

## Support among county chairmen shows Thompson will “play in Illinois”

Posted by: dugwilson | August 16th, 2007 | Category: Uncategorized

Offers to “bus in ” Romney votes to the State Fair may have given him the win in the Illinois Republican straw poll, but strong support among Republican county chairmen shows that Fred Thompson appeals to Illinois voters.

*Springfield Journal Register* <http://www.sj-r.com/extras/breaking/index.asp>

### Romney, Thompson, Paul top GOP straw poll

Last Updated 8/16/2007 6:26:41 PM

Results from the Illinois Republican Party’s straw poll at the Illinois State Fairgrounds gave top ratings to three candidates: Mitt Romney, Fred Thompson, Ron Paul and Rudy Giuliani.

Romney received 40.4 percent of the straw poll ballots to Thompson’s 19.96 percent, Paul’s 18.9 percent and Giuliani’s 11.6 percent.

Others receiving support were: John McCain 4.1 percent; Mike Huckabee, 3.0 percent, Sam Brownback 1.1 percent; Duncan Hunter 0.7 percent; and Tom Tancredo, 0.33 percent.

Organizers said 922 people took part in the poll. Participants did not need to be registered Republicans, but they did need to be Illinois residents.

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### Thompson gets most votes from county chairmen Last Updated 8/16/2007 6:23:30 PM

Illinois Republican county chairmen like Fred Thompson as the GOP’s presidential candidate — even though he isn’t in the race yet.

With the Republican Party of Illinois conducting a presidential straw poll at the Illinois State Fairgrounds today, the Republican County Chairmen’s Association took a vote of its own this morning in a meeting at the Crowne Plaza.

Results of that vote, which was by secret ballot, were 22 for Thompson, a former U.S. senator from Tennessee who has not yet announced he will seek the presidential nomination; 13 for former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani; 9 for former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney; 2 for former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee; 1 for U.S. Rep. Duncan Hunter; and 1 for U.S. Sen. John McCain.

J.C. Kowa, the chairman of Richland County Republicans and secretary of the chairmen’s group, said 53 or 54 of the state’s GOP county chairman attended the meeting, and the vote was not binding.

“We knew that the state party was going to do a straw poll at the fairgrounds,” he said. The organization was “just curious” to see how chairmen as a group would compare with the public voting at the fair, he said.

The leader of the chairmen’s group is Randy Pollard, Fayette County GOP chairman.

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