NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Rep. Mike Pence wins Values Voter straw poll

Adelle M. Banks Religion News Service | Sep. 20, 2010

WASHINGTON -- Rep. Mike Pence, a fast-rising conservative firebrand from Indiana, was the surprise winner of a straw poll on Saturday (Sept. 18) among 17 possible Republican presidential candidates at the 2010 Values Voter Summit.

Pence beat out better known conservative leaders, including former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, to win with 24 percent in a vote sponsored the political arm of the Washington-based Family Research Council.

Coming in second was former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, with 22 percent. Huckabee, a former Southern Baptist pastor, won the straw poll the two previous years.

Family Research Council president Tony Perkins said Pence's "outstanding" speech on Friday at the summit, which has drawn some 2,000 social conservatives, was well-received. Palin, who was invited to speak, did not attend.

"I just attribute it to Congressman Pence's ability to communicate a very strong, conservative message," Perkins said. "I think Congressman Pence has been out challenging both parties on their fiscal policy and taking strong stands on social issues."

But Perkins noted that Huckabee was close on Pence's heels in the straw poll, which had a total of 723 responses. "Mike Huckabee, I think, finished very strongly," he said.

Falling behind were former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, who came in third with 13 percent; former House Speaker Newt Gingrich with 10 percent; and Palin with 7 percent.

Pence, the former chairman of the House Republican Study Committee, wasted no time in forming a connection with the religious conservatives at the summit when he took his turn at the podium Friday.

"I'm a Christian, a conservative and a Republican, in that order," he said, garnering applause.

He also argued against those who think the GOP should shy away from social issues as it focuses on the economy.

"Men and women, we must demand, here and now, that the leaders of the Republican Party stand for life, traditional marriage and religious liberty without apology," he said.

Attendees were asked to pick their choice for the next Republican presidential nominee; President Obama, the presumed 2012 Democratic nominee, was not listed on the ballot.

Two GOP leaders from Minnesota, Rep. Michele Bachmann and Gov. Tim Pawlenty, asked to have their names withdrawn from the straw poll ballot.

The straw poll found that the top issues determining the choice of candidate were abortion, government spending, "repeal of Obamacare," protection of religious liberty and national security.

The Next Step FORWARD [1]

DONATE NOW [1]

Enjoy this article?
Help support more like it by **donating today!** [1]

Source URL (retrieved on *07/07/2015 - 14:53*): http://ncronline.org/news/politics/rep-mike-pence-wins-values-voter-straw-poll

Links:
[1] http://ncrnews.org/webathon/donate/article-end