-presidential candidate.

But if formal announcements hold little drama, they are hardly meaningless. Their timing and staging reflect how presidential politics are changing in the United States in 2008, and offer a glimpse at problems each

John Edwards to Join Those Staging Early Entries Into Race

candidate faces one year before the Iowa caucus. The announcements are an insight into how campaigns are adapting to the pressures of the Internet, the demands of fund-raising, the broad range of avenues for reaching voters and mobilizing supporters, and the particular dynamics of the '08 campaign, crowded with candidates, many of them celebrities.

Most strikingly, the announcements are being made extraordinarily early. In the 1992 cycle, Bill Clinton did not formally announce his candidacy until October 1991, three months before the Iowa caucus. When Mr. Edwards announces, with

a round of morning talk show interviews and a press conference in the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans, he will become the third Democrat to formally enter the race.

As of now, about a half-dozen candidates have formed presidential exploratory committees, a preliminary step that allows them to raise money as they make soundings about a race. And Senator Joseph R. Biden Jr., Democrat of Delaware, told reporters Tuesday that he planned to set up his exploratory committee next month.

In this crowded field, few candidates in either the Democratic or Republican Party can afford to wait and risk watching a rival pick off big-name elected officials, campaign consultants and contributors. And since aides to many of the candidates say they are likely to bow out of the public campaign finance system and raise money on their own, there is



Stephan Savola/Associated Press

John Edwards, at a book signing last month, will formally announce his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination tomorrow with a speech in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans.

pressure to start raising money now.

"Timing is becoming much more of an issue," said Joe Trippi, who managed the 2004 presidential campaign of Howard Dean. "You're seeing it now in the urgency of these people to get out and announce. I'm worried that we're going to see people announce four years ahead of time next time the way this thing is moving."

Understandably, candidates are going to do what it takes to get publicity. Mr. Edwards's aides said they chose this slow-news time of year, and the backdrop of New Orleans neighborhoods ravaged by Hurricane Katrina, in part to command the maximum amount of attention. Camera crews will be permitted to film Mr. Edwards as he helps with the cleanup efforts.

But there are less obvious advantages as well. Mr. Trippi said that when Mr. Dean declared for president in June 2004, they timed his an-

nouncement for a week before the deadline for the release of campaign finance reports. The idea was that the excitement built by the announcement in Vermont would result in a surge of contributions that would allow Mr. Dean to surprise the political world with a display of his grassroots financial support. Mr. Dean's big fund-raising report that month proved to be one of the biggest boosts of his campaign.

Mr. Edwards, who is arguably the most Web-savvy candidate in the '08 race to date, is using Thursday's event to try to gin up his supporters via the Internet. He sent out an e-mail message earlier this week, saying he was on the verge of making a decision that his aides say has, in fact, already been made.

"If you want to take this effort to the next level, send me an e-mail and let me know: JohnEdwards@readytochangeamerica.com," he wrote.

The decision of how to time the announcements also reflects the particular needs of the candidates.

For Mr. Edwards, there is clearly

interest in trying to win attention after two months in which Mrs. Clinton and Mr. Obama dominated the coverage of the Democratic contest. The decision by Senator Evan Bayh of Indiana not to run has left a clear opportunity for Mr. Edwards to position himself as the alternative to the other two senators.

For Mr. Romney, it is a chance to try to reset his bearings after a month in which he has struggled to reconcile his effort to be the most socially conservative candidate in the race with a more liberal record, as Massachusetts governor, on such issues as abortion and gay rights.

The motivation for the announcement of Gov. Tom Vilsack, the Democratic governor of Iowa, was in many ways more typical: a fairly unknown politician trying to get his name on the board with a thematic speech delivered in early primary states.

There may still be a few stop-the-presses surprises lurking out there. There is still a smidgen of doubt about the candidacy of Mr. Obama,

Who's Running in 2008?

Some notable names in the field of potential presidential candidates:

DEMOCRATS	
OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa, Nov. 30 • Representative Dennis J. Kucinich of Ohio, Dec. 12
WIDELY MENTIONED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senator Joseph R. Biden Jr. of Delaware • Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York • Senator Christopher J. Dodd of Connecticut • Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts • Senator Barack Obama of Illinois • John Edwards, former senator from North Carolina • Al Gore, former vice president, from Tennessee • Gov. Bill Richardson of New Mexico • Gen. Wesley Clark, retired NATO commander, from Arkansas
OFFICIALLY NOT RUNNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senator Evan Bayh of Indiana, Dec. 15 • Senator Russell D. Feingold of Wisconsin, Nov. 11 • Mark Warner, former governor of Virginia, Oct. 12
REPUBLICANS	
OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED	None to date.
ESTABLISHED EXPLORATORY COMMITTEES <small>Date set with the Federal Election Commission</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senator John McCain of Arizona, Nov. 16 • Rudolph W. Giuliani, former mayor of New York, Nov. 20 • Senator Sam Brownback of Kansas, Dec. 1 • Timmy G. Thompson, former governor of Wisconsin, Dec. 13 • James S. Gilmore III, former governor of Virginia (announced intention to form committee on Dec. 26)
WIDELY MENTIONED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senator Chuck Hagel of Nebraska • Representative Duncan Hunter of California • Gov. George E. Pataki of New York • Gov. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts • Newt Gingrich, former House speaker from Georgia
OFFICIALLY NOT RUNNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senator Bill Frist of Tennessee, Nov. 29

Source: Congressional Quarterly

The New York Times

who is spending this week in Hawaii with his family discussing his future, and even a smaller smidgen of doubt about Mrs. Clinton.

Although Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts has said he is likely to make a second effort at running, some Democrats say they would not be shocked to see him bow out. And it will be interesting to see if Al Gore succumbs to pleading by Democrats to run.

Mr. Edwards has been preparing for this moment since the second in 2004 when he knew he and Mr. Kerry had been defeated. His relatively high standing in some early polls in Iowa is testimony, in part, to how much time he has spent there in the last two years. Mr. Edwards has also

offered a spray of speeches, op-ed essays and interviews on the subject of poverty in the United States, so even the themes he unveils to begin his campaign are likely to be familiar.

Mr. Romney's intentions are also no mystery: he spent 212 days out of state last year, *The Boston Globe* reported last week, and has methodically moved over the past year to the right side of the Republican ocean.

And if Mrs. Clinton or Mr. McCain end up not running, that will come as sobering news to the stable of high-powered political talent they have recruited in recent months. Both even have putative campaign managers in place: Terry Nelson for Mr. McCain and Patti Solis Doyle for Mrs. Clinton.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY GRAVEL (Declared)

Copyright 2007 The Denver Post
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The Denver Post

September 14, 2007 Friday FINAL EDITION

HEADLINE: Mike Gravel not your typical presidential candidate The low-profile, low-budget Democrat says Americans need more control of government. He is in Boulder today.

BYLINE: Chuck Plunkett Denver Post Staff Writer

BODY:

Mike Gravel, the former senator from Alaska and current longshot candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, is not the expected politician.

For an interview at The Denver Post on Thursday, he arrived with his son, Parker resident Martin Gravel, and his ideas. No entourage. No press officer running interference. No security and no illusions of winning a primary in Colorado, where he is to make a fundraising effort tonight in Boulder.

"When I started to run for office, I didn't care if I would be president," Gravel said. But after sparring with the other candidates in a string of debates, Gravel said he feels it's his duty to stay the course.

"If you have faith in what you can accomplish ... it just may work out," Gravel said. "I think the American people are fed up with what's going on."

Gravel gained notoriety during the Vietnam War when he was instrumental in making public the Pentagon Papers, a classified assessment of the war that is widely credited with turning the country against the conflict.

A self-described maverick with a deep desire to transform government from the ground up, he said he is making the at-times painful, at-times blissful run to draw attention to his so-called National Initiative for Democracy program. Gravel wants the kind of petitioning power available to citizens at the local and state level translated on a national scale.

Gravel also chafes at the current dependence in the political system on big-money contributions, and he advocates public financing of campaigns. He's last in the Democratic race for campaign funds, with just over \$200,000 raised in the first two quarters.

A critic of the Iraq war, he said no candidate who voted for the invasion is fit to be president.

Gravel said that the Republican candidates are so "crazy" that "I don't even bother keeping up with them."

His many firm opinions are so at odds with the mainstream system that they are preventing him from campaigning using anything close to the typical strategy.

While most other candidates have been camped out in Iowa for months, Gravel long ago wrote it off. Because he considers ethanol wasteful and wrongheaded, he knows big farm states, including Colorado, won't give him the time of day.

So he attends the debates and makes appearances in cities where friends can put him up and raise a little cash. Like in Boulder tonight. His niece lives there. He's hoping 70 or so people will come pay \$50 apiece to see him at The Canyon House from 6 to 7:30.

Thrilled with his popularity on YouTube, Gravel said if he were president he would serve only one term and would to push everyday Americans to seize greater control of their government.

"People have to come to understand that the power lies with them," Gravel said.

Grinning, he added: "I can promise you I will be a very unique president of the United States."

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DEMOCRATIC PARTY
KUCINICH (Declared)

New York Times, December 12, 2006

A Familiar Democrat Joins '08 Hopefuls

By MARK LEIBOVICH

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11 — In the midst of a brief chat in his office last week, Representative Dennis J. Kucinich mentioned that, oh, by the way, he planned to run for president again in 2008.

"Yes, I am," Mr. Kucinich, Democrat of Ohio, said in response to a reporter's question about a possible encore to his bid in 2004.

Mr. Kucinich's wife, Elizabeth Harper, who was seated next to him, arched her eyebrows in apparent surprise.

Asked if he had told anyone this yet, Mr. Kucinich said no.

"You just happened to ask," he said.

Then he walked out of his office and informed his press aide.

The news from Mr. Kucinich, a six-term congressman, underscores the "What the heck?" sensibility that seems to be governing some entries into what may be the most crowded presidential field in history.

Besides the possible Rudys, Hillarys and Baracks, the names on the Great List now seem to include every Tom, Dick or Sammy. That would be Gov. Tom Vilsack, Democrat of Iowa; former Representative Dick Armey, Republican of Texas; and Senator Sam Brownback, Republican of Kansas.

In recent weeks, Tommy G.

Thompson, the Wisconsin Republican who was once Health and Human Services secretary, and Representative Duncan Hunter, Republican of California, have also thrown themselves into consideration.

So how about Mr. Kucinich?

Never mind that he did not come close to winning any primaries or caucuses in 2004. Mr. Kucinich, who plans to announce his candidacy formally on Tuesday in Cleveland, said he liked his chances.

"Why not?" he said, adding a horse-racing metaphor, "I run very well on a sloppy track."

He trotted out this line in 2004, too, for what it's worth.

While Mr. Kucinich was no thoroughbred in this or the last field, he gained the instant cachet that being a major-party presidential candidate confers.

"There is a level of intrigue that goes with being a potential presidential candidate," said former Senator Tom Daschle, a South Dakota Democrat who was a "potential presidential candidate" himself until he ruled out a run this month. Mr. Daschle said that he had been introduced thousands of times as a "potential presidential candidate" over the years, and that that had generally been a good thing.

Still, Mr. Daschle cautioned that the field could get unmanageable,

saying, "I think, at a certain point, you'd need to become more discriminating about who's viable."

In many cases, potential candidates take themselves out of the running, as several have recently, including former Gov. Mark Warner, Democrat of Virginia; Senator Russell D. Feingold, Democrat of Wisconsin; and Senator Bill Frist, Republican of Tennessee.

"You're always going to have people who say they're exploring a campaign just to milk the attention," said William G. Mayer, a professor of political science at Northeastern University in Boston who has studied presidential nominating campaigns. "And then, in the end, they don't get in."

Mr. Kucinich will not be one of these. He said his early opposition to the war in Iraq, which he voiced strenuously in 2004, would make him more formidable in 2008.

"It's a totally different landscape this time around," he said, adding that he decided to enter the race last week when he came to believe that the new Democratic leadership in Congress was not committed enough to ending the war.

He says he plans to show up for every debate he is invited to — and even if not, he may show up anyway.

"This is where it comes in handy to be a vegan," Mr. Kucinich said. "I don't take up that much space."

DEMOCRATIC PARTY
OBAMA (Declared)
New York Times, January 17, 2007

Obama Starts Bid, Reshaping Democratic Field

By JEFF ZELENY

WASHINGTON, Jan. 16 — Two years after arriving in Washington, Senator Barack Obama of Illinois made clear on Tuesday his intention to enter the Democratic presidential race, creating an exploratory committee while preparing to open a full-fledged campaign next month to become the nation's first black president.

The announcement by Mr. Obama, his aides said, removed any doubt about his candidacy and ended weeks of speculation — fueled, in part, by the senator himself — that sent ripples through the ranks of other Democrats eyeing the presidential nomination. He said he would formally declare his intention to run on Feb. 10 in Springfield, Ill., the home of Abraham Lincoln.

"Our leaders in Washington seem incapable of working together in a practical, common-sense way," Mr. Obama said, speaking in a video address sent to his supporters. "Politics has become so bitter and partisan, so gummed up by money and influence, that we can't tackle the big problems

Will Be 6th in Contest — Says Voters Want 'Something New'

that demand solutions."

The video, which was also posted on Mr. Obama's Web site, was a blue-sky plan of optimism, offering few specifics. It was designed to make the point that he — as opposed to any other Democratic candidate — was the fresh, unifying face of the party.

Mr. Obama, 45, became the sixth Democrat to enter the prospective field, joining Senators Joseph R. Biden Jr. of Delaware and Christopher J. Dodd of Connecticut, former Senator John Edwards of North Carolina, former Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa and Representative Dennis J. Kucinich of Ohio.

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, perhaps Mr. Obama's biggest rival, is expected to join the race this month. Gov. Bill Richardson of New Mexico said he would

make his decision known soon, and Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, the party's nominee in 2004, is also considering another run.

But in this early stage of the contest, one year before voters begin selecting a nominee, Mr. Obama's candidacy changes the contours of the Democratic landscape. He is the only major candidate, at least among those from the Senate, who is not on record voting about whether to go to war with Iraq; when that vote was taken, he was in the Illinois Legislature, where he was a vocal opponent of the invasion.

Since then, though, Mr. Edwards has renounced his support of the war and become a stronger critic than Mr. Obama. And Mrs. Clinton, who has expressed skepticism about President Bush's revised Iraq strategy, has struggled to convince many in the Democratic Party's base that she has spoken out strongly enough.

While Mr. Obama does not have the burden of explaining his vote on the war resolution as other senators do, the lack of a Senate track record on other issues could prove damag-

ling as he fends off inevitable criticism that he does not have the experience to be president.

The dynamic among those prospective candidates, not to mention other Democrats, is poised to touch off a curious scramble inside the party. Mr. Edwards is seeking to capture the economically disenfranchised or anxious class of voters, who might also find Mr. Obama appealing. At the same time, it remains an open question whether Mrs. Clinton will have competition for the moderate voters who provided a staple for her husband's candidacy 15 years ago.

"One thing that I'm convinced of," Mr. Obama said Tuesday evening as he left the Capitol, "is that people want something new."

By now, the rapid trajectory of Mr. Obama is a well-established tale, with his rise from law professor to state senator to United States senator in less than a decade. He is the only African-American now serving in the Senate and only the third since Reconstruction.

Patrick Healy contributed reporting from New York.

But the next phase of his political development presents an even more intriguing storyline — as well as inviting closer scrutiny — as he discovers whether it is a blessing or a curse to embark on a presidential race carrying so many expectations.

In his video statement, Mr. Obama presented himself as a fresh face — and voice — for Democrats. He did not go into details on his positions on issues; aides said his formal announcement speech next month would feature more specifics.

"Running for the presidency is a profound decision, a decision no one should make on the basis of media hype or personal ambition alone," Mr. Obama said in his video address, adding: "I certainly didn't expect to find myself in this position a year ago."

At 10:06 a.m. Tuesday, Mr. Obama filed papers with the Federal Election Commission to open a presidential exploratory committee. After disclosing his decision on his Web site — a friendly venue where he would face no questions — he immediately began making telephone calls to key Democratic leaders in states with early contests in the party's 2008 nominating calendar.

Mike Gronstal, the Democratic leader of the Iowa Senate, said he received a courtesy call from Mr. Obama

on Tuesday morning, the second time in less than a week that the two had spoken by telephone.

"I welcomed him to the race, and he said he's definitely in," Mr. Gronstal said in an interview. "I told him that in Iowa, to win people's votes, you have to go through a lot of living rooms and answer a lot of questions. We put candidates through the paces, and we don't jump early."

In Washington, Mr. Obama's announcement caused a stir among Democratic political operatives, who rushed to make inquiries about joining his campaign. A list of telephone numbers for local offices in Iowa, New Hampshire and Chicago — none of which have even opened yet — were being circulated via e-mail.

Mr. Obama intends to put the headquarters for his campaign operation in Chicago, which also would provide a major fund-raising base. But the senator was also reaching out to New York contributors, aides said, and intended to establish a fund-raising operation in the city.

Several Democratic fund-raisers in New York say privately that they have received phone calls from Mr. Obama in recent days and weeks, and at one point Mr. Obama had a brief conversation with Bill Lynch, a black Democratic political consultant who is close to M. S. Clinton and

was a top adviser to former Mayor David N. Dinkins.

"Senator Obama and I were supposed to get together, but I haven't heard from him recently," Mr. Lynch said in an interview Tuesday. "It's too early right now to say who I would end up with, though. I'm a serious politician, and I would like to hear the compelling arguments."

Then, he added, "I'm a real admirer of Senator Clinton's."

Advisers to Mrs. Clinton say her campaign timetable has not changed; she expects to make a decision in the next few weeks.

Mrs. Clinton did not take questions from reporters as she walked into the Senate chamber for a series of votes on Tuesday evening. At one point, she and Mr. Obama were barely a foot apart, but carried on conversations as though the other was not there.

As he left the Senate floor, Mr. Obama smiled when asked about the dynamic of the rival senators. "For me, at least," he said, "I actually think it could be fun."

Colorado Republican to Run

WASHINGTON, Jan. 16 (Reuters) — Representative Tom Tancredo of Colorado, a leading opponent of ille-



Michael Tomczak for The New York Times

Senator Barack Obama of Illinois headed into the Senate chamber yesterday after filing papers to open a presidential exploratory committee.

gal immigration, said Tuesday that he would take the first step toward a long-shot bid for the Republican presidential nomination in 2008.

Mr. Tancredo, 61, formed an exploratory committee to raise money for what he termed an "arduous and undeniably uphill battle" that would advance his views on overhauling immigration law.

Mr. Tancredo has been a leading voice in Congress against proposals

for guest-worker programs and in favor of stronger border security to block illegal immigrants from Mexico.

He said he did not see any other presidential candidate in either party dedicated to a tough stance on immigration.

Mr. Tancredo, who visited the early caucus state of Iowa last weekend, is the eighth Republican to announce an exploratory presidential bid.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY
 RICHARDSON (Declared)
New York Times, January 22, 2007

Democratic Governor of New Mexico Joins Field

By MATTHEW L. WALD

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21 — Gov. Bill Richardson of New Mexico said on Sunday that he intended to run for the Democratic nomination for president, joining a growing field that includes Senators Hillary Clinton of New York (since Saturday) and Barack Obama of Illinois (since Tuesday).

Mr. Richardson, elected to a second term as governor in November with a historic 69 percent of the vote, has a varied résumé. He was elected to Congress to represent the Santa Fe area eight times, and then was chosen by President Bill Clinton to be ambassador to the United Nations, and later, secretary of energy.

As governor, he has kept a hand in international politics, working to arrange a cease-fire this month between the government of Sudan and rebels in the Darfur region, and meeting several times with officials from North Korea to discuss nuclear weapons.

Mr. Richardson, 59, was born in Pasadena, Calif., and spent part of his childhood in Mexico City. His mother is from Mexico.

In an interview Sunday on the ABC program "This Week," Mr. Richardson said: "I believe this country is a very tolerant, positive country. I believe the country would be ready for a woman president, an African-American presi-



Ross D. Franklin/Associated Press

Gov. Bill Richardson of New Mexico speaking to reporters this month on his return to Albuquerque from Sudan.

dent, Hispanic president."

He added, "But I wouldn't run as a Hispanic candidate. I would run as an American, proud to be Hispanic, proud of my heritage."

Video of his announcement appears on his Web site in English and Spanish.

Mr. Richardson also emphasized his experience as governor, dealing with budgets, health care, the environment, drunken driving and other issues. In his position as chairman of the Western Governors' Association and at home in Santa Fe he has been a proponent of renewable energy sources.

Mr. Richardson is an enthusiastic campaigner. According to his campaign, the Guinness Book of World Records cites him as the politician who shook the most hands in one day — 13,392 — during his 2002 campaign for governor, beating President Theodore Roosevelt's record of 8,515, set in 1909.

Perhaps more relevant to a national campaign, Mr. Richardson is also a strong fund-raiser. While chairman of the Democratic Governors Association, he raised more than \$28 million for candidates for governor.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY
BAYH (Withdrawn)
New York Times, December 17, 2006

Indiana Senator Withdraws From 2008 Presidential Field

By ADAM NAGOURNEY

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16 — Senator Evan Bayh, Democrat of Indiana, who just two weeks ago took the first steps toward a White House bid in 2008, announced on Saturday that he was quitting the race. He said he had concluded that his hopes of winning were too remote to make it worth continuing.

Mr. Bayh's abrupt withdrawal, which stunned many Democrats, came less than a week after he saw his visit to New Hampshire overshadowed by the crush of attention surrounding a trip there the same day by Senator Barack Obama of Illinois.

In much of the national coverage by the news media, the 2008 contest has been portrayed, notwithstanding the expanse of the Democratic field, as a two-way race between Mr. Obama and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, complicating efforts by lesser-known candidates to hire staff members, raise money and get noticed.

"The odds were always going to be very long for a relatively unknown candidate like myself, a little bit like David and Goliath," Mr. Bayh said in a statement. "And whether there were too many Goliaths or whether I'm just not the right David, the fact remains that at the end of the day, I concluded that due to circumstances beyond our control the odds were longer than I felt I could responsibly pursue.

"This path, and these long odds," the statement continued, "would have required me to be essentially



Doug Mills/The New York Times

Senator Evan Bayh, shown in August, said the odds were against him.

Seeing a slim chance of victory, a Democrat decides to bow out.

absent from the Senate for the next year instead of working to help the people of my state and the nation."

The statement was posted on the Web site of The Indianapolis Star, which disclosed news of Mr. Bayh's decision Saturday in its newspaper.

Mr. Bayh, 50, is a two-term senator. He is also a former governor of Indiana, experience he had emphasized in an effort to stand out in a

field dominated by senators. And he is from a well-known Indiana political family; his father, Birch, was a senator from 1963 to 1981, when he was defeated by Dan Quayle, and ran for the White House in 1976.

The decision by Mr. Bayh came even though he had about \$10 million on hand; he began preparing for this race right after he was re-elected to the Senate in 2004. To some extent, Mr. Bayh's withdrawal reflects the degree to which Mr. Obama and Mrs. Clinton have dominated the early going of this race, threatening to soak up campaign contributions and, as Mr. Bayh witnessed last weekend, news coverage.

Mr. Obama has not said whether

he will run. And even many Democrats who have expressed interest in an Obama candidacy acknowledge his relative inexperience in public office. He is a first-term senator, and he has not experienced the rigors and scrutiny that come with campaigning for president. In such a volatile atmosphere, and with concerns among many Democrats about Mrs. Clinton's viability as a general-election candidate, party leaders believe there is at least a chance that a lesser-known candidate could emerge.

Mr. Bayh is the second Democrat who had drawn interest to announce that he was quitting the race before even beginning it. Mark Warner, the former governor of Virginia, who spent much of the past two years preparing for a 2008 bid, said earlier this year that he would not run, citing family considerations.

Mr. Bayh had sought to establish himself as a moderate Democrat. He is a former leader of the Democratic Leadership Conference, the group that provided the political base for Bill Clinton before he ran for president, and he comes from a part of the country that is not typically amenable to Democrats.

His decision is likely to be a lift for John Edwards, the former senator from North Carolina and candidate for vice president in 2004. And other Democrats may see an opportunity in Mr. Bayh's decision, including Governors Tom Vilsack of Iowa and Bill Richardson of New Mexico, and Senators Christopher J. Dodd of Connecticut, Joseph R. Biden Jr. of Delaware and John Kerry of Massachusetts.

**DEMOCRATIC PARTY
VILSACK (Withdrawn)**

New York Times, February 24, 2007 REPUBLICAN PARTY

A10

THE NEW YORK TIMES NATIONAL SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2007

**Ending Bid for Presidency,
Vilsack Cites Fund-Raising**

By JEFF ZELENY

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23 — Former Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa ended his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination on Friday, saying the crowded field had made it impossible for him to raise enough money to remain competitive in an accelerated coast-to-coast campaign.

After making his announcement, Mr. Vilsack spent the afternoon taking calls from former rivals. They sent their best wishes, even as they began seeking his endorsement in Iowa, where the caucus early next year will kick off the process of selecting a nominee.

"I'm not thinking about that today," Mr. Vilsack said in a telephone interview, pausing for a moment after juggling a string of calls from a variety of callers, including Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama.

Candidates also issued statements praising his candidacy.

Mr. Vilsack was the first Democratic candidate to enter the 2008 race, opening his campaign on Nov. 20 as the not-from-Washington candidate who pledged to renew a forgotten sense of community across America. He also became one of the most outspoken critics of the Iraq war and called for an immediate withdrawal of American troops.

But Mr. Vilsack, 55, said he struggled to compete financially in a field of 150 candidates, particularly as California, Texas, Florida and Illinois are among the states working to move up the dates of their primary elections next year and candidates are expected to campaign earlier in those states. Already in debt, he said he wanted to abandon his bid before his finances worsened.

"So much of this process now is about perception and money," Mr.

Vilsack said, lamenting the end of the days when a long-shot candidate could prosper by courting one voter at a time. "In a setting where you have thousands of people in a convention center, it's hard to develop a relationship-or intimacy."

Earlier, at a news conference in Des Moines, he said: "I came up against something for the first time in my life that hard work and effort couldn't overcome. I just couldn't work harder, couldn't give it enough."

The scramble set off by his announcement was not only for Mr. Vilsack's endorsement, but also for his Iowa advisers and supporters, all of whom are seen as intensely valuable to other candidates. Officials from at least four other campaigns called the Vilsack headquarters on Friday, searching for a staff list.

Monica Fischer, a top Iowa activist and Vilsack loyalist, said: "It is a whole new day in Iowa. It's a sad day for the people who supported him, but it opens everything up for the campaign now."

Ms. Fischer added, "Everybody will be waiting to see who he supports and where his supporters and staff go."

In the three months of his candidacy, Mr. Vilsack faced a burden unlike that of any other person in the race: persuading voters in his own state to view him as presidential material. The steady parade of high-profile, well-financed rivals in his own backyard complicated his efforts.

Still, Mr. Vilsack's decision to end his campaign started many of his admirers in Iowa and across the country. Only two days ago, he appeared alongside his fellow Democratic candidates at a forum in Nevada, and he was scheduled to attend a campaign rally Friday evening in Iowa.



Former Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa was joined in Des Moines yesterday by his wife, Christie, when he announced that he was ending his campaign.

But early Friday morning, he began making calls to party officials and supporters, saying his campaign was spending more money than it was taking in. A few hours later, at his news conference, he criticized the intense focus placed upon fund-raising and urged candidates to continue on-the-ground campaigning in early voting states.

"It is money and only money that is the reason we are leaving today," Mr. Vilsack said, adding that presidential campaigns should be publicly financed.

While Mr. Vilsack reported raising \$1.1 million from Nov. 9 to Dec. 31, according to campaign finance reports, he had spent all but \$300,000 by the end of the year. After Mr. Obama, of Illinois, and Mrs. Clinton, of New York, entered the race in late January, Mr. Vilsack's advisers said, he struggled to raise money.

During his brief campaign, Mr. Vilsack sought to use his life story as an American metaphor: from orphaned infant in Pittsburgh to governor of Iowa, the native state of his college sweetheart-turned-wife,

Christie. He served as mayor of Mount Pleasant, Iowa, and as state senator, and in 1996 he was elected governor. He served two terms.

"This has been a great experience," Mr. Vilsack said Friday. "When you start out life in an orphanage and you run for president of the United States, that's what this country is supposed to be about."

COX (Declared)

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October 5, 2006 Thursday Home Edition

HEADLINE: COLUMN ONE; Excuse Me, Who Are You?; John Cox is running for president. And why not — the field is wide open. Iowa voters like what they hear, when they're not laughing.

BYLINE: P.J. Huffstutter, Times Staff Writer

DATELINE: DES MOINES

BODY:

During the presidential frenzy that descends upon this farmland state every four years, Mary Ann Corrigan has met Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush and Ronald Reagan — and way too many also-rans to name.

Now, blissfully minding her own business at the Machine Shed restaurant, the 72-year-old retired farmer is about to meet John H. Cox.

"I'm running for president of the United States," says Cox, a 51-year-old Republican, as he quickly explains how he would abolish the federal income tax, solve immigration problems and keep gas prices low. Corrigan has barely had a chance to sip her coffee when Cox, a Chicago attorney, accountant and investment manager, churns through his talking points.

Corrigan listens for a couple of minutes, intrigued but clearly confused. Eyeing Cox's dark-blue suit and silk sus-

penders dotted with miniature White Houses, she interrupts the candidate's sales pitch.

"Excuse me, but who are you again?" she asks. "And why are you bothering me now?"

Even by the standards of most Iowans, who are used to being bombarded with campaign rhetoric, Cox's stumping is considered a tad early. There are, after all, 760 days until Nov. 3, 2008.

But this presidential race offers a dream scenario for the political fringe and not-so-fringe because there is no incumbent running, no vice president with a claim on a party's nomination, and widespread voter discontent among Democrats and Republicans. Issues that have plagued both parties — including illegal immigration, the Iraq war and ethics — fuel the public's frustration and desire for change.

So it's an open field — at least, that's what the candidates are telling themselves.

"This is the first time since 1928 that neither party has an heir apparent for their nomination," said Jennifer Duffy, editor of the Washington-based nonpartisan Cook Political Report. "This presidential race really started the day after the 2004 race ended. It's only going to get more intense" after the midterm election Nov. 7.

As of early September, 75 people had filed paperwork with the Federal Election Commission declaring their intention

to run for president. At the same time four years ago, 45 people had done so, an FEC official said.

"You start to see more of these long-shot candidates any time people feel the country's in bad shape, and they feel someone needs to do something about it," said Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. "Clearly, people are upset right now."

Cox's campaign kicked into high gear soon after he filed paperwork in February with the FEC. He has spent months crisscrossing windblown prairies and lush farmland, hawking his ideology while serving plates of pancakes at county fairs and singing hymns at rural churches.

Cox has visited all of Iowa's 99 counties, driven across New Hampshire eight times, made five trips to South Carolina and toured the East Coast. A trip through the South is slated for later this month. He has signed up coordinators to spearhead his campaign in 12 states, including California, Oregon and Nevada.

On this swing through Iowa — Cox's ninth to the state — he and four staffers will travel nearly 600 miles in two days, making nine stops, and speaking to fewer than 500 people.

The field is getting more crowded each day. According to the Hotline, an online political newsletter, U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh (D-Ind.) has visited the Hawkeye State seven times since 2005. Massachusetts Republican Gov. Mitt Romney? Nine trips. Former Sen. John Edwards (D-N.C.)? Ten.

Cox has bumped into other Republicans: Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee at a fundraising dinner in New Hampshire in March, and New York Gov. George E. Pataki at an Iowa farmhouse in August. He missed Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist of Tennessee by six days on his most recent trip to South Carolina.

Cox also is traveling most of the same roads, and stopping at many of the same towns, as independent Joe "Average Joe" Schriener, an Ohio freelance writer and part-time handyman; Democrat Mike Gravel, a former U.S. senator from Alaska; and Dr. Mark I. Klein, a psychiatrist based in Oakland who describes himself as a GOP "grown-up for the White House."

Even Cox is a little bewildered by all the early action.

"Lock your doors and windows. There's going to be presidential candidates coming out of the woodwork," Cox says to Corrigan, as he hands her some glossy campaign literature.

Then he moves to the next booth at the Machine Shed, where the menu offers an 8-ounce cut of prime rib for "the light appetite" and children's portions are denoted by tiny pink pig faces. Shaking hands with a group of military veterans, Cox repeats his spiel.

Cox was born on Chicago's South Side to a single mother. He and his three siblings, he said, grew up in a politically aware family. His mother, Priscilla, a schoolteacher, walked picket lines in the 1960s and volunteered with the local teachers union.

For years, Cox was a Democrat and ran unsuccessfully to be a delegate to the 1976 Democratic National Convention. He had just received his undergraduate degree at the University of Illinois at Chicago, double-majoring in political science and accounting. He earned his law degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1980.

By then, Cox had switched parties, drawn to Reagan's fiscal and social conservatism. His loyalty to the Republican Party grew over the years as did, he said, his wealth: In addition to his two-attorney law office, Cox runs or has a stake in several businesses in areas that include real estate management, investment strategies and accounting.

"[Reagan] and the GOP represented everything I believed in," said Cox, who has four daughters ages 19 months to 24 years. "But times changed. The party's changed."

The call to run for the White House came one night last winter, when he and his wife, Sarah, were watching the news in their condominium in Chicago's tony Gold Coast neighborhood. After listening to her husband rail at congressional candidates and President Bush, Sarah decided she'd had enough.

Why don't you stop talking to the TV, she said, and do something about it?

"I didn't expect him to take me seriously," said Sarah, 40. "Now, it's his dream to win."

Cox agreed: "You only fail if you never try. I'm dead-serious. I'm going to win."

He is, however, familiar with defeat. Cox lost a 2000 bid for Congress in Illinois. He came in third in the GOP primary for the 2002 U.S. Senate race; entered, but later dropped out of, the 2004 Senate race; and fell short in a bid for Cook County recorder of deeds in 2004.

Given Cox's losses, national and Illinois Republican Party officials roll their eyes at his bravado. Even Cox's friends and family have wondered whether he understands how odd such confidence sounds.

"Sure he could win. Anything's possible," said law firm partner Christopher Oakes. "Realistically, though, he's a long shot."

Don't tell that to his paid staff of eight, which includes Cox's national coordinator: Nathan Martin, 25, an Ohio-based National Guardsman and Iraq veteran. This year, Martin made a failed bid for Ohio's 4th congressional district seat.

Martin said he could make more money working for a better-known presidential or congressional candidate, and could probably gain similar experience. But he prefers to stay with Cox, he says, "because I believe in John's message. The 2008 race is shaping up to be a battle of the moderate Republicans, and I want people to know there's an alternative. I believe in the power of a grass-roots campaign."

In Iowa, Cox has spoken at seven county conventions and three district conventions, and at events held at the state GOP convention. He has tapped his own bank account to pay for television advertising on local cable channels in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina. He has sprinkled thousands of dollars into the coffers of Hawkeye candidates, to help support and network with local Republican groups.

Cox won't say how much of his own money he plans to spend on the campaign. FEC filings show that as of July 15, his campaign had raised nearly \$6,000 and had about \$107,000 in operating expenditures. (According to personal disclosure statements Cox filed with the FEC in 2004, his net worth then was between \$1.4 million and \$9 million.)

Often, Cox speaks to crowds that are far smaller than those drawn by better-known — and far better-funded — potential contenders.

When U.S. Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) made a trip to Iowa last month, he was greeted at a steak fry in Indianola by dozens of TV camera crews and political operatives, and thousands of curious voters.

When Cox steps inside the Bredeaux Pizza shop in Winterset, home of the famous covered bridges of Madison County, there are 11 people waiting for him.

He personally greets each one. Then, he begins his pitch.

"Too many of the potential candidates in 2008 are senators, governors and other professional politicians who have supported greater spending and higher taxes to fix our prob-

lems,” Cox tells the gathering. “I’m not a fringe candidate. I’m a Republican’s Republican, a Reagan Republican. So what that I haven’t been a governor? Or a congressman? Or a senator? Does that mean I can’t be your president?”

Jo Jones, 78, giggles at the trim, gray-haired man standing before her.

It’s 2:42 p.m. It’s the fourth time since dawn that a voter has laughed at Cox.

Cox presses on.

“I had to scrape and claw and work my way to the success I enjoy in my life today. I understand the importance of economic security,” he says. “I understand what it’s like to worry about a family business having financial troubles, of worrying about not making a payroll or wondering how you’d survive.”

Minutes pass. Cox vows to kill the federal personal income tax, and replace it with a national sales tax. He advocates moving away from reliance on overseas oil providers, and embraces greater drilling in the U.S. and use of alternative fuels.

The 11 people grow quiet and thoughtful. A few heads nod.

In the middle of Cox’s speech, four other people walk into the restaurant. They had been shopping along the store-fronts

on the downtown square, where lush maple trees shade the Ben Franklin five-and-dime and Down Home Antiques. But the sound of Cox’s voice and the ideas he’s proposing draw them inside.

Cox suggests that businesses should be prevented from hiring illegal immigrants, and prosecuted if they do so. He wants to simplify the path to citizenship so that “it’s easier for people to become Americans, to work and pay taxes and be part of the American dream.” He believes that same-sex marriages shouldn’t be legalized, he says, despite the fact that his half sister is a lesbian: “I’m for traditional families, not for being anti-gay.”

“I like your message. I think you’ll get plenty of support for your ideals,” Jones tells Cox afterward. “You have my vote. But can you be taken seriously?”

Cox replies, “Do you think I’m serious?”

Jones nods and asks for a “Cox for President” lawn sign.

Cox walks outside. There is no campaign bus, only a rented silver Toyota SUV. He and his staff climb inside and head north, toward the highway. There’s another group of potential voters: Twenty people, waiting inside a farmhouse, about 90 minutes away.

p.j.huffstutter@latimes.com

REPUBLICAN PARTY
GIULIANI (Declared)

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, November 14, 2006

Giuliani puts presidential bid for 2008 in motion

He files papers to create exploratory committee

Associated Press

Washington — Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, a moderate Republican best known for his stewardship of the city after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, has taken the first step in a 2008 presidential bid, GOP officials said Monday.

The former mayor filed papers to create the Rudy Giuliani Presidential Exploratory Committee Inc., establishing a panel that would allow him to raise money for a White House run and travel the country.

The four-page filing, dated Friday, lists the purpose of the non-profit corporation "to conduct federal 'testing the waters' activity under the Federal Election Campaign Act for Rudy Giuliani."

"Mayor Giuliani has not made a decision yet," Giuliani

spokeswoman Sunny Mindel said in a statement Monday night. "With the filing of this document, we have taken the necessary legal steps so an organization can be put in place and money can be raised to explore a possible presidential run in 2008."

Under federal election law, an exploratory committee allows an individual to travel and gauge the level of support for a candidacy without formally declaring themselves a candidate and adhering to all the federal rules of fund raising.

An individual who spends money only to test the waters — but not to campaign for office — does not have to register as a candidate under the election law.

One potential rival for the GOP nomination, Sen. John McCain of Arizona, said Sunday that he was taking the initial step of setting up an explor-

atory committee.

The GOP field is expected to keep growing with Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, Sen. Bill Frist of Tennessee, Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and New York Gov. George Pataki expected to join the fray.

Giuliani enjoys strong name recognition, and a recent AP-AOL News poll conducted in late October found that, among Republicans, Giuliani was essentially tied with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and McCain on who they would most like to see elected president in 2008.

Rice has insisted that she will not run.

Giuliani, a former U.S. attorney who was widely praised for leading New York during and after Sept. 11, has said for months that he would wait until the end of the 2006 elections to decide whether to embark on a White House bid.

A moderate, he supports gun control, same-sex civil unions, embryonic stem cell research and abortion rights — stands that would put him at odds with the majority of the GOP conservative base.



Giuliani,
Former mayor
of New York City

REPUBLICAN PARTY HUCKABEE (Declared)

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Christian Science Monitor

November 29, 2007, Thursday

HEADLINE: Huckabee rocks the GOP candidate image

BYLINE: Ariel Sabar Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

DATELINE: Menville, Iowa

BODY:

When aides to former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee told the high school here that he wanted to play bass guitar with its band during a recent campaign stop, Mark Cripps grew uneasy.

As the longtime band teacher, Mr. Cripps knows how many rehearsals it takes for the teen musicians in this tiny west Iowa town to nail a song. Now a stranger of dubious musical talent – a GOP presidential hopeful no less – wanted to sit in on a couple of numbers with no run-through.

Cripps, a stocky man with the world-weary look of band instructors everywhere, wasn't taking any chances.

"I've got my bass player standing in the wings," he said, pacing nervously in the Woodbury Central High auditorium, as his students tuned up, awaiting the arrival of the Huckabee entourage that October morning. "I instructed the kids: No matter what happens, hang with the job."

Then Huckabee bounded on stage in boots and jeans, grabbed an electric bass, and bowled through "C Jam Blues," a song he'd never played before. His performance was more bravado than finesse. He bent back mid-song to consult with the 12th-grade bass player, who was standing behind him looking ill at ease. But there were no dropped beats, no goofed chords, and Cripps looked genuinely surprised.

"He knew how to ... I don't want to say 'fake it,' but 'survive it,'" Cripps said, as the news crews packed up. Cripps thought he might have even glimpsed politics in the governor's guitar shtick. "He was coming to show you, 'I can do this, I can take charge.'"

* * *

As Huckabee tells it, his cash-strapped parents bought his first electric guitar from a J.C. Penney catalog for Christmas 1966, after "months of begging." Huckabee was 11. (What is it about Hope, Ark., that inspires would-be presidents to pick up an instrument?)

"The young man played until his fingers almost bled," Huckabee blogged last year, referring to himself in the third person. His teenage bands played sock hops, talent shows, and Saturday night "country music jamborees," and went by names like The Misfits and The Sanction.

"Perhaps you expect that he went on to become a famous and successful musician, gracing the album covers of Grammy-winning recordings," Huckabee blogged. "Not quite."

Huckabee says there is one reason his band, Capitol Offense, made up of wonky former staffers from the governor's office, has opened for the likes of Grand Funk Railroad, Percy Sledge, and Willie Nelson: "If you're the only governor in America with a rock-and-roll band, you get invited to some pretty good gigs."

Performing, he says, helped him overcome stage fright and prepared him for the fishbowl of politics. "For sure, I would have never made it to the Governor's Mansion without music."

Now he's hoping to ride rock 'n' roll to the White House. Huckabee may be known to diehard supporters as the former Southern Baptist minister who sees economic salvation in the flat tax. But his guitar-plucking has helped cast a popular image as the GOP candidate of "Main Street" – that, together with his diet book ("Quit Digging Your Grave with a Knife and Fork") and his appearances on "The Colbert Report" and "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

Huckabee suggests that a candidate's agility in pop culture is as good a test as any of presidential mettle. "Stephen Colbert gave me the Colbert bump, and that's why I'm doing really well right now in the polls," he told the students, only half-jokingly, of his appearances on the show. "I think you learn more about people by watching how they handle things like 'The Colbert Show' than something that's very tightly scripted."

With his comb-over and dimpled grin, Huckabee is less hipster than cool older guy. He's your favorite uncle, the one with the Eric Clapton concert T-shirt and a gift for one-liners, eager to show that not long ago he was a kid, too. Were there a spectrum of Hollywood wholesome, he'd fall between Jimmy Stewart and Kevin Spacey: a place where awshucks meets off-killer.

Watching Huckabee cycle between social conservative and freewheeling rock 'n' roller makes for some jarring juxtapositions. One night he was in suit and tie talking Social Security with seniors in Sioux City. The next morning he was playing bass in bluejeans with the school band here.

"There's a great way to live life," he said delivering an antidrug message after the jam session, "and that's keep your mind free and clear." But then in another zigzag, he segued into a meditation on 1970s rock when a junior, Jacob Polkinghorn, asked about illegal immigration.

"My views on illegal immigration? By the way, I like your shirt," Huckabee interrupted himself, gesturing at Jacob's T-shirt, with the rainbow-prism cover art from Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" album.

Jacob grinned broadly.

"Favorite Pink Floyd song?" Huckabee quizzed him. "Mother," Jacob replied, naming a track from the 1979 album "The Wall," a rock opera linked in popular lore with the hallucinogenic drug culture.

Around the time "The Wall" was released, Huckabee explained later in a phone interview, "I was working for a Christian evangelical organization in Texas doing communications."

"I was never a druggie," he added. "I'm probably one of the few people my age that's never even tasted beer."

Those details didn't come up at the high school. Instead, he told Jacob, "When I saw your shirt, I just had to tell you ... it really excites me that guys who are students now love the music that I listened to."

Like your favorite uncle, Huckabee can at times seem to be trying too hard.

* * *

The big show was later that October night, across the state, at the Surf Ballroom, in Clear Lake. The venue is a pop landmark: The last place Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and J.P. Richardson (The Big Bopper) played before their plane crashed in 1959. Posters on the doors beckoned Iowans to Huckabee's "2007-2008 Road to the White House Tour."

October had been a good month. His campaign had raised \$800,000 in the first three weeks. And though still in fifth place in most national polls of GOP voters, in Iowa he'd inched into a tie for second. (Now in late November, he is a solid second – even tied for first in some polls.)

“Are you guys ready to have a little fun tonight?” Huckabee roared to a crowd of 400 as his band swept on stage. “We want to show that conservatives, Republicans, Christian believers can have as much fun as anybody else in the whole world.”

Capitol Offense, which doesn't play original music, launched into a set of classic rock covers, the sort in any road-house jukebox: “Born to be Wild,” “Mustang Sally,” “Wonderful Tonight.” Huckabee doesn't sing. But he bobbed to the beat, his shimmering electric bass slung from an American-flag strap.

At a table behind the dance floor with his wife and toddler daughter, Justin Herrick said he'd always liked Huckabee's opposition to abortion and gay marriage. But when he read that the candidate had a band, his reaction was, “Wow.” So he and

his wife drove two hours from Wartburg College, a Lutheran school they attend.

“Usually most ministers would be against the rock 'n' roll thing, but here he is playing it,” said Mr. Herrick. “It shows what he's really like on the weekends.”

Hanging back in the shadows and scrutinizing Huckabee's technique was Randy Hudson, a bassist in a band he described as “a gospel Hootie & the Blowfish meets Billy Joel.”

“At first I thought, 'Is this a gimmick?' ” said Mr. Hudson, a college student and former cable-TV installer. But after hearing Huckabee play, Hudson decided otherwise. “By not looking like a politician, you run the risk of people not seeing you as a politician. But he's betting on the fact that people are sick of politicians.”

Turning to watch the former governor, Hudson smiled. “He's kind of like Bruce Springsteen running for president, except a nicer guy.”

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REPUBLICAN PARTY

HUNTER (Declared)

New York Times, December 6, 2006

2nd Republican Enters Race For Presidency

By SARAH ABRUZZESE

WASHINGTON, Jan. 25 — Representative Duncan Hunter, Republican of California, announced his bid for the presidency on Thursday in Spartanburg, S.C., then boarded a motor home to tour the state, where he hopes to gain support from a conservative electorate.

Mr. Hunter, 58, said his candidacy would emphasize his support for the war in Iraq, his opposition to abortion and his belief in free trade.

Serving his 14th term as a congressman, Mr. Hunter, of San Diego, is a Vietnam veteran and a lawyer. He was the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee until this year and is now the ranking Republican on the panel.

In a release earlier this month, he paved the way for his candidacy, saying, "America needs a way ahead in the ongoing war against terrorists and a policy of economic opportunity, with a reaffirmation of faith in the principles of our founding."

He said yesterday that he would also emphasize the need to restore the balance of trade with China.

"This is not free trade, this is not fair trade," Mr. Hunter said according to the text of his speech. "It is cheating."



Erik S. Lesser/European Pressphoto Agency

Representative Duncan Hunter, newly a presidential hopeful.

Mr. Hunter, who has a 92 percent lifetime conservative rating from the American Conservative Union, repeated his opposition to abortion this week, telling thousands of anti-abortion demonstrators here that, if elected, he would not nominate judges who supported abortion.

Mr. Hunter also opposes embryonic stem cell research and supports tighter controls on illegal immigration. Mr. Hunter is the second Republican to announce his intention to run for the presidency. Senator Sam Brownback of Kansas did last week. Senator John McCain of Arizona and Rudolph W. Giuliani, the former mayor of New York, are also expected to seek the nomination.

**REPUBLICAN PARTY
KEYES (Declared)**

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Los Angeles Times

September 18, 2007 Tuesday Home Edition

HEADLINE: Nation in Brief / WASHINGTON, D.C.; Keyes
enters GOP presidential race

BYLINE: From Times Wire Services

BODY:

Alan Keyes, a Republican whose two previous runs for president ended in failure, is making a third try for the White House.

The Maryland conservative announced on his website that he had filed paperwork with the Federal Election Commission to make his candidacy official. He joins a crowded Republican field of nine candidates and is scheduled to participate tonight at a debate involving lesser-known candidates in Florida.

Keyes, a State Department official under President Reagan, made unsuccessful presidential runs in 1996 and 2000.

REPUBLICAN PARTY MCCAIN (Declared)

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, April 26, 2007

U.S. Sen. John McCain (left) greets supporters from his campaign bus after a rally Wednesday in Portsmouth, N.H. The Arizona Republican formally began his second bid for the White House on Wednesday. He said he might call today for the resignation of Alberto Gonzales, the U.S. attorney general.



GETTY IMAGES

McCain jumps into 2008 race

Senator distances himself from White House

By ADAM MAGGORMY
and MICHAEL COOPER
New York Times

Manchester, N.H. — Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) formally began his second bid for the White House on Wednesday with a thinly veiled critique of the Bush administration, pledging that he would restore competence to foreign and domestic policy and welcome compromise with Democrats.

Without naming President Bush, McCain cited "many mistakes" in Iraq, alluded to Hurricane Katrina and the government's failure to "rescue the infirm from a hospital with no electricity," criticized "substandard care and indifference for our wounded veterans" and renewed his call for reining in what he termed wasteful federal spending.

McCain, trying to reinvigorate a campaign that has been dogged by problems for the last several months, said Americans were wary of "old politics" marked by partisan infighting and petty brawling.

McCain repeatedly said — in a state where independent voters are allowed to vote in either primary — that a McCain presidency would be marked by effort to reach accommodations with political opponents.

"Americans are acutely aware of our problems, and their patience is at end for politicians who value incumbency over principle, and for partisanship that is less a contest of ideas than an uncivil brawl over the spoils of power," he said, adding, "They're tired of it."

Though he did not explicitly criticize Bush in the course of his 30-minute speech, delivered under slate-gray skies and before an often listless crowd in Portsmouth, McCain systematically distanced himself from the White House and from his major Republican competitors.

His remarks suggested a sharp strategic shift after months of trying to build support with conservative voters in part by presenting himself as a champion of Bush and his natural heir.

That strategy has exposed him to questions about his ideological consistency and whether he had sacrificed his

JOHN SIDNEY MCCAIN

Age: 70; born Aug. 29, 1936

Birthplace: Panama Canal Zone

Experience: U.S. senator from Arizona, 1988-present; U.S. congressman, 1982-'86; director, Navy Senate Liaison Office, Washington, 1977-'81; Navy pilot, 1977; prisoner of war, Hanoi, Vietnam, 1967-'73; commissioned, U.S. Navy, 1958

Education: U.S. Naval Academy, 1958; National War College, 1973-'74

Family: Wife, Cindy Hershey; five sons and two daughters; divorced once

Quote: "I'm not running for president to be somebody but to do something. To do the hard but necessary things, not the easy and needless things." — McCain, in announcing his candidacy in Portsmouth, N.H.

Source: Associated Press

political identity to overcome skepticism among the social conservatives who helped Bush win the White House twice.

McCain went so far as to hint that he might call today for the resignation of Alberto Gonzales, Bush's embattled attorney general.

Asked aboard his bus as he traveled Wednesday to Manchester from Portsmouth whether he still supported Gonzales, he responded, "I'll tell you tomorrow," explaining that he did not want to answer the question then because it would "step on my message."

In fact, McCain stepped on his message hours later when he sat down for an interview with Larry King for CNN.

When King asked whether he thought Gonzales should step down, McCain responded, "I think that out of loyalty to the president that that would probably be the best thing that he could do."

Also Wednesday, McCain, 70, made reference to his age as an issue in the campaign but tried to turn it against his main rivals.

"I'm not the youngest candidate," he said. "But I am the most experienced."

► **Race:** Democratic presidential hopefuls rebuke Giuliani. **6A**

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REPUBLICAN PARTY

PAUL (Declared)

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, March 13, 2007

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Texan announces presidential bid

He says GOP lacks his libertarian views

Associated Press

Ron Paul, a nine-term Texas congressman who describes himself as a life-long libertarian, announced his candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination Monday in Houston.

Appearing on C-SPAN's "Washington Journal," Paul said he was at first reluctant to run but that "a lot of people want to hear my message and I'm willing to deliver it."

Paul, who formed an exploratory committee in January, said he has raised more than \$500,000 in the past month "with very little effort."

"So far, the amount of money raised isn't competitive with those establishment candidates who will raise \$100 million, but with the Internet and the amount of money and enthusiasm, I think we can become very competitive," he said.

Paul also ran for the White House as a Libertarian Party candidate in 1988.

An obstetrician-gynecologist from just south of Houston, Paul is ideologically far afield from the Republican mainstream.

Among other differences with his party's base, Paul has criticized President Bush for acting unconstitutionally in sending U.S. troops to Iraq and has said he would support an investigation into whether Bush "deliberately misrepresented" his reasons for doing so.

"I'm very confident the Republican Party has gone in the wrong direction," Paul said. "We used to be the party of small government. Now we're the party of big government."

Hagel non-announcement: Sen. Chuck Hagel, one of the more forceful Republican voices in opposition to the Iraq war, put off a decision about a possible presidential bid, saying Monday that he wanted to focus on

the conflict and other pressing national issues.

In an odd twist, the Nebraska senator called a news conference in Omaha to say he would decide about his political future later this year, saying a late entry into the 2008 race is still possible.

"I want to keep my focus on helping find a responsible way out of this tragedy," Hagel said of the Iraq war.

Citing the war, Social Security, trade and climate change among other issues, Hagel said, "I believe it is in the interest of my Nebraska constituents and this country that I continue to work full time on these challenges."

Endorsement for Giuliani: Republican presidential hopeful Rudy Giuliani picked up an endorsement Monday from Sen. David Vitter of Louisiana, who said he is backing the former New York City mayor even though he disagrees with his stances on social issues. "Rudy has the strong

unwavering leadership and sound judgment that we so clearly need in this time of war and terrorist threats," Vitter said at a Washington news conference with Giuliani.

Criticism from Clinton: Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton on Monday denounced oil giant Halliburton's planned relocation to Dubai from Houston.

"I think it raises a lot of very big concerns, and we're going to be looking into it in Washington," the New York senator said at a news conference in New York City.

"I think it's disgraceful that American companies are more than happy to try to get no-bid contracts like Halliburton has, and then turn around and say, 'You know, we're not going to stay.'"

Halliburton spokeswoman Melissa Norcross said the company still would comply with U.S. government oversight.

REPUBLICAN PARTY ROMNEY (Declared)

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November 24, 2007 Saturday Late Edition – Final
HEADLINE: For Romney & Company, Campaign Is All Business

BYLINE: By MICHAEL LUO

BODY:

Presidential campaigns, with their boiler-room pressure, news media scrutiny and organizational challenges, have always functioned as something of a dress rehearsal for the White House. How do the candidates make tough decisions? Are they willing to listen to opposing points of view? Do they micromanage?

These questions have taken on a particular edge among the candidates for the Republican presidential nomination, who have remained for the most part ideologically close to President Bush but are trying to cast themselves as more competent.

Mitt Romney, in particular, is staking his campaign in large measure on his image as a managerial guru. He has emphasized his advantage on this score on the stump, saying it derives from the data-driven, analysis-laden business practices he acquired in his years in the private sector — and which his aides say are evident in how he runs his campaign.

“What concerns me about Washington is that people have answers before they’ve gathered any data, done any analysis, solicited opinions from people who disagree,” Mr. Romney said in an interview. “From the business world, you look at that and you say, ‘You’ve got to be kidding.’”

No governing from the gut for Mr. Romney, his aides say. This is a man who relishes “metrics,” is always on the lookout for data to frame discussions and brings a devil’s advocacy to every discussion, whether it focuses on policy formation or advertising.

“He challenges everything you first give him,” said Alex Gage, Mr. Romney’s director of strategy. “The worst thing to do is go into a meeting with him and say: ‘Well, we think this is the best thing to do. Anybody disagree? No, no, we all agree.’ That will be a red flag for him.”

Even as his advisers talk up his management skills, however, they are not forthcoming on some of the tougher decisions Mr. Romney has faced since entering the race, like how much of his own money to pour into his campaign (of the \$63 million he has raised, some \$17 million has come from his own pocket), or how to deal with persistent accusations of flip-flopping. And many of the largest decisions are yet unmade, like if and when to give a major speech about his Mormon faith.

Mr. Romney recently told reporters that he was inclined to deliver the address but that his political advisers had warned him against it, raising questions about who exactly holds sway in his campaign.

His aides prefer to direct attention to his past, promoting his image as the turnaround artist who fixed companies, then the 2002 Winter Olympics and finally the state of Massachusetts, where he was governor from 2003–7.

Any effort to cast Mr. Romney as a pragmatic, problem-solving politician must also take into account his partisan slide to the right since leaving the Statehouse, leading him to make blustery comments about doubling the size of the detention camp at the Guantanamo naval base in Cuba and to abandon ideas like requiring people to buy health insurance, which was at the core of his universal health care plan in Massachusetts.

“Prior to running for president, Mitt was not particularly partisan or ideological,” said Eric A. Kriss, who worked with Mr. Romney at Bain Capital and later as the Massachusetts budget chief. “He was more likely to say, ‘Show me the data.’”

Political observers typically cite the Romney campaign as the best-organized operation among the Republican contenders, from its hyper-focused field teams in early voting states to its efficient fund-raising apparatus. The effort is in stark contrast to that of Senator John McCain of Arizona, who was forced to scale back his presidential campaign significantly last summer when he found it had been far overspending what it had raised while pursuing a national strategy.

Mr. Romney has bona fide management credentials, with joint M.B.A. and law degrees from Harvard (he attended Harvard Business School at the same time as Mr. Bush), and a stellar business reputation.

His management approach is built on several core principles, he says, including picking the right team, demanding data, conducting thorough analyses and making sure to have ways to measure success or failure. He said he had developed the process over time in both the private and public sectors.

“I don’t think there are many people who have had that experience in life, who have actually gone through that process again and again and again, and honed it down,” he said.

Much of Mr. Romney’s style was developed in his years at Bain Capital, the private equity powerhouse he helped found. He led a small team that singled out companies for takeover, revamped them and then sold them for profit. But the premium was less on operational prowess, which might be brought to running the sprawling federal bureaucracy, and more on salesmanship and deal making, as well as on the kind of intense analysis he had employed as a management consultant.

As governor, Mr. Romney did little direct managing, delegating much of that to his staff, Mr. Kriss said. When addressing challenges, including solving the state’s budget crisis and shaping its universal health care plan, he took an analytical approach. Both efforts began with Bain-style strategic audits.

His style in the campaign is similar, his aides said, with Mr. Romney relying on a circle of lieutenants, many of whom are longtime friends from Bain, the Olympics or the Statehouse, who are familiar with what he expects.

“He describes himself as the chairman of the company and me as the C.E.O.,” said Beth Myers, Mr. Romney’s campaign manager and former Statehouse chief of staff. “He does not manage this campaign.”

Even so, Ms. Myers consults with Mr. Romney daily by phone or e-mail. She said he demanded explanations for everything, like his travel itinerary and the balance between fund-raising and campaigning.

“It’s a daily thing of justifying,” she said, “making sure we’re not just doing something because we’re supposed to be doing it.”

His aides said Mr. Romney had early on laid out broad expectations for his staff, including that the campaign follow a strict budget. A committee reviews any unplanned expenditures and requires departments to make weekly cash forecasts. Mr. Romney gets monthly budget reports; Ms. Myers receives daily updates.

Another expectation was measuring progress in every aspect of the campaign. Mr. Gage, a veteran of several previous presidential campaigns, said the Romney campaign required a

greater level of “documentation” than others he had worked for.

“A lot of presidential campaigns just end up on yellow legal pads,” he said. “People don’t write memos, prepare presentations or organize defenses. It is just sort of ad hoc.”

Staff meetings at the Romney campaign’s Boston headquarters are typically full of statistic-laden spreadsheets and PowerPoint slides. But the defining feature is the kind of back-and-forth that Mr. Romney demands before decisions.

Illustrative of this approach was the way the campaign went about deciding whether to stay in the Iowa Straw Poll after two rivals, Rudolph W. Giuliani and Mr. McCain, announced on the same day in June that they were dropping out. The campaign had long been focused on the straw poll as a defining test that could lift Mr. Romney’s profile. But a watered-down field diminished its significance as a bellwether for the nomination and would still cost the campaign millions of dollars.

After a flurry of deliberations at the staff level, Mr. Romney had a conference call with his advisers. Gentry Collins, his Iowa state director, advocated staying in and had prepared data on a number of factors, like cost estimates and get-out-the-vote operations. Mr. Romney ran through a list of questions about why the other campaigns had dropped out and what could be gained by staying in.

“He was looking for a great deal of information,D” Mr. Collins said.

By the end of the call, the consensus was to go ahead.

“He is not the kind of you guy can say, ‘We all decided to go do this,’ and he’ll sign off on it,” Mr. Collins said. “He demands to know why we wanted to make that decision, why someone else wants to make another decision.”

URL: <http://www.nytimes.com>

REPUBLICAN PARTY TANCREDO (Declared)

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April 3, 2007 Tuesday Regional Edition

HEADLINE: Tancredo Joins GOP Presidential Field

BYLINE: Zachary A. Goldfarb

BODY:

Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.) formally announced he is running for president, sharply criticizing the leading Republican candidates for their positions on immigration.

"The political elite in Washington have chosen to ignore this phenomenon," said Tancredo, a leading congressional voice against illegal immigration. "You look and you see no one is going to make this the primary issue of their campaign."

Announcing on conservative talk radio on a day when other GOP candidates said they had raised tens of millions for the campaigns, Tancredo appeared unfazed.

"We have something they don't have — a group of people out there who are there because of an issue," Tancredo said. His campaign announced that it had raised about \$1.3 million in the first three months of the year.

Richardson to Return Donations

New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, a 2008 Democratic presidential hopeful, announced that he will return up to \$35,000 in contributions to his 2002 and 2006 gubernatorial campaigns after the Associated Press disclosed that the funds came from key figures in a public corruption scandal in the state.

"We're totaling it up, and any money from any of these individuals, the governor will donate to charities," Amanda Cooper, Richardson's deputy campaign manager, told the AP.

Four people, including the former New Mexico Senate president, were charged last week with trying to bilk the government out of \$4.2 million in a courthouse construction project.

One of the four, engineering subcontractor Raul Parra, donated \$5,500 to Richardson in 2002 and 2006, and a company in which Parra is a partner contributed \$15,000, the AP reported. Prosecutors indicted Parra on charges of conspiracy, money laundering and mail fraud.

Richardson's campaign also took in \$9,500 from Marc Schiff, the project's architect, and \$5,000 from the company of subcontractor Manuel Guara, the AP reported. Both men have pleaded guilty to conspiracy and mail fraud.

In unrelated Richardson news, the governor signed a law yesterday permitting doctors to prescribe marijuana to help gravely ill patients alleviate pain and nausea.

House Democrat to Resign

Rep. Martin T. Meehan (D-Mass.) will submit his resignation May 9 and officially leave office July 1, setting up September primaries and an early October election to replace him.

After 14 years in Congress, Meehan is set to become chancellor of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell.

Among those who plan to run to replace Meehan are Niki Tsongas, the widow of former senator Paul Tsongas (D-Mass.); Lowell City Council member Eileen Donoghue (D); Democratic activist David O'Brien; and the Republican mayor of Lawrence, Michael Sullivan. The winner of the Democratic primary will be heavily favored to win the general election.

Meehan told the Associated Press that he would not endorse anyone in the race. "My role as chancellor is such that I don't think I should be endorsing anyone," he said.

A contested congressional race is something of a novelty in Massachusetts, where the all-Democratic delegation rarely faces a challenge or loses a member.

N.J. Democrats Back Clinton Bid

Gov. Jon S. Corzine (D) and 21 other New Jersey elected officials endorsed Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.) for president.

"She is someone who I know as a leader," said Corzine, who served New Jersey as a senator for six years and previously was the chief executive and chairman of Goldman Sachs. In his statement, Corzine cited Clinton's work on behalf of children and health care as the major reason for his endorsement.

The governor was joined by Democratic Reps. Robert E. Andrews and Frank Pallone Jr., former governors Brendan Byrne and Jim Florio, state Assembly Speaker Joe Roberts, and the state Democratic Party chairman, Joe Cryan.

Giuliani, Clinton Lead Fla. Poll

Clinton and former New York mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani hold commanding leads among Florida voters in their respective parties, according to a new Quinnipiac University poll.

Giuliani led the Republican field with 35 percent support, trailed by Sen. John McCain (Ariz.) at 15 percent. Former House speaker Newt Gingrich drew 11 percent and former U.S. senator and actor Fred Thompson had 6 percent, though neither has formally signaled they will run for president.

Clinton captured 36 percent of Democrats' support and was followed by former vice president Al Gore, Sen. Barack Obama (Ill.) and former senator John Edwards (N.C.), all of whom registered in the low to mid-teens.

Florida has not traditionally played a big role in the nominating process, but state lawmakers are considering moving its primaries to Feb. 5 or earlier.

The poll was conducted March 21-27 among 1,061 Florida voters and had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

REPUBLICAN PARTY FRED THOMPSON (Declared)

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Los Angeles Times

November 12, 2007 Monday Home Edition

HEADLINE: THE NATION; The animation of Fred Thompson; Punching up his tempo, gestures and volume, the GOP candidate tries to address concerns that he's, well, lazy.

BYLINE: Michael Finnegan, Times Staff Writer

DATELINE: FORT MILLS, S.C

BODY:

— Campaigning in New Hampshire and South Carolina, Republican presidential hopeful Fred Thompson raised his voice and shook his fists as he described his vision of an America true to conservative values.

The display of vigor last week was timely: Two months into his bid for the nomination, the former Tennessee senator is fighting to shake the image of a laid-back — even lazy — candidate who lacks the fervor of his rivals.

Thompson not only has adopted a forceful speaking style, he has taken a more aggressive approach toward other Republican candidates.

The push to put questions about vitality to rest is part of a larger effort to rebound from a spate of campaign stumbles, most recently his flights on the jet of a fundraiser who turned out to have a criminal record for selling drugs.

Once seen as a potential consensus candidate for social conservatives, Thompson is widely thought to have fallen short of expectations. Since the Sept. 5 launch of his campaign, his poll ratings have slid steadily — most sharply in New Hampshire, the first state to hold a primary. Conservative luminaries, including evangelical leader James C. Dobson and columnist George F. Will, have given scathing appraisals of his candidacy.

Thompson advisors had hoped the avuncular Southern manner that drove his success as a Hollywood actor would prove a key asset, as it still may. But critics and late-night comics have portrayed Thompson not as wise and seasoned but as lackadaisical and unprepared.

“The rap against Sen. Thompson is that he didn’t have the fire in the belly to be president,” said Whit Ayres, a Republican strategist who has not aligned himself with a candidate. “Less-than-energetic performances on the stump . . . have given credence to that criticism.”

On Tuesday, Thompson, 65, confronted the low-energy concern directly in Fort Mills, S.C., where Muzak has its headquarters. Speaking to supporters crammed into Beef O’Brady’s sports bar and restaurant, he suggested that the nation needs a leader with sound judgment, not raw passion.

“Ultimately,” he said, “the American people have to ask themselves: Do they want someone with their finger on the nuclear button who has fire in his belly?” He paused for effect. “Or her belly?” The crowd burst into laughter.

Joking aside, Thompson is trying to define himself as the purest conservative in the race. In Rochester, N.H., he toured a gun factory, a reminder that GOP campaign rivals Mitt Romney and Rudolph W. Giuliani have each backed gun-control measures, even if they now champion the 2nd Amendment affirmation of the right to bear arms.

“Do you test the accuracy manually or by machine?” Thompson, in safety goggles, asked a manager as they inspected triggers and rifle barrels.

Thompson calls terrorism his No. 1 priority. On a visit to Spartanburg, S.C., he left open the possibility of authorizing waterboarding, which simulates drowning, in interrogations. “It sounds awful to me,” he said. “But I assure you that if innocent lives are at stake, and there’s a ticking time bomb, and we have a terrorist, and our intelligence is good enough for us to be certain that he knows where that ticking time bomb is, we’re going to find out where it is.”

He supports the Iraq war but rarely brings it up.

Thompson has toughened his rhetoric on illegal immigration, denouncing “open borders” at every campaign stop. It is the main focus of his attacks on GOP rivals Giuliani and Romney.

Criticizing the former New York mayor for barring local inquiries on immigrants’ legal status, Thompson said: “It goes against national security, and yet that’s what Mayor Giuliani supports.”

“Where was Fred Thompson when he had the chance to tackle illegal immigration and fix a broken system?” asked Giuliani spokeswoman Maria Comella, citing Thompson’s Senate votes against tighter border controls and job verification measures.

Thompson accused Romney of switching stands on legalizing undocumented immigrants, a charge the former Massachusetts governor calls a distortion.

In his TV ads, Thompson portrays himself as a man of “common-sense conservative principles.” He highlights his support for tax cuts and his opposition to abortion.

Abortion opponents have been wary, however — all the more so since he said on Sunday that he could not run on his party’s 2004 platform calling for a constitutional amendment banning abortion. States should be free to decide the matter, he said.

Thompson is running his ads first in Iowa, where another Republican Southerner, former Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, has surpassed him in the polls. The state’s Jan. 3 caucuses open the presidential nomination contests. Romney holds a wide lead in the state. Thompson campaigned there Sunday and was to continue today.

But Thompson is banking most on the Jan. 19 primary in South Carolina, where he is in a tight race with Giuliani and Romney — his slide in the polls has been less dramatic there than elsewhere.

“South Carolina is the critical state for the Thompson campaign,” said Ayres, the GOP strategist. “If he can’t win there, it’s hard to imagine where he could win.”

At stops last week in Columbia, Spartanburg, Fort Mill and Greenville, Thompson played up his Southern roots as well as his more vigorous new style.

“Mighty good to be back in God’s country,” he told a breakfast crowd at Tommy’s Country Ham House in Greenville.

Thompson’s manner appealed to John Brown, 60, a retired memorial-and-flag salesman who came to hear him speak in Spartanburg amid the thick aroma of deep-fried onion rings and fries at the Beacon Drive-In. “He doesn’t get rattled,” Brown said.

Thompson advisors say the accelerated tempo and accompanying hand gestures in his speeches last week were not a calculated response to such observations, but the natural evolution of a candidate relatively new to the national stage.

“If you’re expecting somebody to leap off the stage and start singing show tunes,” said senior Thompson advisor Rich Galen, “you’re not going to get that.”

REPUBLICAN PARTY BROWNBACK (Withdrawn)

Copyright 2007 The Kansas City Star
October 20, 2007

HEADLINE: Brownback drops presidential bid
BYLINE: STEVE KRASKE, The Kansas City Star
DATELINE: TOPEKA

BODY:

Time to mow the yard for Sam Brownback, who saw too little of the green stuff in his presidential bid.

An emotional Brownback on Friday formally ended his bid at a statehouse news conference, saying his “Yellow Brick Road just came up short of the White House this time.”

Asked about running for governor in 2010, the Kansas Republican was explaining that he hadn’t thought of any other political races when his wife, Mary, piped up.

“The yard needs mowing first,” she said.

The senator agreed and told a gathering of supporters that he was leaving the race “a better man. Our ideas haven’t won yet, but neither will they be forgotten.”

Despite a solid conservative record, he said, he never gained traction with national media.

And “We’re out of money.”

Third-quarter fundraising didn’t even bring in \$1 million, just as expenses began to soar for the Jan. 3 Iowa caucuses.

Brownback didn’t rule out an endorsement of a rival, although former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani is not a likely recipient. The party, he predicted, will nominate an anti-abortion candidate. “I don’t see him winning the nomination,” he said

Analysts said Brownback’s supporters in Iowa could move to former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and push Giuliani to third there.

Brownback wouldn’t comment, either, on becoming a vice-presidential candidate. Some in Kansas dismiss that possibility because Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius could then pick his replacement.

Brownback apologized for missing nearly 35 percent of Senate votes this session while on the campaign trail.

Asked whether he would have done anything differently, Brownback mentioned his moderate stand on immigration. Both he and President Bush lost conservative allies for supporting amnesty for illegal immigrants.

“I wouldn’t debate immigration in the middle of an election cycle,” he said. “That one was hard.”

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REPUBLICAN PARTY GILMORE (Withdrawn)

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Orlando Sentinel (Florida)

July 15, 2007 Sunday FINAL

HEADLINE: Ex-Virginia Gov. Gilmore drops out of GOP race
BODY:

RICHMOND, Va. — Former Virginia Gov. Jim Gilmore ended his long-shot campaign for presidency Saturday. The 57-year-old Republican said in a statement that his late start, near the end of April, and the front-loaded primary schedule

“have made it impractical to continue to pursue this path towards further public service.” “I have come to believe that it takes more than a positive vision for our nation’s future to successfully compete for the presidency,” Gilmore said. Elected governor of Virginia in 1997, Gilmore served the one term allowed by state law. Before that, he was Virginia’s attorney general. President Bush appointed him chairman of the Republican National Committee, a job Gilmore held for about a year.

CONTACT: Compiled from wire reports

REPUBLICAN PARTY T. THOMPSON (Withdrawn)

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Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (Wisconsin)

August 13, 2007 Monday Final Edition

HEADLINE: Thompson ends his quest; Presidential bid is over, but he'll continue his public work, he says

BYLINE: MEG JONES, Staff, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
BODY:

Despite visiting every Iowa county and pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into his presidential quest, former Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson on Sunday dropped out of the race for the White House.

Thompson made the announcement one day after finishing a disappointing sixth in the Republican Iowa straw poll won by former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney.

"I have no regrets about running," Thompson said in a statement issued by his campaign Sunday night. He thanked Iowans, his campaign volunteers and his financial contributors for their support.

"I felt my record as governor of Wisconsin and secretary of Health and Human Services gave me the experience I needed to serve as president, but I respect the decision of the voters. I am leaving the campaign trail today, but I will not leave the challenges of improving health care and welfare in America."

Before the straw poll was held Saturday, Thompson had said repeatedly that, if he didn't finish in the top two, his campaign was likely to end. In June, Thompson wrote on his campaign Web site that candidates finishing in the bottom half of the straw poll should withdraw and support the rest of the Republican candidates.

Thompson netted just 7% of the vote in the 11-person field.

Romney scored about 31% of the vote, to outpace former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, who had 18%. Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback was third with 15%.

Thompson had focused on doing well at the Iowa straw poll, banking on a first- or second-place finish that would propel his ability to raise funds, garner national media attention and give a boost to his campaign momentum.

"If we could have willed a victory, we would have," Steve Grubbs, senior adviser to Thompson's campaign, said Sunday.

"No candidate is more experienced than Governor Thompson and no candidate worked harder, but sometimes the dynamics just aren't there to bring about a victory."

Traveling the state

While the straw poll lost some of its cachet this summer when two big names – former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani and Arizona Sen. John McCain – said they wouldn't compete, Thompson spent much of his time recently canvassing Iowa.

He boasted of having visited each of Iowa's 99 counties, many of them in an Iowa-built Winnebago in the last month.

On Saturday, his transportation choice was decidedly more Wisconsin-built as Thompson roared onto the Iowa State University campus where the polling was held in a borrowed Harley-Davidson Fat Boy.

Thompson earlier had said he would spend roughly \$800,000 on his Iowa bid, including about \$200,000 out of his pocket in the form of loans to his campaign. Last month, he'd reported raising \$890,000 in all for his campaign, with nearly \$487,000 raised during the second quarter.

Now that he's out of the running, Thompson plans to return to the private sector and non-profit work after a brief time off.

Ran on his record

In his campaign, Thompson stressed he was a "reliable conservative" with a successful record as Wisconsin governor.

At a debate in May in California, Thompson said of himself: "I vetoed 1,900 things. I reduced taxes by \$16.5 billion. I'm from Wisconsin, a blue state, and I won four consecutive times. I still have a very high popularity appeal. And I'm the one that started welfare reform, reduced the welfare caseload in the United States and the state of Wisconsin by 93 percent. And I believe that kind of a record will attract Democrats and independents, if you stand up and start talking on principles and ideas."

He also portrayed himself as the candidate with a plan for Iraq – decentralizing Iraq and requiring the Iraqi legislature to take a vote of approval on the U.S. presence there.

----- The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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