

# Analysis: Ted Cruz Is Ready to Pick Up If Ben Carson Drops

Ben Carson is starting to lose some ground in national polls. Read this blurb from *Business Insider*:

*Retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson looks like he may be losing some steam in a slew of recent national and state polls that have shown clear warning signs for his candidacy.*

A Fox News poll of Republican voters released on Sunday found Carson tumbling six points, dropping back down to 18% support.

In the poll, he trailed front-runner Donald Trump, who has held steady, by 10 points. Fox's poll also put Sens. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and Marco Rubio (R-Florida) in a tie for third with 14% each.

Carson also has slumped in Iowa, the crucial first-nominating state where Carson has gained traction with the state's more conservative and evangelical groups.

According to a CBS poll released Sunday, Carson's support in the Hawkeye State has dipped to 19%. That put him below Trump, whose support sat at 28% in the poll, and Cruz, who garnered 21%. For Carson, it's a quick turn of events from last month, when he regularly surged ahead of Trump in Iowa polls.

And in the first-in-the-nation primary state of New Hampshire, Carson slipped to third in polls conducted by CBS and Suffolk University.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out why this is happening. Ben Carson is coming under intense scrutiny. Whether or not some of it is fair or not really isn't the germane question. The only thing that really matters is how Carson handles the onslaught. So far the reviews are mixed.

But the larger, more dangerous problem is that a narrative is starting to form about him. It's a narrative that may not be accurate but hey, perception is reality. And in this case the perception is that Carson may not be ready for primetime. He's starting to be looked at as, "the nice guy who's really smart but may be in over his head on policy issues." He's had to dial back comments about China in Syria and fight off attacks from his own policy advisor on his supposed inability to grasp key aspects of foreign policy. Throw in how the media is picking apart every nook and cranny of his past writings and you can see why his numbers are falling.

Enter Ted Cruz, stage right. He's on the upswing and will benefit from the Carson drop-off. Cruz is not only organized but is extremely knowledgeable about domestic and foreign policy issues. He's five paragraphs deep on each and every issue. Carson is not. Evangelicals may find a natural home with Cruz. They probably won't go to Trump because he's been bashing Carson out on the trail. Trump has hurt himself with those moves and after mocking Carson's belt buckle story, it's probably just a bridge too far for any Carson supporter looking for another candidate. Having said that, Trump probably wasn't going to get many of those voters anyhow.