

Potential candidates plan for upcoming 2016 election

by Kelsey Fleming
News Editor

As the 2016 presidential election approaches, potential candidates are already in the midst of preparation. Currently, no one has officially declared that they are running. However, many prospective candidates are already forming political committees to raise money and encourage wealthy donors to sponsor them and their campaigns. So far, experts have been compiling lists of potential candidates. This list includes Democrats such as Hillary Clinton, Jim Webb, and Bernie Sanders and Republicans Rick Perry, Jeb Bush, Ted Cruz, Chris Christie, Marco Rubio, Rand Paul, Scott Walker, Ben Carson, Rick Santorum, and Lindsey Graham. Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney has publicly decided not to run.

According to experts, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton may announce her launch of an exploratory committee in April. So far,



PREPARING FOR 2016: Clinton is expected to be a frontrunner for the Democratic party.

only one potential candidate, former Sen. Jim Webb, has launched an official exploratory committee. At the National Press Club, Webb claimed that discussions about his plans to run will continue into February. By March, Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont plans to make a decision regarding his presidential campaign.

In terms of the Republican ticket, experts believe former Texas Gov. Rick Perry will announce his campaign for president in May or June. Last November, Perry held several fundraisers where he greeted supporters. So far, no Republican candidates have made official announcements of their plans to run. However, more and more are holding fundraisers and organizing committees. For example, Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush has expressed his desire to run, commenting he is "actively exploring the possibility of running for President." On Jan. 6, Bush launched a leadership PAC called "Right to Rise." Other politicians, such as Sen. Ted Cruz, have started traveling state to state. Cruz recently visited Iowa and New Hampshire and has even renounced his Canadian citizenship.

Some possible candidates have launched political action committees. For example, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie expects to make a decision about his plans to run by May or June. On Jan 26, Christie launched his political action committee called Leadership Matters for America. By March or May, Marco Rubio plans to announce his possible campaign. According to his senior adviser, he will "proceed as if he is running for president." Gov. Scott Walker recently formed a political committee called Our American Revival. He plans to announce his campaign goals by June.

Others have not yet determined whether they want to run as a presidential candidate or just as a senator. Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul has notified the public that he will indeed be on the 2016 ballot, either or senator. He expects to make his decision by March or May. Others, such as Dr. Ben Carson, are still in the midst of planning



FAMILY TIES: Following in his father and brother's footsteps, Bush may run for president.

their possible campaigns. Carson hopes to make an announcement by May. So far, he has already formed a political action committee named "One Nation."

Several candidates are actively discussing their campaigns with donors and activists. By spring, former Pennsylvania senator Rick Santorum expects to make a decision about his political campaign. Others, such as Sen. Lindsey Graham, have launched unofficial exploratory committees to "test the waters." Graham has not yet announced a date for her final decision.

As potential candidates organize their campaigns and prepare for the imminent presidential election, the competition is already palpable. In the coming months, prospective candidates will travel from state to state in the hopes of fomenting excitement for their political campaigns.

(Sources: ABC News, The Huffington Post, The New York Times)

Blizzard hits east coast

by Madeline Hagar
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The Juno blizzard struck the Northeast on Jan. 26, bringing heavy snow fall, the closure of schools, the shutdown of New York's entire subway system, and raids on supermarkets and stores for food, water, and other necessities. The storm warnings lasted until Wed., Jan. 28.

The National Weather Service declared a blizzard warning from New Jersey to Maine, with worsening conditions through the night and winds over 50 mph in New York City. Flood warnings were issued as well for tides in New York were expected to be three feet higher than usual. Due to the blizzard and flood warnings, citizens were urged to remain in their homes. "This is literally the calm before the storm. It's about to start in earnest," New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said. "And when it does, it's going to come in very fast and very hard, and people have to be very, very careful. People have to stay off the streets and stay off the sidewalks."

Officials warned that Juno could bring as much as three feet of snow. Therefore, New York created an 11PM curfew and suspended all forms of public transit. Since there were travel bans in place across the region, citizens had no choice but to stay in their homes. The roads and subway reopened early Tuesday, but life still remained at a standstill. East coast schools, including Harvard and MIT, canceled all classes for Tuesday.

Additionally, in response to the storm warnings, residents raced to the supermarkets for food and water to sustain themselves during the storm. Stores exhausted their stock, running out of everything from basic foods to shovels and snowblowers. At a market in Somerville, Massachusetts, canned foods quickly disappeared. In Brooklyn, supermarkets ran out of bread and water. "I've been to three or four stores and I can't get any milk or eggs," said Marcy Rivers, a Connecticut resident. "I don't know what we are going to do now."

From eastern Long Island to New England, residents reported more than 30 inches of snowfall. Worcester, Massachusetts recorded 34.5 inches of snow, whereas Boston received 24.6 inches. Providence, Rhode Island saw 19.1 inches, making it the fourth heaviest snowstorm on record. According to the National Weather Service in Taunton, Massachusetts, several cities ranging from Massachusetts to Rhode Island met their criteria for blizzard conditions, including 14 hours of storm warnings in Marshfield, Massachusetts.

Forecasters predicted that Juno would be "The Great New York City Blizzard of 2015." However, the brunt of the storm actually hit Boston, Providence, and Cape Cod. They encountered 40 mph winds and near-whiteout conditions for several hours. New York prepared for a total shutdown of traffic and commerce, but ultimately only received eight to twelve inches of snow.

(Sources: Reuters, NY Times, weather.com)



all photos courtesy wikimedia commons

BURIED IN SNOW: As snow covered the East Coast, many took precautionary measures and did not go to work.

Obama gives budget update

by Rachel Salisbury
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Last week, President Barack Obama released his annual budget proposal, a 2000-page document that details the many ways he wants taxes and government spending to change for the upcoming year.

In line with his previous rhetoric and the rest of the Democratic party, one of the big ticket items on this year's proposal was cutting taxes for lower and middle class families by raising taxes on the wealthy. President Obama asserted the budget is "designed to bring middle-class economics into the twenty-first century."

This economic agenda goes hand-in-hand with wealth redistribution measures that would "include a new five-hundred dollar tax credit for second earners, an expansion of the earned-income tax credit, and an increase in the value of existing tax credits available to families paying for child care," according to The New Yorker, in addition to increased funding for Head Start, Pell Grants, and Obama's universal preschool initiative.

The budget reiterates the President's initiative to provide tuition for two years of community college for those who meet the prerequisites. Originally, these tuitions would have been paid for by eliminating the 529s, the tax benefits attached to savings accounts that more often than not benefit wealthy families. In the new budget, the money for this plan will come from general tax revenue, as both Republicans and Democrats objected to axing the 529s benefits.

In order to pay for its many enumerated initiatives, the proposal also includes new tax increases. The three most significant tax hikes are raised estate-tax bills

on wealthy families, raised capital-gains tax rate paid by high earners (from the current twenty percent to twenty-eight percent), and a new surcharge on large, highly leveraged financial firms.

As expected, the proposal has received considerable pushback from the GOP. For example, Republican Ohio Senator Rob Portman voiced his issues with the bill in a public address on Feb. 7; he claimed the plan will never balance itself, "not in five years, not in ten years. Not ever."

While the majority of these changes are not expected to pass through the Republican controlled Senate and House of Representatives, the major proposals are still expected to impact fiscal policy and the political climate.

(Sources: CBS News, The New Yorker, Fiscal Times)



GOP BACKLASH: Many Republicans opposed the president's suggestions.

Drone lands at White House

by Sarah Sullivan
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After a night drinking with friends on Jan. 5, a government intelligence worker borrowed his friend's recreational drone to take it for a test run. The drone flew onto the White House property and crashed on the lawn at around 3AM Monday morning. The drunk man returned home and texted his friends with his suspicion that the drone had gone down on the White Houses grounds and went to sleep. When he woke up the next morning, he was greeted with news that the drone had in fact crashed on the property. After learning of the incident, the employee notified his employer, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, that he was responsible for the crash.

It is unclear whether the employee will face disciplinary action for his actions, given that drones are illegal in Washington DC. While the man had no harmful intentions, he may still receive an indictment in order to make an example out of his conduct.

This "drunken misadventure," as named by the New York Times, raises concerns about how easily a drone or other flying object could enter the White House or other government buildings. For example,

someone with malicious intentions could weaponize a drone to assassinate the president or cause other harm. The Secret Service, which protects the presidential family and the White House, has taken measures to stop missiles and other large airborne weapons, but it is the smaller drones and flying objects that pose a bigger threat. An agent on duty actually spotted the drone flying onto the premises but could do nothing to stop it. While drones are banned in Washington and the airspace above the White House is restricted from unauthorized aircraft, it is evident that drones make these laws easily breakable.

While President Barack Obama was overseas during the incident, he issued a review of the regulations on commercial drones. Obama stated that he wanted to make sure that "these things aren't dangerous and that they're not violating people's privacy." The president also noted that this particular drone, the DJI Phantom, is one you can "buy at Radioshack." He commented that the government currently does not have very many regulations of commercial and private distributors of drones, which may pose a security threat as shown in this accidental misdemeanor.

(Source: New York Times, New York Post)