

MEMORANDUM

TO: ROMNEY FOR PRESIDENT LEADERSHIP
FROM: ALEX GAGE
STRATEGIST
DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2007
RE: GOV. ROMNEY IN THE POLLS

In light of recent media coverage of our advertising campaign, I thought I would take this opportunity to let you know where Gov. Romney stands today in the polls, and what we should expect to see over the next few months.

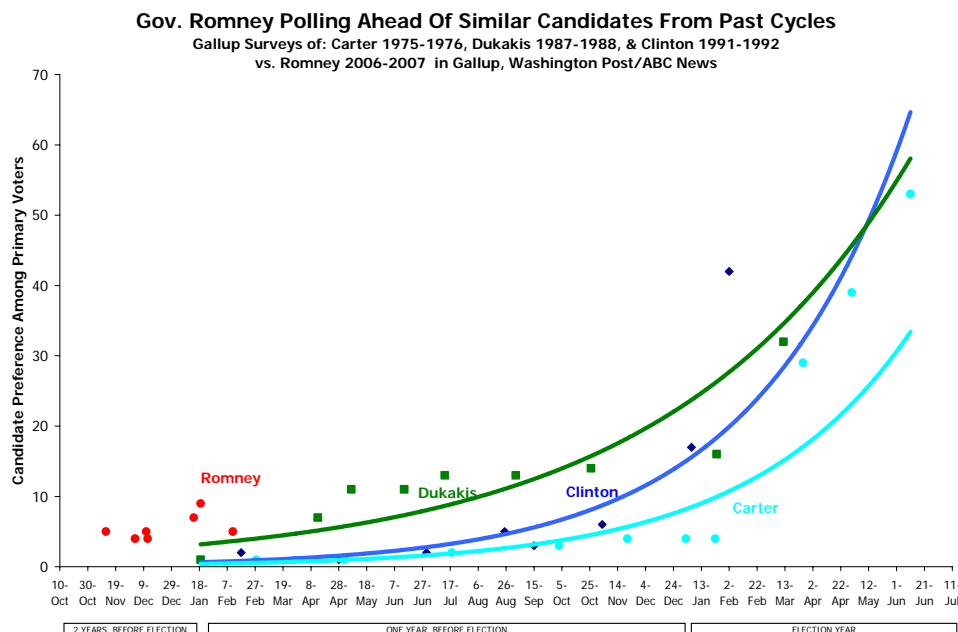
VOTERS ARE NOT YET TUNED IN TO THE 2008 ELECTION.

According to the latest poll from the Pew Research Center, just 24% of Americans are following news about the 2008 presidential election "very closely." Far more voters are paying attention to Iraq, the recent cold winter weather, and even the Super Bowl than the presidential election. At this point in the cycle, national polls are entirely a reflection of name identification, not voters' views of the candidates. Remember that in late February 2003, Joe Lieberman was leading the field for the Democratic presidential nomination.

We should therefore not expect our new ads, which are running in just a few early primary states, to have any impact on voters' awareness of Gov. Romney nationwide.

BUT, GOV. ROMNEY IS BETTER-POSITIONED THAN PAST SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES.

As you can see in the chart below, where Gov. Romney's poll standing is plotted in red, Gov. Romney has more support in national polls at this stage of the cycle than other small-state governors who ran and won the nomination did.



Carter, Dukakis, and Clinton were all governors of small states who began their campaigns with low national exposure and went on to win their party's nomination. At this point in 1975, Carter was polling at 1%; in 1987, Dukakis was polling at 1%; in 1991, Clinton was at 2%. In the latest Gallup poll, Gov. Romney polled at 5%—an impressive level given that he remains almost entirely unknown on the national stage. It's also useful to remember that John McCain was unknown on the national stage in the spring of 1999, polling at just 3%, and didn't begin to attract any significant support until late October.

THE MORE VOTERS FIND OUT ABOUT GOV. ROMNEY, THE MORE THEY LIKE.

Gov. Romney has a strong favorability rating among voters who have heard about him—a recent Quinnipiac poll found that 83% of Republicans who have heard of Gov. Romney have a favorable opinion of him. As more voters tune in to the election over the coming months, we can expect to see his name identification rise—but we should not expect it to reach the levels of candidates like Giuliani or McCain who have been in the national spotlight for years anytime soon.

GOV. ROMNEY IS ALSO WELL-POSITIONED IN KEY STATES.

Now that we are on the air in early primary states, we may see slight improvements in Gov. Romney's name identification there. But we should not ignore the fact that Gov. Romney is already better-positioned in early primary states than past successful candidates were at similar points.

According to the American Research Group, Gov. Romney's support in Iowa rose from 6% to 11% between December 2006 and January 2007, and his support in New Hampshire rose from 9% to 20%. At this point in 1991, only 13% of New Hampshire voters had even heard of Bill Clinton, and at this point in 1987, Dukakis was polling at less than one percent in Iowa.

JUST AS WE'VE EXPECTED, GOV. ROMNEY'S SUPPORT WILL GROW SLOWLY OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

With this year's campaigns beginning earlier than ever, keep in mind that the race is a marathon, not a sprint. Gov. Romney is already well-positioned compared to previous candidates who came from similar backgrounds to win their party's nomination, but we should be careful not to expect to see movement in the polls until voters seriously begin to pay attention to the race.

Observers in the media will inevitably question why our numbers don't immediately rise after being up on the airwaves, but we must remain patient. Remember that our ads are only airing in a few states, and as history shows us, nationwide polling will continue to reflect name identification until voters start to pay attention to the election.

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