



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on June 2, 2010

Bush Rips Crist, Predicts He'll Finish Third

Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush is not sugarcoating his opinion of his successor and former fellow-Republican Charlie Crist. Bush is predicting that Crist, who announced he was leaving the Grand Old Party last April to run as an independent in a three-way Senate race, will finish third behind Republican Marco Rubio and Democrat Kendrick Meek.

"It's all about him," Bush said about Crist in an interview with *Weekly Standard* executive editor Fred Barnes. "It's not about anything else. Governor Crist organizes his life around his personal ambitions ... He doesn't have a set of guiding principles to share with people." That will hurt him, Bush predicted, in "a year where people want you to say what your core beliefs are and painting it in brighter, bolder colors instead of pastels is the way to go."



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A May 17 Rasmussen poll showed Rubio with a seven-point lead over Crist, 39-31 percent. But Bush's wish may be the father of his thought in predicting a third-place finish for the governor. The poll showed Meek far behind his better-known rivals, attracting the support of just 18 percent of respondents in the statewide survey of 500 likely voters conducted on May 16. Twelve percent were undecided. The poll claims a margin of error of 4.5 percent.

Crist dropped out of the Republican primary race after polls earlier this year showed him trailing the more conservative Rubio in a head-to-head match up by as much as 23 percent in a Quinnipiac University poll. The governor fell out of favor with many Floridians when he endorsed President Obama's \$787 billion stimulus plan last year, sharing a platform with the Obama and praising the President for making more federal money available to the Sunshine State. The two briefly hugged one another onstage, resulting in a photo that appeared in ads supporting Rubio all over the Internet.

Crist enjoyed a bounce in the Rasmussen poll shortly after he announced his independent run, moving up to a 38 to 34 percent lead over Rubio among likely voters. But he has fallen back since and the later poll showed him trailing Crist among both Democratic and Republican voters. With Republican voters, his support dropped from 30 to 23 percent. His lead over Rubio among unaffiliated voters has shrunk from 12 to three percent.

The poll showed Crist viewed "Very Favorably" by 20 percent of Florida voters and "Very Unfavorably" by 16 percent. Rubio, who has suffered some negative publicity regarding allegations he spent state money for his personal use during his tenure as speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, was viewed "Very Unfavorably" by 22 percent of those surveyed. The same percentage of respondents



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viewed him "Very Favorably." Only 12 percent had a "Very Favorable" view of Meek, while 15 percent viewed him "Very Unfavorably."

Rubio, who has been popular among tea party activists, was the choice of 65 percent of the voters who are in favor of a law like Arizona's that involves local police in apprehending illegal immigrants. Of those who oppose that kind of law, 42 percent preferred Meek, while 38 percent said they were for Crist. Overall, 53 percent said they would favor such a law for Florida.

Photo: Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush with Gov. Charlie Crist during Crist's gubernatorial campaign in 2006: AP Images



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