



GOP Debate: Bachmann Takes Down Pawlenty

"It's an indisputable fact in Congress her record of accomplishment and results is nonexistent," Pawlenty [said](#) of his fellow Minnesota Republican. Bachmann [replied](#): "Governor, when you were governor in Minnesota, you implemented cap and trade in our state. And you praised the unconstitutional individual mandate and you called for requiring all people in our state to purchase health insurance that government would mandate. Third, you said the era of small government was over. That sounds a lot more like Barack Obama, if you ask me."



Pawlenty [continued](#) the exchange of political barbs: "She's got a record of mistating and making false statements, and that's another example of that list. She says she's fighting for these things. She's fought for less government spending, we got a lot more. She led the effort against Obamacare, we got Obamacare. She led the effort against TARP, we got TARP. She says she's got a titanium spine. It's not her spine we're worried about, it's her record of results. If that's your view of effective leadership with results, please stop because you're killing us."

Bachmann's claims clearly drew political blood from Pawlenty in a GOP primary where individual healthcare mandates are the stuff of political death. Pawlenty's charges are at least partly unfair, but it's unclear if enough voters will take them seriously. Bachmann is, after all, only one vote of 435 in the House of Representatives, which is one half of one of the three branches of the government.

Pawlenty has staked his entire campaign on Iowa, a neighboring state to Minnesota, spending nearly all of his \$4 million campaign war chest in the state where the first-in-the-nation caucus will take place. Many political observers have [speculated](#) that Pawlenty may be forced to withdraw from the race (or at least downsize his campaign in a major way) if he fares poorly in the Ames straw poll August 13.

Photo of Michele Bachmann: AP Images

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