



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, March 14, 2012

CONTACT: Amy Steele, Luna Media Group

amy@lunamedia.com or 208-301-0846 (cell)

Youth Turnout in Alabama 8% , Mississippi 5% *Santorum Wins Youth Vote in Both States*

MEDFORD/SOMERVILLE, Mass. – Eight percent of eligible voters under the age of 30 in Alabama and five percent in Mississippi participated in yesterday's primaries, according to exclusive preliminary analysis by the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement ([CIRCLE](http://www.civicyouth.org)).

Former Sen. Rick Santorum was the overwhelming choice of young Republican voters in Alabama and Mississippi with 41% and 45% of the under-30 vote, respectively.

- **Vote Choice by Young Voters in Alabama Primary:**
Santorum 41%
Gingrich followed with 28%
Romney 16%
Paul 12%
- **Vote Choice by Young Voters in Mississippi Primary:**
Santorum 45%
Romney 24%
Gingrich 22%
Paul 9%

"Santorum performed poorly among young people in the early caucuses and primaries, as he did in his last Pennsylvania Senate race," said CIRCLE director Peter Levine. "But he has improved his showing since Michigan, probably on the strength of socially conservative youth."

The difference in youth turnout in Mississippi between 2012 (5%) and 1996 (3%) is within a margin of error. While no two primary years are the same, we compare the 2012 caucus to the 1996, since in both cases only one party had a competitive Republican primary race. No youth turnout information is available from the 1996 Alabama primary.

Compared to 2008, when youth turnout was 19% in Alabama and 14% in Mississippi with both Republican and Democratic competitive primaries, youth turnout was down this year.

61,000 youth participated in yesterday's Alabama Republican primary, and 22,000 in the Mississippi primary. In the 2008 Democratic primaries, then-candidate Obama received 44,000 votes from young people in Alabama and 42,000 from youth in Mississippi.

Because of a lack of available data, the CIRCLE turnout estimates for 2012 do not include young people who participated in yesterday's Democratic primaries. Comparisons to past years must be made with caution, because turnout is affected by the date of the primaries and by the nature of the Democratic and Republican presidential campaigns, which are different in every cycle.

More details on youth participation in the Alabama and Mississippi primaries can be found [here](#).

CIRCLE has also calculated cumulative youth support for 2012 Republican candidates compared to cumulative youth participation in 2008, which is available [here](#).

Definitions

Youth: For the purpose of this press release and estimation of youth participation in the Mississippi and Alabama primaries, we define "youth" as citizens who were eligible to vote on March 13, 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 primary as a percentage of the number of all people who participated.

Youth turnout rate: An estimate of the number of young people who cast ballots as a percentage of the total number of young people who were eligible to participate on March 13, 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@lunamediaGROUP.com.

Click [here](#) to obtain more extensive information about Mississippi's young voters and historical voting trends, and click [here](#) for Alabama.

###

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.