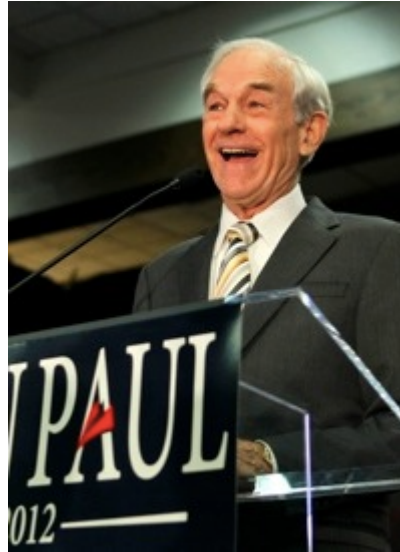




Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on February 12, 2012

Was Maine Stolen from Ron Paul?

Ron Paul's campaign [confidently predicted victory](#) when the final votes are tallied. "Only 194 votes [statewide] stand between Paul and a first place victory," RonPaul 2012 blogger Jack Hunter pointed out in a post after the media declared Romney the winner. "Washington County is a stronghold for Paul and has yet to report. It might be a week before we know the final outcome there and Washington County is expected to yield 200 votes or more." Former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum [placed](#) third with 18 percent of the vote in the official Maine caucus statewide vote tally, while former House Speaker Newt Gingrich placed fourth with six percent of the vote.



The cancellation of the Washington County caucus alone among Maine caucuses scheduled for February 11 has led many Paul supporters to suspect electoral shenanigans by the Republican establishment to deny Paul a state victory. That Washington County would vote heavily in favor of Paul was well-known, and Paul was widely seen as the only credible threat to Romney.

Maine state GOP Chairman Charlie Webster vowed that [later caucuses would not be counted](#) in the vote totals. "Some caucuses decided not to participate in this poll and will caucus after this announcement," Webster told the Associated Press February 11. "Their results will not be factored in. The absent votes will not be factored into this announcement after the fact."

The Washington County caucus was the only one to have been postponed because of an [anticipated snowstorm](#). But while some media forecast six or more inches of snow, the [Washington County forecast](#) from the National Weather Service for February 11 was for a total of 3-5 inches of accumulation during the day, hardly out-of-the-ordinary for the Maine climate in February. Moreover, the Portland area was [forecast](#) to have almost as much snow, 1-3 inches, while nearby [Hancock County had an identical forecast](#) as Washington County. Yet caucuses were not cancelled in those areas.

Ron Paul 2012 national campaign chairman Jesse Benton [predicted victory](#) when the delegate process is completed in a website statement. "We are confident that we will control the Maine delegation for the convention in August. Our campaign is so thankful to all of our supporters in Maine, and all over the nation, and we want them to know that we plan to take this message all the way to the White House."

Rep. Paul's campaign has stressed that the establishment is desperate to get Romney a couple of state wins after losing Minnesota, Colorado and Missouri to former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum earlier last week. "Maine is a state in Romney's backyard that he should've been able to walk away with easily. That Mitt almost lost to Ron tonight — and that Mitt still may lose to Ron in the days to come — does not bode well for the establishment candidate," Ron Paul campaign blogger Jack Hunter [argued](#) as the caucus results emerged.

Romney did [win](#) the CPAC presidential preference poll in Washington, D.C., this weekend with 38



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percent of the vote. Other presidential candidates earned the following percent: Rick Santorum 31 percent, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich 15 percent, and Ron Paul 12 percent. The CPAC poll carries no delegates toward the presidential race, but it measures a mixture of movement conservative opinion, campaign organization, and energy in the campaigns. Ron Paul had won the CPAC poll the previous two years, but did not make an effort to bring his young supporters to the conference again this year.

Romney announced in his Maine victory [speech](#) that "I am the only candidate in the race who has never served a day in our broken federal government. The voters of Maine have sent a clear message that it is past time to send an outsider to the White House, a conservative with a lifetime of experience in the private sector, who can uproot Washington's culture of taxing and spending and borrowing and endless bureaucracy." Of course, Romney helped to grow Massachusetts state spending and increase taxes and has been marinated in the tax-and-spend culture during his government service. As Governor of Massachusetts, [Romney asked the state legislature for 88 "fees" to be increased](#) in order to propose a balanced budget he was required by state law to submit. Many of these fees — such as increases on firearms permit applications and automobile licenses — were just tax increases disguised as "fee" increases.

Correction: *As originally published this article described the vote tally of a caucus in south Washington County. We have since learned, however, that this caucus was in south Washington County, Minn., not Maine. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.*

Photo of Ron Paul: AP Images



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