

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, March 12, 2012
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By Same Point in 2008, Obama's # of Youth Votes More than Double 2012 Republican Candidates'

Paul, Romney Still Have More Youth Votes than the '08 Nominee, Sen. John McCain

MEDFORD, MA – Tufts University's Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning & Engagement (CIRCLE), has released analysis ahead of tomorrow's Mississippi and Alabama Republican primaries showing that, by this point in 2008, then-candidate Barack Obama had secured the votes of 459,000 young Americans – more than double the total of any of the 2012 Republican candidates in similarly compared states.

After Super Tuesday, former Gov. Mitt Romney and Rep. Ron Paul are essentially tied for the number of youth votes received thus far, according to an examination of exit polling data by CIRCLE's researchers of those primary and caucus states that have already cast their vote this election cycle. Although both candidates' numbers still lag significantly behind then-candidate Obama's youth vote total in 2008 in the same states, there has been an uptick since 2008. In fact, Paul has 181,000 and Romney 189,000, as compared to eventual '08 Republican nominee, Senator John McCain's 164,000 votes in the same states four years ago.

To view a comprehensive graph showing the 2012 GOP candidates and their race to secure the youth vote over time this election cycle, go to:

<http://www.civicyouth.org/?p=3611>

“This Republican primary election cycle's uptick in the total number of youth votes, compared to where Sen. McCain's was at this same point in 2008, may be an indicator that the 2012 Republican candidates are doing a better job speaking to or doing outreach to conservative and/or libertarian youth,” said Peter Levine, director of CIRCLE. “Or it could also be an indicator that those youth have just generally been more mobilized this election cycle.”

“Regardless, we should be careful not to overstate the significance of this increase from the 2008 Republican primary youth vote totals. Even with the increase this cycle, the Republican Party still has a 265,000 vote deficit from where the Democratic Party was in 2008 by this point (900,000),” Levine continued.

To view a full comparison between the two parties, please go to:

<http://www.civicyouth.org/?p=3611>.

And to view a graphic illustration of the turnout trend in each year's primary season, please go to: <http://www.civicyouth.org/?p=3611>.

As for Romney and Paul, when comparing their own specific 2008 and 2012 primary and caucus performances, they've both gained youth support. Paul has dramatically increased his youth support between the 2008 and 2012 primaries (64,000 vs. 181,000), compared to Romney's more modest increase (159,000 vs. 189,000). **These comparisons can be seen in graphs by visiting here: <http://www.civicyouth.org/?p=3611>.**

CIRCLE will provide additional demographic information tomorrow morning on youth voters in Tuesday's upcoming Alabama and Mississippi contests. On Wednesday, March 14, CIRCLE will publish an exclusive youth voter turnout estimate for those two states, as well.

To sign-up to receive copies of CIRCLE's cutting-edge research on young Americans and next-day voter turnout estimates for the 2012 elections, please email amy@lunamediaigroup.com.

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CIRCLE (www.civicyouth.org) is a nonpartisan, independent, academic research center that studies young people in politics and presents detailed data on young voters in all 50 states. CIRCLE was founded in 2001 with a generous gift from the Pew Charitable Trusts and is part of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University. CIRCLE's reputation for reliable, independent, timely research has been hailed by experts in the field of civic partnership, such as Harvard University professor Robert Putnam who said CIRCLE had brought "the best and most serious research to one place."

The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service (<http://activecitizen.tufts.edu>) is a national leader whose model and research are setting the standard for higher education's role in civic engagement education. Serving every school of Tufts University, Tisch College creates an enduring culture that prepares students to be lifelong active citizens.

Tufts University (www.tufts.edu), located on three Massachusetts campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville and Grafton, and in Talloires, France, is recognized as one of the premier research universities in the United States. Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the university's schools is widely encouraged.