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Santorum loses ground. Romney has reclaimed Michigan by 7.91 points after the CNN debate.

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Romney has erased Santorum's 3.62 point lead within a week. Santorum & Romney's debate performances had a significant impact, solidifying Romney's base while peeling away some of Santorum's. A deeper analysis however, shows that Santorum still has support among the core bases of Michigan's Republican vote and can still win Michigan and a majority of its congressional district delegates.

The Michigan Republican primary has fluctuated wildly within the past week. Former Governor Mitt Romney has benefited from an unexpectedly poor debate performance by former Senator Rick Santorum. The shifting narrative to social issues coupled with joint attacks from Governor Romney and Congressman Ron Paul has Romney trading places with Santorum to take the lead in Michigan. While the Romney campaign has gained footing, Santorum has maintained his lead among a number of key constituency groups that will make the Michigan election as competitive as the Iowa Caucus.

Overall, Mitt Romney has 7.91 point margin (38.75% to 30.84%) over Rick Santorum. Newt Gingrich is third with 9.28%, Ron Paul is fourth with 8.88% and 12.24% of the respondents were undecided. Our poll had 2,264 respondents with a margin of error of 2.06% with a confidence interval level of 95%.

Candidate Romney has grown his voter share and margin against Santorum among the following constituency groups:

- Republican voters over the age of 66,
- Somewhat Conservative Republicans,
- Moderate Republicans,
- Non-Evangelical Christians,
- Voters who believe the Economy is the priority issue of the campaign,
- Non-military intervention leaning (Doves) within the Republican party, and
- Non-Tea party Republicans.



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Romney has gained a solid footing among a number of constituency groups that he was tied or trailing Santorum in from our last poll. These groups include:

- Catholics,
- Voters who believe reducing the national debt is the primary issue,
- Voters who believe economic issues are more important than social and faith related issues,
- Voters ages 51 to 65.

While down in the overall numbers, Santorum still has positive margins within key cross tab groups of Republican voters including:

- Social conservatives,
- Evangelical Christians,
- Voters who believe national security are the priority issues of the campaign,
- Voters who believe social, faith and economic issues are equally important,
- Tea Party members voters, and
- Republican voters ages 31 to 50.

The CNN debate played a major factor in the resulting shift in Michigan. We asked survey respondents did the candidate's performance in the CNN Presidential Debate affect their choice. 40.52% of our respondents were moved in an affirmative direction. Of respondents who said that the candidate's debate performance confirmed their selection, Mitt Romney was the choice of 53.42% of these voters. Rick Santorum was the choice of only 20.93% of these voters, a deficit of 32.49 points. For respondents who were moved to change their choice based on the debate, Romney gained 26.06% of this shifting population, while Santorum was third at 17.61%. Newt Gingrich benefited from the debate, by getting 21.13% of this voting group. Of voters who weren't affected by the candidate's debate performance or didn't see the debate, Santorum is the clear leader. Santorum leads Romney by 5.87 points (39.64% to 33.77%) among those whose choice wasn't affected by the debate. Santorum lead Romney by 8.29 points with voters who didn't see the debate at all.

In wake of the growing cultural, social and faith based discussions that have taken place over the last 4 weeks; we polled respondents to determine which basket of problems is more important in their consideration of a candidate, faith and social issues or economic issues. Santorum naturally leads among voters who believe faith and social issues are more important (52.22% to 21.66% for Romney, a margin of 30.56 points) and Romney naturally lead with voter who believe economic issues trump social issues (48.88% to 18.96%, a margin of 29.92 points). What is significant is the voter group who believe faith, social and economic issues are equally important. Rick Santorum is leading within this group, with 36.66% of the voter share to 33.46% for Gov. Romney, a margin of 3.2 points. This constituency group comprised 24.40% of our respondent pool. This voter group can help Santorum gain ground if he is able to tie the narrative of Christian and family values to economic principles and policies to address jobs. Romney can take this group from Santorum if he can get block him from pivoting to a more balanced campaign narrative.



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We believe any solid assessment of the Michigan electorate must be deeper due to the complexities of our population and the paths they live. Based on this need for a deeper analysis, we segmented a number of key statistical cross tabulation groups for analysis. Some of those highlights include:

Ideology

41.35% of Michigan likely Republican primary voters are self-identified as very conservative. Rick Santorum is maintaining a commanding lead with this important constituency, 42.35% to 31.34%. Santorum has an 11.01 point margin, which has decreased 16.66 points from our February 16th poll, where Santorum had a 27.67 point margin. Romney has grown his lead among somewhat conservative and moderate Republican primary voters. Romney has a 48.11% to 25.34% margin (22.77 points, an increase of 12.43 points) among somewhat conservative voters and a 43.76% to 18.59% margin (25.17 points, an increase of 8.51 points) among moderate voters.

Religious affiliation

38.38% of Republican primary voters self-identified as Evangelical Christian. Rick Santorum has a decreasing lead among the Evangelical Christians voter base. Santorum vote support has dropped 9.88 points from 47.41% to 37.53%. Gov. Romney's Evangelical voter base has increased by 8.13 points from 27.65% during our February 16th poll to 37.53%. Romney has gained voter support in Santorum home base, Catholic voters. Romney has moved from a statistical tie with our February 16th poll to a 9.01 point lead with self identified Catholic voters (41.28% of the Catholic vote to Santorum's 32.27%). Catholics will make up 29.72% of the Republican primary voter base. Romney's lead is surprising considering Rick Santorum is Catholic. Romney has also increased his lead among non Evangelical Christians. Romney has 46.08% of the non-Evangelical Christian vote to 22.79% for Santorum, a margin of 23.29 points.

Voter primary issue

Romney has increased his lead among voters that cited jobs and the economy as the primary consideration for selecting a candidate. Romney received 47.02% voter support while Rick Santorum support dropped 5.8 points to 23.80%, giving Romney a margin of 23.22 points. Conversely, Rick Santorum has lost ground from our prior poll with reducing the national debt, leadership and fixing Medicare & Social Security primary issue voter groups, while increasing his margin with National defense/Military primary issue voter groups. A summary of the other issue groups:

- Reducing the national debt 28.55% to 40.24% for Romney – 11.69 point deficit and a swing of 18.46 points.
- Social issues: 66.47% to 13.87% for Romney – a 52.60% point margin.
- Leadership and American Exceptionalism: 35.67% to 36.62% for Romney – 0.95 point deficit and a swing of 10.22 points.
- National Defense, Military: 36.78% to 26.44% for Romney – a 10.34 point margin and an increase of 3.85 points.
- Medicare/Social Security: 24.62% to 32.82% for Romney – 8.20% point deficit and a swing of 9.60 points.



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Middle East/Foreign Intervention

In our follow up from our last poll, we asked Michigan voters about the candidate's stated positions from the debate on possible intervention in Iran and Syria. In our last poll, Rick Santorum has a significant advantage with likely Republican voters who have "hawkish" (supported military intervention) tendencies on intervention in the Middle East. That advantage decreased among voters that want a military focused response to the middle East (38.53% of the total respondent universe). Romney now has a slight lead with 38.48% to Santorum's 36.41%. Romney's advantage with the "dovish" voters who only want diplomatic intervention or want the U.S. to stay out of these international issues has also increased slightly. Governor Romney's support among the diplomatic intervention only base (45.05% of the total respondent universe) is 40.10% to Santorum's 26.50%), a margin of 13.60 points. Romney's advantage has grown among the do not intervene voter base (5.15% of the respondent universe), leading Santorum by 5.17 points (32.76% to 27.59% for Santorum. Attorney Tarek Baydoun, founder/President of Baydoun Consulting, Michigan's largest political robodialer, is also a political scientist with an expertise on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Baydoun was surprised by the shift in foreign policy opinion by Michigan Republicans stating "The conventional story line by pundits that Republicans and conservatives are hawkish on foreign policy in the Middle East appears to be a miscalculation. Republicans' appetite for foreign military intervention seems to have soured in recent years since the failures in the Iraq war. Surprisingly, this paradigm shift in public opinion has so far not affected the rhetoric of the leading Republican candidates."

Tea Party Voter identification

Rick Santorum has maintained a significant support among voters who claim membership within the Tea Party movement but has decreased since our poll last week. Santorum has also opened up a lead among voters who are supportive of the Tea Party's ideas but are not members themselves. Romney has doubled his support among non-Tea party voters and has gained the lead among voters who are undecided about the Tea Party. The movement summary with each voter group is listed below:

- Tea Party members - Santorum 41.20% to Romney 29.17%, a margin of 12.03 points and a decrease of 17.86 points.
- Supporters of the Tea Party but not members - Santorum 36.25% to Romney 32.67% a margin of 3.58 points.
- Non-Tea Party Republican voters – Romney 45.10% to Santorum 25.48%, a margin of 19.62 points and an increase of 10.1 points.
- Undecided about the Tea Party – Romney 36.30% to Santorum 25.19%, a margin of 11.11 points and a swing of 17.8 points.

"Santorum maintains a significant base to work from", states chief pollster Eric Foster President of Foster McCollum White & Associates, "the tea party members and Tea Party supportive voters made up 41.29% of our respondent pool. Santorum must increase his margin from our initial poll. He can afford to lose the non-Tea Party vote but he must decrease the deficit to less than 10 points to balance that against his positive Tea Party voter margins. Romney must continue to pound the message that Santorum is a big government conservative and work to tie him to George W. Bush. The debate gave him an opening to do that based on the issue of *No Child Left Behind* and Santorum's vote for it."



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Age of Voters

Santorum continues to maintain a sizable lead among voters ages 31 to 50. He leads this group by 23.41 points (45.04% to 21.63% for Romney). The shifts within this cross tab have come from voters' ages 51 to 65 and voters over the age of 66. The movement summaries are as follows:

- Age 51 to 65 voters – Romney 36.10% to Santorum 31.78%, a margin of 4.32 points and a swing of 15.92 points.
- Voters ages 66 and older – Romney 48.53% to Santorum 24.21%, a margin of 24.32 points and an increase of 14.45 points.

Santorum was expected to lose voters over the age of 66 due to the positive image of Mitt Romney's family, George Romney. Santorum needs to return the deficit within the 66 and older voter group to single digits and regain his previous advantage among voters ages 51 to 65. For Romney to continue his positive movement, he must continue to lead among voters ages 51 to 65. He cannot afford to lose both the 31 to 50 and 51 to 65 year old voter groups.

Voting regions

Upper Peninsula – Rick Santorum has maintained a sizable advantage among voters in this region of Michigan. Santorum leads Romney by 13.58 points (44.44% to 30.86% for Romney). Santorum's lead has decreased from our last poll by 15.65 points.

Northern Lower Peninsula – Rick Santorum is now trailing Mitt Romney by a slight margin in this region of Michigan. Rick Santorum received 33.04% of the primary voter support vs. 35.22% of the primary voter support, a margin of 2.18 points and a swing of 2.66 points from Santorum's lead last week.

Southwest Region – Santorum is now trailing Romney with 31.93% of the Southwest region primary voters while Romney received 36.59% of the primary voter support. Romney's margin is 4.66 points, which is a swing of 13.26 points within the week.

Central Region – Santorum is now trailing Romney with 32.47% of the Central region primary voters while Romney received 36.36% of the primary voter support. The swing margin in this region is 11.84 points in favor of Romney.

Thumb Region – Santorum is now trailing Romney with 32.91% of the Thumb region primary voters while Romney received 35.90% of the primary voter support, a margin of 2.99 points and a swing of 3.48 points.

Southeastern Region – Romney has increased his lead in Southeastern Michigan with 44.25% of the Southeastern Michigan region primary voters while Santorum received 25.58% of the primary voter support. This is a significant margin of 18.65 points and a swing of 20.98 points.

Romney has flipped four of the five geographical regions to his column and increased his lead in Southeastern Michigan. On the surface, this has been a good week of movement for Romney. The challenge lies under the data. Santorum is only trailing by single digits in the regions he lost. The Southwestern and Central regions both have very large evangelical populations and Tea Party concentration. The Thumb Region is home to a significant base of manufacturing workers who would be persuadable to Santorum's manufacturing economic plans. Southeastern Michigan is



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still open for Santorum to close the gap because it has the largest concentration of Catholic voters in the state. Within the weekend and up to Tuesday, Romney must be on guard because these regions can swing back to Santorum, depending on Santorum's campaign tactics.

Congressional Districts

Michigan's Republican Primary will award its delegates through a combination of individual congressional district winners and overall State winner. This hybrid model will allow a second place or third place state-wide contestant to pick up delegates by winning one of Michigan's congressional districts. Our findings suggest that Mitt Romney has regained the advantage in 10 of Michigan's congressional districts. Santorum is leading in the following congressional districts (above the margin of error of 2.06%):

- 1st District – Santorum 36.73% to Romney 34.51%, a swing of 14.2 points for Romney.
- 2nd District – Santorum 39.25% to Romney 32.26%, an increase of 0.15 points for Santorum.
- 7th District – Romney 31.49% to Santorum 35.91%, a swing of 5.6 points for Santorum.

Romney is leading in the following districts (above the margin of error of 2.06%):

- 3rd District – Romney 38.43% to Santorum 31.00%, an increase of 6.3 points for Romney.
- 4th District – Santorum 32.52% to Romney 37.78%, a swing of 18.82 points for Romney.
- 5th District – Romney 38.10% to Santorum 29.37%, an increase of 7.84 points for Romney.
- 6th District – Santorum 29.41% to Romney 36.90%, a swing of 20.75 points for Romney.
- 8th District – Santorum 23.33% to Romney 46.67%, a swing of 30 points for Romney.
- 9th District – Romney 51.39% to Santorum 24.31%, an increase of 16.39 points for Romney.
- 11th District – Romney 42.11% to Santorum 31.58%, an increase of 6.79 points for Romney.
- 12th District – Santorum 19.81% to Romney 44.34%, a swing of 30.24 points for Romney.
- 13th District – Santorum 26.67% to Romney 40.00%, a swing of 17.03 points for Romney.
- 14th District – Romney 49.41% to Santorum 22.35%, an increase of 7.52 points for Romney.

There are three districts that are a statistical tie (within the margin of error of 2.06%)

- 10th District – Santorum 32.04% to Romney 33.15%, a swing of 5.13 points for Romney.

The past week has shown the significant fluidity in the Republican field. In our initial poll, Rick Santorum was in a statistically relevant position to win 12 of Michigan's 14 Congressional districts. Based on our data, he is now in position to win a range of 4 to 8 of the Congressional districts. Santorum still has a viable chance to win the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th districts, primarily because of their geographic locations within the Southwestern, Central, Thumb and Northern Lower Peninsula regions of the state. This would provide him with a potential yield of 16 of Michigan's 30 delegates.



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The impact of the debate and the increased narrative on social issues has weakened Rick Santorum in Michigan. Mitt Romney has gained significant advantages based on these changing dynamics, but has yet to deliver the knockout punch of winning the very conservative, Evangelical Christian and Tea Party heart of Michigan's Republican electorate. Candidates Newt Gingrich and Ron Paul have seen some positive movement within key cross voter categories, which has also contributed to Santorum's slide. In spite of the change in first place, Gov. Romney has not sealed the deal with the core voter categories in Michigan. Santorum still leads in most of the core voter bases and is still within the undecided voter base margin of making up significant lost ground, especially in the Southwestern, Central, Thumb regions of the state. Our analysis suggests that mitt Romney has regained momentum, but Rick Santorum is competitive in enough voter groups to still win Michigan.

Please contact Eric Foster of Foster McCollum White & Associates at either 313-333-7081 or efoster@fostermccollumwhite.com or Tarek Baydoun of Baydoun Consulting at either 313-729-3737 or baydounconsulting@gmail.com for a more detailed summary of our polling report.



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Polling Study Overview

- Foster McCollum White & Associates, a Political and Governmental Affairs and Organizational Development consulting firm based in Troy Michigan and Baydoun Consulting, a political communications consulting firm based in Dearborn, Michigan conducted a telephone-automated polling random survey of Michigan registered and Most Likely Republican Primary voters to determine their voting preferences for the 2012 February Presidential Primary Election. This 10-question automated poll survey was conducted on the evening of February 23, 2012 between the hours of 7:00 pm and 8:30 pm. 38,490 Households were called, and 2,416 Respondents participated in the survey. The response rate for this survey was 6.28%.
- Our initial qualifying question for the polling study was the likelihood of the respondent's participation in the February 28th Republican Presidential Primary. Of our 2,416 Respondents who participated, 2,263 self-identified that they were certain or likely to participate in the Primary election and 153 self-identified that they were not likely to participate in the Primary election. We disqualified the not likely respondents from our reporting pool.
- A list base sample of traditional Michigan high participation registered voters who have participated in a minimum of 70% of the Republican primaries since 1992 and voted for Republican candidates in general elections since 1992. These voters also have a minimum 70% participation rate in February & May elections and Odd year municipal and county elections in Michigan since 1993 was used. The list based sample was equally pre-weighted towards Republican voting participation rates by geographical regions and congressional districts of Michigan who are certain or likely to vote in the February 28th Republican election.
- Our polling study compared voter sentiment for the February ballot. For reporting purposes, we will focus our findings on the following general election contest:
 - o Republican Nomination and commitment to their selection,
 - o Voters' primary voting issue for participation in the February primary,
 - o Social Issues versus Economy Issues,
 - o Foreign Affairs Intervention, and
 - o Demographic and Geographic considerations.
- The margin of error for this polling sample is 2.06% with a confidence level of 95%. Our polling study produced sub populations within each of the surveyed election contest. Results within the sub populations will be reported with respect to the individual cross tab and sub population group as it exist.



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Cross tabulation groups for comparison purposes

Age

Religious affiliation – Evangelical Christian, Catholic, Non Evangelical Christian, Jewish, Muslim and other religious affiliations

Voter Political Ideology Preference – Conservative, Moderate and Liberal

Tea Party Affiliation

Michigan Voter Regions

Michigan Congressional Districts – 28 Delegates are awarded by winner of individual congressional districts

Major 17 voting counties (Counties combined traditional represent 75% to 83% of the voter participation in Michigan State-wide elections)

Primary Voting Interest Question

Social versus Economy Issues Question

Foreign Affairs Question

This poll was commissioned by Foster McCollum White & Associates and Baydoun Consulting and not commissioned on behalf of or by any candidate or political organization. We strive to adhere to the principles and standards of the National Council on Public Polls in the gathering and reporting of polling data.



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Data Analysis Statement

The data has been separated analytically into results in all of the voter regions of Michigan, Congressional districts, voter's religious and political ideological affiliation, significant voter counties that impact the outcome of Michigan elections, Tea Party affiliation, geographical regions of the state and congressional districts. Any sectional analysis within the aforementioned categories can be useful when inferring strengths and weaknesses and possible strategy.

For the assessment of individual cross tabulation categories, we use a correlation coefficient model based on the *Pearson r correlation*, also called *linear* or *product-moment* correlation. Pearson correlation (hereafter called *correlation*), assumes that the two variables are measured on at least interval scales and it determines the extent to which values of the two variables are "proportional" to each other. The value of correlation (i.e., correlation coefficient) does not depend on the specific measurement units used. Our proportional model for correlating the statistical relevance of a geographical region, age grouping or congressional district is based on the random proportionality of our respondent pool to the specific proportionality of the group's weight to the aggregate model. The correlation coefficient (r) represents the linear relationship between these two variables (aggregate and cross tabular category).

The aggregate State-wide sample size of 2,264 respondents has a 2.06% margin of error, any reviewer of the polling report allows for the statistical relationship between the aggregate and cross tabulation margin of error for the reported clusters. The poll sample was pre weighted for gender and ethnicity based upon historic Republican participation demographics throughout Michigan. This poll was commissioned by Foster McCollum White and Associates & Baydoun Consulting and not commissioned on behalf of or by any candidate or political organization. We strive to adhere to the principles and standards of the National Council on Public Polls in the gathering and reporting of polling data