

Mike Huckabee Says No to 2012 Presidential Bid

Mike Huckabee confirmed Saturday that he is not running for president in 2012. The former Arkansas governor used his Fox News show, "Huckabee," to make the announcement.

In 2008, Huckabee appealed to many evangelical voters and won the Iowa caucuses. As he said in his announcement, he was consistently on top of the polls and was favored higher than his peers.

Despite his stature in the polls, Huckabee has taken himself out of the race. "For me the discussion and decision is ultimately not a political one, not a financial one, not even a practical one—it's a spiritual one," he said Saturday night.

Although some wonder if he is out for good, Huckabee was pretty clear in his intentions. "All the factors say go, but my heart says no, and that's the decision I have made. In it, I have finally found some resolution," he said. "I can't predict the future, but I know for now, my answer is clear and firm. I will not seek the Republican nomination for president this year."

Huckabee concluded the speech by saying, "I'm eternally grateful for the faithful support of my wife, children and my real friends who promise to stand with me no matter what."

Although Huckabee is out of the race, he will still be a powerful voice in the election. Not only is his Fox News show popular, he also has connections with some key Iowa caucus players. Due to his influence, some presidential hopefuls will be after his endorsement. Several potential candidates made statements following Huckabee's announcement.

"Former Speaker Newt Gingrich called the announcement 'a

wonderful example for all Americans of' someone trying to do the right thing,'" a blog reported. Gingrich, who announced his candidacy last week, called Huckabee a "new star for the Republican Party" and said there is "no question he would have been a front-runner in the 2012 campaign for president" in a released statement.

"Mike Huckabee is a friend and colleague; and an important leader within the Republican Party," former Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty commented in a statement. "Mike and I agree our nation is facing big challenges and desperately needs new leadership, and I plan to work hard to earn the support of the millions of Americans who have supported him."

According to the blog, ex-Senator Rick Santorum wrote, "Those of us who believe in the virtues and values of life and family can never have enough allies, and I am grateful to Governor Huckabee for helping to keep those issues front and center." Santorum released a statement saying he was looking forward to "dialogue with Governor Huckabee and his supporters to talk of our shared commitment to fight for traditional values and the rights granted to us by our forefathers."

Real estate mogul Donald Trump also responded to Huckabee's choice not to run in a special address that immediately followed the announcement.

"I'm Donald Trump and this is a special announcement," Trump said. "Mike Huckabee is not going to be running for president. This might be considered by some people, not necessarily me, bad news because he is a terrific guy—and frankly I think he would be a terrific president. But a lot of people are very happy that he will not be running, especially other candidates. So, Mike, enjoy the show. Your ratings are terrific. You're making a lot of money. You're building a beautiful house in Florida. Good luck."

Nick Ayers, Pawlenty's campaign manager, tweeted on Huckabee's

decision. "I respect the way Huck came to his decision and announced it," Ayers posted Saturday night. "He will still have a big say in this process."