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What Do U.S. Mid-Term Elections Mean for Africa?

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Executive Summary

Mid-Term Congressional elections in the United States not only determine control of Congress, but have an indirect impact on the presidency, showing the relative strength or weakness of the President. They are barometers of the American political climate and, because politics is much about perception, can confirm a president's power and offer support of his policy agenda. Mid-terms terms also provide guidance about the current and future political atmosphere to both major political parties, current office-holders, and potential candidates.

In the U.S. mid-term elections held earlier this month, Republicans won a decisive victory over the Democrats, highlighted by capturing a Senate majority, increasing their majority in the House of Representative, and thus gaining complete control over the legislative branch. This paper addressed both the positive and negative consequences of the those election results for Africa.

About the Author

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What Do U.S. Mid-Term Elections Mean for Africa?

David Dumke

Introduction

For the global community, attention to American electoral politics is almost entirely focused on presidential elections, which occurs every four years. During presidential election years, voters decide the head of the state and leader of the executive branch, and all the power and policy that comes with it. They also determine control of the House of Representatives, 1/3 of the members of the Senate, and up to two dozen governors.

Mid-term elections, on the other hand, not only determine control of Congress, but have an indirect impact on the presidency, showing the relative strength or weakness of the President. They are barometers of the American political climate and, because politics is much about perception, can confirm a president's power and offer support of his policy agenda. Or, as was seen in the most recent mid-term election, they can highlight the President's relative weakness and unpopularity of his agenda. Finally, mid-terms provide guidance about the current and future political atmosphere to both major political parties, current office-holders, and potential candidates.

In the U.S. mid-term elections held earlier this month, Republicans won a decisive victory over the Democrats, highlighted by capturing a Senate majority, increasing their majority in the House of Representative, and thus gaining complete control over the legislative branch. Additionally, they won most key governor races – including gains in heavily Democratic states like Massachusetts, Maryland, and Illinois, and retained control in swing states including Florida, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. That said, the win was not a mandate for Republican rule or necessarily a rebuke of all Democrats, but rather a loss specifically for President Obama – not uncommon for a president in a second-term, mid-term election. But the losses were more than Democrats expected, and they lost nearly all competitive races considered “toss ups.” Unlike in 2010 when the election was largely a referendum on the President's health care plan, Republicans did not win on a single issue. However, many Republicans capitalized on the perception of President Obama's weak leadership on national security and international affairs.

The Democratic Party spin is that Republican control of the Senate may be short-lived. Many incumbent Republican Senators, who won seats in Democratic-leaning states in the wave election of 2010, must defend seats on unfavorable political terrain in 2016. Moreover, most analysts believe, at least at this point, that the national election map tends to favor Democrats due in large part to changing demographic in key swing states. But two years is considered an eternity in U.S. politics.

114th Congress

Incoming Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker John Boehner have stated they are interested in working with President Obama to pass key legislation, including restoring a budget process and passing key spending bills. They have sounded very pragmatic since the election, despite their record of refusing to compromise since Obama was inaugurated in January 2009. Why the change in posture? Because the Republican Party is aware that they have long been accused of being obstructionists and overly partisan, including taking blame for shutting down the U.S. government twice in 2013. Politically, the Republican Party needs to prove it can govern effectively, and compromise when necessary, prior to the 2016 election.

On 20 November 2014, President Obama announced a plan to alter U.S. immigration policy by providing illegal immigrants – mostly from Latin America, but from all corners of the globe including Africa – amnesty and a path to citizenship. While the Senate passed a bipartisan immigration bill supported by the White House in 2013, the Republican-led House of Representatives failed to pass it or seriously debate it: thus the necessity of changing policy by executive order rather than through the legislative process. It is risky for Obama, but politically beneficial to Democrats, particularly considering the growing importance of the Latino “swing” vote.

The net result of the immigration decision, however, is likely to further damage relations between the White House and congressional Republicans. Republicans will face pressure from rank and file members of the House, in particular, to impeach President Obama for usurping power granted solely to the legislative branch. Compromise seems increasingly unlikely.

Thus, in the 2015-2017 period, we are likely to see continued partisanship and gridlock between the Obama White House and Congress. There will likely be a series of vetoes on contentious legislation, and the President is likely to make use of executive orders – as he recently did with immigration – to implement policy changes.

It should be noted that the election defeat and altered political landscape provides an excuse for the Obama Administration to announce personnel changes, including to the national security team. This will likely be done in the coming weeks. But at this point it remains unclear who will stay and who will go.

African impact?

In terms of Africa, the mid-term election results potentially could have both positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, the House and Senate Republican leadership is staunchly pro-trade, which could lead first to an agreement to re-authorized fast-track trade authority to President Obama. Fast track allows a president to negotiate

a trade agreement with a foreign partner that Congress then can approve or disapprove – but can't amend. This tool is essential in brokering free trade agreements with foreign partners. Over the last decade, pro-labor Democrats and anti-free trade Republicans – many allied with the populist Tea Party movement – have made any new trade agreements extremely difficult to complete. But with a changed congressional lineup, pro-trade Republicans and Democrats will likely be able to work with President Obama to launch new free trade discussions, including African nations.

Second, Congress is more likely to re-authorize the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the most important African-oriented trade legislation ever passed by Congress. It must be reauthorized by September 2015, and again the new 114th Congress is more likely to be able to work with the Obama Administration to complete a deal. AGOA was first passed in 2000 in an attempt to help spur market-led economic growth and development in sub-Saharan Africa and deepen U.S. trade and investment ties to the region. Most analysts believe it has been tremendously successful, and continues to grow in importance each year.

On the potentially negative side, it is likely that foreign assistance, including assistance to Africa, will be cut in the coming two years. Under a previous 2013 budget agreement, all programs face across-the-board cuts unless Congress and the Obama Administration can reach a new agreement. These cuts would not be devastating, but still reduce overall assistance. Republicans, it should be noted, are also traditionally less supportive of non-military assistance than Democrats. So it will be less likely that new or additional funding will emerge for Africa.

It should also be noted that per the budget agreement, a disproportionate percentage of budget cuts will be made to the Defense budget. It is unlikely, but possible, that the United States Africa Command's (AFRICOM) budget could be reduced as a result, and that some military training programs – including those benefiting African partners – may be eliminated, consolidated, or diminished.

The assistance exception may be for funding directed towards the Ebola crisis. It is possible, if not likely, that a substantial assistance package will be provided early next year through an emergency assistance package – where funding is attached to an emergency appropriations bill which is not subject to the aforementioned budget agreement. Also, additional funding will be provided from existing agency budgets, particularly from the Department of Defense.

Finally, it should be noted that in the midst of the campaign, Republicans called for a travel ban for nationals from West African nations. It remains to be seen if they will continue to make this demand, or pass legislation mandating this, particularly as the Ebola crisis has faded from the front page of newspapers and the demand for drastic action has diminished in recent weeks.

Looking Ahead to 2016

For the 2016 presidential race, Hillary Clinton is the prohibitive favorite to win the Democratic nomination, and at this point favored to win the general election too. Other Democrats will run, but she is the clear frontrunner. Clinton has successfully distanced herself from the Obama Administration, and in all but name, is now the leader of the Democratic Party. In the coming months the most formidable Republican candidates will emerge, which will likely include a number of Republican governors – possibilities include Scott Walker of Wisconsin, John Kasich of Ohio, Rick Perry of Texas, and former Governor Jeb Bush of Florida. Some senators such as Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio) may also flirt with a bid. In all cases, however, the field will likely be set before the end of 2014.

The 114th Congress & African Policy

Congressional Lineup:

- Current House of Representatives: 199 Democrats; 233 Republicans; 3 Vacancies
114th Congress House: 191 Democrats; 242 Republicans; 2 undecided*
- Current Senate: 53 Democrats; 45 Republicans; 2 Independent
114th Congress Senate: 53 Republicans, 44 Democrats, 2 Independent, 1 undecided*
- *Louisiana will have runoff elections in December for 2 House seats and the Senate seat currently held by Mary Landrieu. Republicans are favored in all three races.

Key Races Senate:

- Incumbents Defeated: Mark Pryor (D-Arkansas), Mark Udall (D-Colorado), Kay Hagan (D-North Carolina)
- Retirements/Ran for Other Office: Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Carl Levin (D-Michigan), Jay Rockefeller (D-West Virginia), Tim Johnson (D-South Carolina), Mike Johanns (R-Nebraska), John Walsh (D-Montana)
- Incoming Members: Rep. Tom Cotton (R-Arkansas), Rep. Cory Gardner (R-Colorado), Rep. Gary Peters (D-Michigan), Rep. Shelley Moore Capito (R-West Virginia), Rep. Jack Kingston (R-Georgia), Tom Tillis (R-North Carolina), Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), Ben Sasse (R-Nebraska)

Key Races House:

- Incumbents Defeated: Steve Southerland (R-Florida), Joe Garcia (D-Florida), Nick Rahall (D-West Virginia), John Barrow (D-Georgia), Brad Schneider (D-Illinois), Bill Enyart (D-Illinois), Carol Shea-Porter (D-New Hampshire), Tim Bishop (D-New York), Pete Gallego (D-Texas)

- Notable Retirements/Ran for Other Office: Michele Bachman (R-Minnesota, former presidential candidate), Dave Camp (R-Michigan, Ways & Means Committee Chairman), Buck McKeon (R-California, Armed Services Committee Chairman), George Miller (D-California, former Education & Labor Committee Chairman), Jim Moran (D-Virginia, Appropriations Committee), Mike Rogers (R-Michigan, Intelligence Committee Chairman), John Dingell (D-Michigan, House Dean and former Energy & Commerce Chairman), Henry Waxman (D-California, former Energy & Commerce Committee Chairman)

Governor Results of Note:

- Democratic Gains: Pennsylvania
- Republican Gains: Arkansas, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts

House of Representatives

The leadership of the House of Representatives will remain unchanged, at least among the top three Republican positions: Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio), Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-California), and Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-Louisiana). Boehner (R-Ohio) will lead the House with a greater majority, but will continue to have difficulty controlling the Tea Party-oriented members. However, with the conservative but pragmatic Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky) leading the Senate, Boehner may have some increased leverage. On the Democratic side, no changes are expected but there is discontent after the Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-California)-Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-Maryland) team led the House Democrats to their third straight defeat.

African-oriented policy will not change, although there is more support for trade expansion, which could benefit the African continent. The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), an organization comprised of all African American members of Congress, has long been supportive of African initiatives. But as all CBC members are Democrats, the loss of the Senate slightly diminished their clout. The CBC currently had 43 members, including 42 members of the House and 1 Senator. The CBC African Task force is co-chaired by Reps. Gregory Meeks (D-New York) and Karen Bass (D-California). Meeks is particularly active in supporting trade expansion with Africa.

There will be little change as relates to Egypt, but there will likely be greater sympathy among both Republicans and Democrats towards Cairo in terms of the war against extremism. Support for Tunisia will remain strong on a bipartisan basis. Libyan policy will be openly debated, with Republicans pressing the Administration to produce a plan for North African stability.

The powerful House Appropriations Committee, which allocates funds for all federal programs including foreign assistance and defense, will see minimal change. Rep.

Harold Rogers (R-Kentucky) will remain as Chairman, with Rep. Nita Lowey (D-New York) serving as Ranking Member – the top minority position on the committee. The Foreign Operations Subcommittee Chairman will remain Kay Granger (R-Texas), with Lowey serving a dual role as subcommittee Ranking Member as well. While there will be some changes in membership, the leadership of the committee is likely to stay the same. Neither Rogers nor Granger have been particularly supportive of African assistance, but at the same time neither have opposed it. In North Africa, these two key players have been fairly supportive of Egypt – and will likely become more supportive given concerns over the Ansar Bayt Al-Maqdis-ISIL alliance. The biggest challenge is how foreign aid will be allocated in an era of austere budgets, with African programs possibly subject to across-the-board cuts.

The House Armed Services Committee will be led by Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas), who will replace retiring Rep. Buch McKeon (R-California) as Chairman. Rep. Adam Smith (D-Washington) will continue to serve as the Democratic Ranking Member. Thornberry has been an internationalist throughout his career on all issues, particularly military assistance. He is supportive of AFRICOM, the U.S. military's African command which is likely to be of increased importance in the coming years. Additionally, he has not only been supportive of Egypt over the years – consistently supporting Foreign Military Financing (FMF)and opposing earmarking assistance to Egypt – but has also remained keenly interested in Egyptian issues. It is notable that Thornberry worked as Deputy Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs under former President Ronald Reagan, and has since remained well informed on international matters.

House Energy & Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-Michigan) will lead the committee for another term, with Rep. Frank Pallone (D-New Jersey) serving as Ranking Member. Neither Upton nor Pallone are oriented towards international affairs, thus the results will have limited impact on Africa. However, it is notable that Minority Leader Pelosi attempted to bypass Pallone, who had the most seniority of any Democrat on the committee after the retirements of Reps. John Dingell (D-Michigan) and Henry Waxman (D-California), in favor of Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-California). But Pallone, with the help of the Congressional Black Caucus (which has utilized the seniority system to ensure powerful positions on committees), defeated Pelosi in a vote among House Democrats on 19 November 2014. The defeat has been interpreted as a referendum on Pelosi's power – and suggests she is incapable of enforcing party unity.

Rep. Ed Royce (R-California) will chair the House Foreign Affairs Committee for a second term, with Ranking Member Eliot Engel (D-New York) remaining as the committee's top Democrat. The Africa Subcommittee will be chaired by Rep. Christopher Smith (R-New Jersey), with Karen Bass (D-California) serving as Ranking Member. Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Florida) and Ted Deutch (D-Florida) will serve as Chairman and Ranking Member, respectively, of the Middle East & North Africa Subcommittee.

There will be no significant changes in the composition of the committee, although Royce has long been interested in African economic development, and terrorism issues. Given the ongoing campaign against ISIL and terrorism, he is likely to become more sympathetic to Egypt moving forward, and pay greater attention to Somalia, Chad, Nigeria, Kenya, and other African nations who have battled extremist groups. He will also look at other African issues which could destabilize the continent. For example, on 18 November 2014, the committee held a hearing on the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

The Africa Subcommittee will continue to be led by Christopher Smith. Smith is active as chairman, and has held hearings on a range of issues, from sectarianism to terrorism to medicine to African energy needs. He is particularly interested in Christian issues, and is a devout Catholic. Ranking Member Bass has worked well with Smith, and has attempted, through various formats, to increase congressional awareness of African issues. The full committee will likely clash with the Administration over Iran, with or without a deal on the Iranian nuclear program. Royce will also push the Administration to explain its strategy regarding ISIL, and its broader policy toward the Middle East and Africa.

Rep. Devin Nunes was chosen as new Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee by Speaker Boehner. He holds conventional views which would be similar to the outgoing chairman, Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Michigan). Nunes will look into Iran and the Middle East, and will probably review the Ebola situation. Ranking Member Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Maryland), who has been very supportive of Egypt, will work well with Nunes in one of the few committees that has usually worked in a bipartisan fashion. The committee has never had much focus on sub-Saharan African issues, but this could change given a new-found congressional interest in terrorism links through the Middle East and Africa.

The House Ways & Means Committee, which manages trade and tax policies, will be chaired by former Vice Presidential candidate and current House Budget Chairman Paul Ryan (R-Wisconsin). Ryan will take the gavel from retiring Chairman Dave Camp (R-Michigan). Ryan is aggressively in favor of free trade. He has long supported granting fast-track trade authority and AGOA. In North Africa, he was a founding member of a now-defunct Middle East trade caucus. There is a real opportunity for cooperation with the White House on trade, however Ryan is a national figure and will likely focus on the highly partisan issues of health care and tax reform. The Democratic Ranking Member will remain Sander Levin (D-Michigan). Levin is pro-organized labor and tends to publicly oppose free trade agreements, but behind the scenes he has a record of being pragmatic and helpful on trade issues.

Senate

With a change of party control, the Senate leadership will be overhauled. The Republican leadership team includes Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky), Majority Whip John Cornyn (R-Texas), and President Pro Tempe Orrin Hatch (R-Utah). The Democratic leadership remains unchanged, but no longer controls the committees, nor the legislative agenda. Harry Reid (D-Nevada) is the new Minority Leader, with Richard Durbin (D-Illinois) becoming Minority Whip.

The Senate's policy toward Africa is not likely to change significantly, with the notable exception of trade-related issues outlined above. There may also be significant assistance allocated to address the Ebola crisis, and extra attention paid to terrorism on the continent. The incoming Senate will also be more supportive, on a bipartisan basis, of Egypt because of the focus on ISIL and extremism. In regard to the foreign policy generally, and to North African and the Middle East specifically, the Republicans will likely press the Administration to explain its policy and how it protects U.S. national security interests. Africa is not expected to receive a great deal of attention, except in relation to Ebola and terrorism, and possibly new trade agreements.

The new Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee is Richard Shelby (R-Alabama), with outgoing Chairman Barbara Mikulski (D-Maryland) becoming Ranking Member. The Foreign Operations Subcommittee Chairman will be Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina), switching places with Pat Leahy (D-Vermont), who will become the Ranking Member. Shelby is a conventional conservative who has not devoted much attention to international matters in recent years. He has, however, previously served on the Senate Intelligence Committee. He is generally, if cautiously, supportive of foreign assistance, particularly military assistance. But his record on African issues specifically is one of ambivalence; he has never taken positions supportive of or detrimental to Africa. He is supportive of foreign programs that protect U.S. national security interests, and thus will likely be supportive of African nations facing terrorist threats. Accordingly, he is supportive of Egyptian assistance, based on security grounds – but still will probably not be actively engaged on the issue. Lindsey Graham will serve as Foreign Operations Subcommittee chairman, and tends to pay attention to international issues that are in the headlines. He hasn't been very active on African issues except the Ebola virus. He criticized the Administration's handling of the issue and supported freezing flights from West Africa until the virus was contained. He has been active in North Africa, particularly as it pertains to terrorism. He was critical of the removal of former Egyptian President Morsi from power, but has since become more supportive of the Egyptian government.

John McCain (R-Arizona) has been named Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. He promises to be an antagonist of the Obama Administration, particularly on Ukraine, Iran, and the campaign against ISIL. McCain also has been critical of the Sisi

government in Cairo and Omar Bashir in Sudan. He has not focused greatly on African issues, but does support AFRICOM, military assistance including to African nations, and counter-terrorism. On the Democratic side, Jack Reed – a former Army officer – is the new Ranking Member. He has considerable influence with the Obama Administration.

The Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee will be led by Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska). Outgoing Chairman Mary Landrieu (D-Louisiana) will be the Ranking Member if she wins a runoff election against Republican Bill Cassidy in December. Chairman Murkowski is well versed on energy and oil issues. Construction of the Keystone natural gas pipeline will be a top issue, and may lead to a showdown with the Obama Administration. But regardless, she is well versed on the international oil market. As such, she understands the importance of Africa, particularly Algeria and Nigeria. She will likely also be helpful to Egypt, and the security/extremism issues will appeal to her.

The Senate Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over tax and trade issues, will be chaired by Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), with Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) serving as Ranking Member. On trade, there is an opportunity for bipartisan cooperation to renew presidential trade promotion authority (TPA), a tool necessary to negotiate free trade agreements. But there is not much of an appetite at the moment for specific free trade agreements. Hatch is also supportive of AGOA and will likely lead efforts to pass an extension before next year's deadline

Sen. Bob Corker will be the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, with outgoing Chairman Bob Menendez (D-New Jersey) becoming Ranking Member. Corker is a thoughtful member, but it is unclear what his agenda will be. While he is considered a moderate and not overly partisan, he will be forced to highlight issues which question President Obama's national security strategy. This includes Iran, Ukraine, and the broader Middle East and North Africa. It is unclear how much attention will be paid to Africa. The Africa Subcommittee, which has been led by Sen. Chris Coons (D-Delaware), will be chaired by Sen. Jeff Flake (R-Arizona).

Through the Senate Intelligence Committee, Republicans will likely press the Administration on the war against ISIL and more broadly terrorism – including in Africa. Sen. Richard Burr will likely become Chairman, but to date a decision has not been made. If Burr does not lead the committee, James Risch (R-Idaho) will. Burr has never been particularly active on foreign policy matters, nor has Risch. Risch, however, has been somewhat unhelpful to Egypt, chastising Cairo in the past for failing to protect its border along Gaza; his comments echoed those made by Israel prior to the Arab Spring. Outgoing Chairman and future Ranking Member Diane Feinstein (D-California) is a serious legislator who has focused on terrorism in recent years, including terrorist threats in Africa.

The Emerging 2016 Presidential Candidate Field

Potential 2016 presidential candidates have begun emerging from the shadows in recent weeks, with the launching of campaigns expected to occur around New Years. The Democratic field looks to be small, as the prohibitive favorite remains Hillary Clinton. Other “dark horse” candidates – long shots – are expected to emerge after Clinton’s formal announcement, which will likely occur in early January. Clinton has effectively cleared the field of potential candidates by creating an extensive national network and position herself to secure a huge fundraising edge over any potential Democratic challenger. It is hard, at this point, to see who could defeat Clinton in the primary.

On the Republican side, the field is wide open with nearly two dozen names being mentioned as potential candidates. Republican leaders would prefer to offer a moderate, pro-business candidate, yet the Republican primary process still pressures any candidate to tact to the political right to appeal to conservative Republican primary voters. By doing so, a potential candidate (and past candidates like John McCain and Mitt Romney) has difficulty moving back toward the center – where they are able to win independent voters. The Tea Party faction remains influential, and thus politically problematic as their members have a disproportionate influence on the primary.

Clinton, at this point, is also the frontrunner to win the general election. She is a known entity, well respected, is the most viable woman candidate ever, and is seen as experienced and somewhat moderate. But she has several vulnerabilities, among them age (she will be 69 in 2016), that she is a polarizing figure, and while experienced she is also somewhat dated – offering little break from the unpalatable political status quo. While she has worked hard to distance herself from the increasingly unpopular President Obama, she may be accused of representing a “third Obama term.” The Republicans must field a candidate with appeal broader than Republican primary voters, and must adapt a forward-looking agenda that appeals to independents and other swing voter blocs. Appealing to older, white, and largely male voters exclusively will not win the presidency.

Democrats:

- Hillary Clinton: She is known, experienced, and has a huge edge in terms of organization and fundraising abilities. She is the clear favorite.
- Martin O’Malley: The two-term governor of Maryland and former Mayor of Baltimore has attempted to acquire nationwide recognition. He is considered a liberal, and it is unclear if he could appeal to voters in swing states. O’Malley might be running simply to position himself as a presidential candidate in 2016, or as a vice presidential candidate.
- Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-Vermont): Sanders is an independent member of the Senate who caucuses with the Democrats. He is a socialist, and on the liberal

extreme. He would likely have a small following allowing him to remain in the race for months, possibly to push the Democratic party to the left just as Tea Party candidates push Republicans to the right – though he has little chance of winning.

Republicans:

- Former Governor Jeb Bush: Bush served two terms as governor of Florida, an important swing state. He has national name recognition and a solid fundraising base, but his name is both a curse and a blessing. Additionally, he is on the wrong side (opposed to Tea Party and conservatives) of education and immigration reform, which would be good in a general election but undercuts him in a Republican primary. And like Clinton, his name does not represent change but more of the same.
- Governor Scott Walker: Walker was just re-elected to a second term as Governor of Wisconsin, a traditionally Democratic-leaning state. He has also survived a recall effort, and successfully defeated organized labor in the state. He is 47, and is popular among conservatives but has proven he can win in a swing state.
- Governor John Kasich: After winning a second term as Governor of Ohio, an important swing state, Kasich – former Chairman of the House Budget Committee – is testing presidential waters. It is hard to see him winning the race, but he could be a good vice presidential pick. Kasich appeals to moderates and the business community.
- Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio): The Ohio Senator has also served in the House and was George W. Bush's U.S. Trade Representative and Director of the Office of Management and Budget. It is hard to see Portman and Kasich both running.
- Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Florida): Rubio has long considered running for president. He is relatively young, appeals to moderates and conservatives, is from a swing state, and is Latino – an electoral asset. He has been supportive of immigration reform, which hurt him with Tea Party supporters. He is unlikely to run if Bush runs, but could be a vice presidential contender.
- Governor Rick Perry: Perry is departing after three terms as governor of Texas – a time of tremendous economic growth. He appeals to conservatives, but many question his intelligence, particularly after a terrible and unsuccessful run for the presidency in 2012.
- Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas): Cruz is the congressional leader of the Tea Party, and as such has a considerable national following. The problem is that while he could conceivably win some Republican primaries, he would make the business community somewhat uncomfortable – and would have limited appeal to independent voters. But his candidacy could influence the direction of the Republican primary, pushing candidates to the political right.

- Sen. Rand Paul (R-Kentucky): Paul is not a gadfly candidate like his father, former Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas). He has a libertarian following, Tea Party appeal, and remains in the mainstream to a large extent. But there is concern among the Republican establishment that Paul is dangerous, and could lead the party to disaster nationally. Still, he has appeal beyond the traditional Republican base, including to younger voters.
- Other Republicans: Dr. Ben Carson (surgeon and Tea Party favorite), Former Sen. Rick Santorum (social conservative and 2012 candidate), former Governor Mike Huckabee (political talk show host and 2012 candidate), Sen. Lindsay Graham (R-South Carolina, probably will not run), former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton (neoconservative, appeals to Tea Party), Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal (former member of Congress), Indiana Governor Mike Pence (former member of Congress and Ranking Member on Foreign Affairs Middle East Subcommittee)

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