

Chris Christie Joins Crowded GOP Battle for Donors

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and his supporters have formed a political-action committee ahead of a likely bid for president, adding a third well-known Republican figure to the fight for campaign funds among the party's core donor class, the Wall Street Journal reported.

The launch of the PAC, called Leadership Matters for America, is the clearest sign yet that Christie is running and allows him to assemble a team of staffers and fundraisers who could support a potential run for president, the newspaper said.

The PAC signals increased competition for the same set of large-dollar donors who have been taking calls from former Florida Governor Jeb Bush and 2012 GOP nominee Mitt Romney, both of whom are considering presidential campaigns, the Journal said. ()

Reuters could not immediately reach Christie for comment outside regular U.S. business hours.

Christie, 52, has not declared a bid for the presidency, but has discussed national themes in recent speeches and was in Iowa, a key state in the primary elections, this weekend for a summit attended by influential Republican activists.

Christie, who many conservatives see as a moderate, touted his ability to appeal to a broad segment of the electorate, from Hispanics to independent voters.

According to a poll released last Thursday, nearly three in five registered voters in New Jersey do not think Christie would make a good U.S. president.

Christie's popularity was dented over revelations that

officials in his administration ordered closures on the George Washington Bridge in 2013 that resulted in traffic jams in a town whose mayor had not endorsed the governor in his re-election bid.

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