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iCaucus Head: 95% Chance Snyder Will Be Primaried

A conservative primary challenger to Gov. Rick **[SNYDER]** will announce his candidacy in two weeks at the Republican Mackinac Conference, according to the Chief Strategist of the Michigan chapter of the national grassroots conservative group iCaucus.

Kevin **HEINE** said he's been in contact with this person, who allegedly has been involved in at least one high-profile race in the last five years and has the ability to independently raise resources.

The person was not tested in the iCaucus survey released earlier this week (See "Agema, Schuette Top Snyder In Poll Of GOP Delegates," 9/3/13), Heine said, however those results showed Snyder is vulnerable among dialed-in Republican voters against a certain type of candidate.

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Asked to place odds that an impending announcement, which has been promoted on the blog, *Right Michigan*, will take place, Heine said, "95 percent." The only hang-up would be if the "money is not there," but there isn't a sign that will happen.

"I talked with him yesterday," Heine said. "He has most of the puzzle pieces in place now."

The probability that Snyder would be vulnerable in a Republican primary seemed to take a hit on Thursday with the release of numbers from the national firm, Harper Polling, which showed Snyder beating National Committeeman Dave **AGEMA**, 64-16 percent with likely Republican primary voters (See "Land At Forefront Of Potential GOP Senate Candidate Field," 9/5/13).

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The iCaucus survey of 744 former Republican convention delegates and alternates showed Agema beating Snyder 42.34 to 32.39 percent.

But Heine said comparing the two surveys misses the point. He was going after whether Snyder was vulnerable with educated Republicans.

The point was not to test Snyder against any names, per se, but to test the degree of his vulnerability, assuming he was vulnerable at all, Heine said.

What the survey showed is that once the name ID and issue education concerns are off the table, Snyder was vulnerable against Agema, Attorney General Bill **SCHUETTE** and, mathematically, former U.S. Senate candidate Gary **GLENN**, Heine said.

"There is an opinion out there among the grassroots that Snyder has poisoned the Republican brand and it's time to flush the well and start fresh," he said.

With polling showing a hypothetical race between Snyder and Democrat Mark **SCHAUER** as being a "toss-up," Snyder's re-election cannot be considered a guarantee.

A different Republican alternative could do better, or at least that's a prevailing opinion based on Snyder's support of Medicaid expansion, a new publicly owned bridge to Canada, common core educational standards and higher gasoline taxes for the state's road system, Heine contends.

"The Republican Party is supposed to be the party of smaller government," he said. "It's supposed to keep government out of people's hair and, currently, if you look at the numbers, government is not getting smaller. Medicaid expansion only adds people to the rolls."

But while the Snyder team is privately taking seriously a potential Tea Party challenge to Lt. Gov. Brian **CALLEY** at a Michigan Republican Party (MRP) convention, where the liberty caucus/Tea Party presence is stronger on a percentage basis, they are "not a bit" concerned about a Snyder primary challenge.

Polling they have shows Snyder running "extremely strong" in a Republican primary, that it would be "unlikely" someone would even manage the 15,000 signatures needed to get on the ballot, let alone stage a competitive primary.

Tom **SHIELDS** of the Marketing Resource Group (MRG) said polling he's seen does not validate the claim Snyder is vulnerable at all in a Republican primary.

"Anybody who gets into that race is wasting their time and money," Shields said. "Republicans should be consolidating their base behind a sitting governor and concentrating their time on Mark Schauer rather than playing these types of games."

Shields called the talk of a primary challenge "a lot of wishful thinking by a small group of people who are not representative of the people who will come out to vote." In reality, under Snyder, the state of Michigan is on firm financial footing for the first time in years, unemployment is down and "things are clicking as they haven't in a long time."

Stu **SANDLER** of Decider Strategies said, "Snyder is governor and is going to win his re-election as Governor."

Whether it's Right to Work or getting Michigan's "fiscal house in order," Snyder has the support of conservatives and Republicans even if they don't agree on every issue. Sandler scoffed at the idea that a mystery candidate could get much traction against the incumbent.

"As far as I know, Han **SOLO** isn't running against Rick Snyder," he said.

The grassroots group iCaucus vets and endorses conservative candidates across the country with the goal of promoting "the election of fiscal, social and constitutional conservatives."

The benchmark is to play in 40 percent of the available seats in every election cycle at the federal and state level. While a vast majority of their endorsed candidates are Republicans, there's no guarantee the group won't protect a Democrat that goes through its vetting process, Heine said.