



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on September 20, 2010

Who is Mike Pence?

In an early straw poll, Rep. Mike Pence (R-Ind.) was the choice for presidential nominee in 2012 over such conservative luminaries as Sarah Palin, Mike Huckabee, and Mitt Romney. Capturing 24 percent of those voting at the Family Research Council's Values Voter Summit this past weekend in Washington, DC, Pence relegated even Senator Jim DeMint to a barely visible 5 percent.



The [Family Research Council](#), founded in 1981 by Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family in his attempt to “drive the national debate on family issues,” promotes socially conservative views on such issues as marriage and divorce, homosexuality, and abortion. Their mission statement says, in part:

FRC champions marriage and family as the foundation of civilization, the seedbed of virtue, and the wellspring of society.... Believing that God is the author of life, liberty, and the family, FRC promotes the Judeo-Christian worldview as the basis for a just, free, and stable society.

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Accordingly, it takes strong and sometimes controversial stands, such as outlawing homosexual behavior, supporting a federal conscience clause (protecting rights of medical workers to withhold morally objectionable practices such as abortion), promoting tighter regulation of pornography (especially on the Internet), and believes that hotel pornography may be prosecuted. FRC also supports lower taxes, limited government, and simplifying the tax code. It opposes stem-cell research that involves the destruction of human embryos, legal recognition of same-sex domestic partnerships, and no-fault divorces.

In the straw poll, considered by some to be indicative of the kind of candidate Christian voters might support in the next presidential election, Pence was followed closely by Mike Huckabee at 22 percent, with Sarah Palin at a mere seven percent. [Describing himself](#) as “a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican, in that order,” Pence was first elected to the House in 2000, where he has served ever since. He opposed expanding the federal hate crimes law because “protecting the rights of freedom of speech and religion must be paramount in our minds.” He presented an immigration proposal in 2006, calling it “no amnesty immigration reform” which was criticized by Phyllis Schlafly, Tom Tancredo, and Pat Buchanan. He voted for the so-called Bush tax cuts in 2001 and 2003, and briefly considered a run for the Senate seat occupied by Indiana Democrat Evan Bayh, but then withdrew earlier this year explaining that he believed that Republicans would win back the House in the mid-term elections this fall. However, he has started a website, www.repmikepenceforpresident.com, in the event that his candidacy gets traction.



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His voting record on many issues is crystal clear. On abortion, for instance, he boasts a 0 percent rating from NARAL Pro-Choice America and Planned Parenthood as well as the National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association, while enjoying a 100 percent rating from the National Right to Life Committee. He has a 92 percent rating from the National Taxpayers Union, and a 98 percent rating from Citizens Against Government Waste. He holds a lifetime rating of 90 percent from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and 100 percent ratings from the American Conservative Union, the Campaign for Working Families, and Eagle Forum. Gun Owners of America gives Pence a rating of A-minus, while the NRA rates him a solid A.

On Constitutional votes during the 111th Congress, Pence [scores a strong 86 percent](#) on *The New American's* "Freedom Index," while organized labor, on the other hand, holds his voting record in that arena with disdain, as the AFL-CIO has given Pence a six percent lifetime rating, and the American Federation of Government Employees only eight percent. The International Brotherhood of Boilermakers and the SEIU each give Pence their lowest rating: 0 percent.

Pence's position on the Bush bailouts in September 2008 [was published](#) in *Human Events*:

The decision to give the federal government the ability to nationalize almost every bad mortgage in America [derails]...our free market economy....

We have fought the good fight. Now we need to finish the race and make sure that posterity and the American people know there were conservatives [such as myself] who opposed the leviathan state in this dark hour.

This straw vote may mean nothing at all. On the other hand it may be an encouraging harbinger of just the kind of candidate unabashed Christian conservative voters are looking to support in 2012.

Photo: Rep. Mike Pence, R-Ind., speaks to people gathered at the Capitol for a "Remember in November" rally to express opposition to government spending backed by President Obama and Democrats in Congress, Sept. 12, 2010: AP Images



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