



Iowa Caucus Youth Turnout – 4%, Overwhelmingly Supported Paul, Provided Candidate 1/3 of Total Votes

About 18,000 Iowans Under the Age of 30 Participated in Last Night's Caucuses

MEDFORD/SOMERVILLE, Mass. – Four percent of eligible Iowa voters under the age of 30 participated in last night's presidential caucuses, according to preliminary analysis by The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement ([CIRCLE](http://www.civicyouth.org)). Representative Ron Paul (R-TX) drew the support of 48% of the under-30 caucus-goers, with Rick Santorum coming in second among young people with 23%; Mitt Romney drew just 14% of the young voters. (See Table 2)

According to CIRCLE's estimate, approximately 8,800 young people turned out for Ron Paul in last night's caucus. In comparison, at least 30,000 young people turned out for Barack Obama in the 2008 Iowa Caucuses, contributing to his victory there. Almost twice as many young voters supported Obama in 2008 as supported all the 2012 Republican candidates combined. The 48% support for Rep. Paul was the highest level of support for any candidate among any age group in yesterday's Caucuses. (Mitt Romney won 33% of the votes of ages 65 and older, the second strongest concentration of support.) Youth represented a typical proportion of all the Iowa Caucus-goers in 2012 at 15%.

"For the second year in a row, youth played an important role in the Iowa Caucuses," said CIRCLE Director Peter Levine. "In 2008, they turned out strong and gave their support to both parties' Iowa Caucus winners, Barack Obama and Mike Huckabee. In 2012, they turned out at a more typical rate but threw such a high proportion of their votes to Ron Paul that he finished close. It is statistically unlikely that the young Paul supporters of 2012 had caucused for Obama in 2008. It is more likely that a different group was mobilized in each year."

Because of lack of available data, the CIRCLE turnout estimates do not include young people who participated in yesterday's uncontested Democratic Caucuses.

The 2012 youth turnout was the same as in 2004 (the last year in which only one party had a competitive race). In the two recent years that had both Republican and Democratic competitive races, the youth turnout was 13% in 2008 and 3% in 2000. See Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Iowa Presidential Caucus Participation
17-to-29-Year-Old Citizens**

Year	Youth Turnout Rate	Number of Youth Who Participated	Youth as a Share of Caucus Goers
2012***	4%	18,338	15%
2008*	13%	65,230	18%
2004**	4%	20,740	17%
2000*	3%	14,940	9%

1996***	3%	12,539	13%
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* Combines the Democratic and Republican figures. For separate results by party, see Table 3

**2004 statistics only include the Democratic Caucus. There was no Republican Caucus in 2004, because President George W. Bush was an incumbent and the GOP nomination.

***2012 and 1996 statistics only include the Republican Caucus. In these years, there was/is no Democratic Caucus, because there was an incumbent president from the Democratic Party that took the nomination.

Source: The share of Caucus participants is obtained from the 2012, 2008, and 2004 IA entrance/exit poll conducted by Edison Research, and the 2000 and 1996 IA entrance/exit poll conducted by Voter News Services. The numbers of votes cast are obtained from the Associated Press at 6:20 am Eastern Time on January 4. The numbers of votes cast in the past election years were obtained from various sources including the Washington Post archives (1996), Federal Election Commission (2000 and 2004), and CNN.com (2008). Estimated voter turnout is obtained by taking the estimated number of votes cast by young people and dividing it by the estimated population of the 17-to-29-year-old citizens from the Current Population Survey (1995-2011). See p. 2 for definitions.

Table 2 - Iowa Youth Vote Choice by Party, 17-to-29 Year-Old

	<i>Bachmann</i>	<i>Gingrich</i>	<i>Huntsman</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Perry</i>	<i>Romney</i>	<i>Santorum</i>
Iowa	2%	5%	1%	48%	8%	13%	23%

Source: National Election Pool Iowa Entrance Poll 2012

Comparisons to past years must be made with caution, because turnout is affected by the date of the caucuses and by the nature of the Democratic and Republican presidential campaigns, which are different in every cycle. For example, in 2008 both the Republicans and Democrats held caucuses, but in 2012 only the Republicans held a competitive caucus. Table 3 provides estimates of youth participation in Iowa caucuses by party and year.

**Table 3 – Iowa Presidential Caucus Participation By Party
17-to-29-Year-Old Citizens**

<i>Political Party</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Caucus-Goers</i>	<i>Share of Caucus-Goers by Party</i>
Democratic	2012	N/A	N/A
	2008	52,580	22%
	2004	20,740	17%
	2000	N/A	N/A%
	1996	N/A	N/A
Republican	2012	18,338	15%
	2008	12,650	11%
	2004	N/A	N/A
	2000	N/A	N/A
	1996	12,539	13%

Definitions

Youth: For the purpose of this press release and estimation of youth participation in the Iowa Caucus, we define “youth” as citizens who were eligible to vote on January 3, 2012, as permitted by state election law.

Number of youth who participated: An estimate of how many youth participated in caucuses or primaries.

Youth share: An estimate of the number of young people who participated in the caucus as a percentage of the number of all people who participated.

Youth turnout rate: An estimate of the number of young people who participated in caucuses or cast ballots as a percentage of the total number of young people who were eligible to participate on January 3, 2012.

The youth turnout rate is the best indicator of how young Americans are engaging in the political process. The other statistics—the sheer number of youth participants and the youth share of the electorate—can change because of factors unrelated to youth engagement.

To sign-up to receive copies of CIRCLE's cutting-edge research on young Americans and next-day voter turnout estimates for the 2012 elections, please email amy@lunamediaigroup.com.

To obtain more extensive information about Iowa's young voters and historical voting trends, click [here](#).

CIRCLE (www.civicyouth.org) is a nonpartisan, independent, academic research center that studies young people in politics and presents detailed data on young voters in all 50 states. CIRCLE was founded in 2001 with a generous gift from the Pew Charitable Trusts and is part of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University. CIRCLE's reputation for reliable, independent, timely research has been hailed by experts in the field of civic partnership, such as Harvard University professor Robert Putnam who said CIRCLE had brought "the best and most serious research to one place."

The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service (<http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/>) is a national leader whose model and research are setting the standard for higher education's role in civic engagement education. Serving every school of Tufts University, Tisch College creates an enduring culture that prepares students to be lifelong active citizens.

Tufts University (www.tufts.edu), located on three Massachusetts campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville and Grafton, and in Talloires, France, is recognized as one of the premier research universities in the United States. Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the university's schools is widely encouraged.