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GOP Presidential Straw Poll Is A Big Success

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**Maryland GOP Presidential Straw Poll Is A Big Success
Grassroots Candidate Wins Surprise Upset**

ANNAPOLIS— After eleven days of presidential straw poll ballots cast at the Maryland Republican Party's State Fair booth, Congressman Ron Paul (R-Texas) was announced last night as the winner.

The Maryland Republican Party's first-ever presidential straw poll at the State Fair resulted in nearly 1,000 Marylanders casting a vote for their favorite Republican candidate for president. The straw poll was open to all voting age adults regardless of party affiliation, and the voter had to be present at the booth. The campaigns of all nine presidential candidates appearing on the ballot were invited to have a representative at the State Fair booth at all times. While most campaigns did not have a representative present, the Ron Paul campaign had full representation for all eleven days.

Congressman Ron Paul came in first place with 263 votes, Mayor Rudy Giuliani was second with 220 votes, and Senator Fred Thompson received 188 votes, which garnered the third place spot. The rest of the votes were cast as follows: 89 votes for Governor Mitt Romney, 54 votes for Senator John McCain, 35 votes for Governor Mike Huckabee, 17 votes for Speaker Newt Gingrich (write-in), 16 votes for Congressman Tom Tancredo, 12 votes for Senator Sam Brownback, 3 votes for Congressman Duncan Hunter, and 3 votes for Governor Bob Ehrlich (write-in). There were 11 other write-in votes for individual people. There were also a number of spoiled ballots that were not counted.

Dr. Jim Pelura, Chairman of the Maryland Republican Party, released the following statement:

“When we came up with the idea of holding our first-ever presidential straw poll at the State Fair, we never expected such a large turnout. We were extremely pleased by the steady flow of people casting a vote in the straw poll, signing our petitions opposing the gas tax increase, sales tax increase, and illegal immigration, and picking up a “Don't Blame Me...I Voted For Ehrlich” bumper sticker. We heard loud and clear that Marylanders are not happy with the direction of our state under one-party rule.”

Chris Cavey, First Vice Chairman of the Maryland Republican Party and Co-Chairman of the MDGOP's State Fair Planning Committee, stated the following:

“The final vote showing Ron Paul won is a lesson for all campaigns of how grassroots politics can make all the difference. The Paul campaign repeatedly e-mailed their base of support to turn out at the State Fair to cast a vote for Dr. Paul, and in doing so, demonstrated that a small organized operation can beat the odds.” Cavey continued, “The Maryland Republican Party's booth at the State Fair was a huge success. By contrast, the Democrat Party's booth was a ghost town. Where were the Democrats? They were at our booth signing our petitions opposing tax increases.”

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