

Under Fire, Marco Rubio to Make Policy Speech in Iowa

Republican presidential candidate U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio will be in Iowa Thursday to make a veterans policy speech.

In the speech, which will be made at 9:30 a.m. CST at the Noah's Event Venue in West Des Moines, Rubio will lay out his principles for reforming the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs so those who have served our country get the care they deserve. He will be joined by his brother, Mario, who is an Army veteran.

The senator has been criticized recently for his lack of effort organizing an effective ground game in Iowa, according to National Review. The first-in-the-nation Iowa Republican Caucus, the first stage of the nominating process, is just 53 days away.

His one-day trip this week will feature three stops.

Following his policy speech, he will travel north to the Iowa State University (ISU) campus in Ames, where he will hold a meet-and-greet at the "M Shop" in the Memorial Union beginning at 12:15 p.m. Rubio's state chairman is Jack Whitver, a Des Moines attorney who was a football standout wide receiver at ISU.

Rubio's Iowa swing will end with a meet-and-greet at Mediacom Outdoor Club in Iowa City. That event will begin at 2:30 p.m. Members of the public who wish to attend any of the events are encouraged to RSVP through Rubio's campaign website.

Perhaps adding to the establishment's concerns about a lack of ground game, this will be the 20th time he has visited Polk County, the third time he's visited Story County and the second time he's visited Johnson County. He has visited only

17 of Iowa's 99 counties, fourth worst among the GOP hopefuls.