

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: John Garst

February 20, 2012

404-819-3041

Romney Regains Lead by 2% in Michigan GOP Presidential Race

Romney 32%- Santorum 30% - Gingrich 9%- Paul 7%

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Mitt Romney has regained the lead in a Mitchell/Rosetta Stone Poll of Michigan conducted for MIRS (Michigan Information & Research Service). The two front runners are now in a statistical dead heat with Romney (32%) having a 2% lead over Rick Santorum (30%) while Newt Gingrich (9%) and Ron Paul (7%) are far behind in a trial Republican presidential ballot test. About one in five voters remain undecided (22%). Eight days ago, Santorum had a 9% lead and twelve days before that Romney led by 15% in a topsy-turvy race.

The telephone survey of 420 likely 2012 Republican Presidential Primary voters was conducted jointly by Mitchell Research & Communications, Inc. of East Lansing, Michigan and Rosetta Stone Communications of Atlanta, Georgia on Monday, February 20, 2012, and has a margin of error of + or – 4.7%. It was an automated IVR (Interactive Voice Response) Poll.

“Reports show Romney is spending twice as much on media as Santorum and it would seem as though it is having an impact. Romney has turned the race around and has gone back into the lead by 2%. Romney has made big inroads with conservatives that had gone to Santorum in the last poll. Santorum’s lead among Tea Party voters has been cut from 15% to 5%, his lead with Evangelical Christians has been cut from 16% to 11%, and his huge lead among those that say they are “very conservative” has been cut in half, from 31% to 15%. The strong negative ads being run in Michigan defining Santorum as a big spender have had a huge impact. Romney’s message and resources have put him back into the lead,” Steve Mitchell, president of Mitchell Research & Communications, Inc. said.

John Garst, President of Rosetta Stone Communications in Atlanta, said "The campaign in Michigan remains extremely close; however recent polls conducted over the last few days indicate that there has been a fundamental momentum shift back to Mitt Romney."

"Romney's lead is also being fueled by the 25% of the voters who say they are "more likely" to vote for Romney because he was born and raised in Michigan. With those voters, Romney leads Santorum by a whopping 40% (59%-19%) while he trails by 11% (34%-23%) among those who say it would make them "less likely" to vote for him based on that information or that it would make "no difference." Clearly, being from Michigan is a huge factor for Romney," Mitchell said.

Highlights of the poll were as follows:

The polling shows that two-thirds of the voters are self-identified Republicans (69%) while about one third of all voters are either Democrats (18%) or independents (9%) and 4% said they were from another party. These percentages are very consistent with percentages from the last competitive GOP presidential primary in Michigan in 2000.

Romney has gone from being behind by 10% among Republicans to being 4% ahead. He has also cut the deficit among men from 23% to just 2%.

In order to be surveyed, voters had to pass the following screen:

In the upcoming February 28th Presidential Primary you can either vote for a field of Republicans or you can vote in the Democratic Primary for Barack Obama. Whichever primary you vote in, you have to declare yourself to be a member of that party. The fact that you declare yourself to be a Republican or Democrat will be public information that anyone can get. The list of those who vote in the Democratic or Republican Primary will be made available to list vendors. Knowing this, are you definitely voting, probably voting, not sure yet, or definitely not voting. Those who said they were definitely not voting were not surveyed.

Only those saying they were voting in the Republican Primary were surveyed.

(Rosetta Stone Communications is a political consulting and polling firm located in Atlanta, Georgia. Rosetta Stone Communications has been accurately polling state and federal races for media agencies and political campaigns since 1997.)