

**Equifax Credit Watch™ Gold with 3-in-1 Monitoring**

- Unlimited Equifax Credit Reports™
- Alerts to key changes to your credit file
- Up to \$20,000 in identity theft insurance

**EQUIFAX**

**GET PROTECTED** ▶



**PRINT THIS**

Powered by **Clickability**

**Click to Print**

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

## McCain fares poorly, Huckabee well in S.C. straw poll

- McCain near bottom of the pack in South Carolina straw poll
- McCain did not attend Republican conventions Saturday
- Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee sees gain in support

From CNN's Lauren Kornreich

**WASHINGTON (CNN)** -- The weekend before Arizona Sen. John McCain makes his official presidential announcement in South Carolina, polls show he's not popular with local Republican voters.

The Republican parties in Greenville, Spartanburg and Richland counties held conventions Saturday, where the candidates had the chance to speak and voters participated in polls. McCain did not attend and opted to send former Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating to appear in his place. Spartanburg County Republican Party Chairman Rick Beltram blamed McCain's absence for his poor showing.

"I thought that McCain missing these South Carolina conventions was a major error in his strategy," Beltram said. "I don't understand what [McCain's strategists] were thinking. McCain is coming here next week to announce that he's running for president, and the newspapers have stuff about him doing so poorly in the straw polls. It is beyond me what their strategy was."

"He was just in the state on Wednesday and will be back there next week," McCain spokesman Kevin McLaughlin said. "And he looks forward to many more visits in the coming months."

In Spartanburg County, the candidates spoke and were evaluated on five different issues. McCain finished last among six candidates. Beltram said Keating's speech was more of an endorsement for McCain than discussion about the issues.

Most of the other presidential candidates made their rounds at the three GOP conventions in South Carolina. Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and Chicago businessman John Cox appeared before all three groups.

Among the 421 voters in Greenville County, Romney finished first with 132 votes, followed closely by Huckabee with 111. California Rep. Duncan Hunter got 87, Giuliani had 35 and Brownback received 19. McCain received 17 votes. Colorado Rep. Tom Tancredo had five votes, former U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson got three, and Texas Rep. Ron Paul and former Virginia Gov. Jim Gilmore each got one. Only candidates who have established presidential exploratory committees were considered in the poll.

So far, Huckabee has done better in South Carolina than in nationwide polling.

"It shows that if you work hard for votes, people respond and will vote for you," Greenville County Republican Chairman Samuel Harms said.

In Spartanburg, each of the candidates gave a 10-minute speech and was evaluated on how he handled five different issues. The issues discussed were the war on terror and war in Iraq, border security and illegal immigration, fair trade, making President Bush's tax cuts permanent and social issues like abortion and gay marriage.

About 700 people participated and awarded the candidates one, three or five points. Huckabee finished first with 3,522 points, Giuliani came in second with 3,161, followed by Hunter with 3,090 and Romney with 2,972. Brownback earned 2,931 points, Cox had 2,456 and McCain got 2,027.

In Richland County, 126 delegates participated in the straw poll. Romney won with 39.7 percent of the vote. Brownback had 13.5 percent, Giuliani got 11.9 percent, and both McCain and Huckabee got 10.3 percent. Hunter got 7.9 percent and Tancredo received 3.2 percent. Cox and a write-in President Bush both received 1.6 percent.

"When it's all said and done, South Carolina is still wide open," Beltram said. "Anyone can move up. We'll see lots of effort put here. Now, no one is capturing the voters' heart and soul."

Find this article at:

<http://www.cnn.com/2007/POLITICS/04/21/s.c.straw.poll/index.html>

**Click to Print**

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

© 2008 Cable News Network.