

# GOP Voters Favor Ford Over Reagan

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If the 1976 Republican convention narrows down to a choice between President Ford and Ronald Reagan, GOP voters currently say they would favor Ford, by a margin of 58 to 36 per cent.

Ford is also the top choice of Republicans when they are asked to name their first choice for the nomination from a list of ten men who have been mentioned as possible Republican presidential candidates.

Nearly half, 48 per cent, select Ford, while 25 per cent favor Reagan. Senator Barry Goldwater (seven per cent) and Vice President Nelson Rockefeller (five per cent) are the only other men on the list to receive more than three per cent of the vote.

This question was asked to determine the first choice of GOP voters from a list of possible presidential candidates:

"Here is a list of people who have been mentioned as possible presidential candidates for the Republican nomination in 1976. Which one would you like to see nominated as the Republican candidate in 1976?"

Gerald Ford.....	48
Ronald Reagan.....	25
Barry Goldwater.....	7
Nelson Rockefeller.....	5
Elliot Richardson.....	3
Charles Percy.....	2
Howard Baker.....	2
James Buckley.....	1
John Connally.....	1
Mark Hatfield.....	1
No Preference.....	5

This question was then asked of Republicans to determine Reagan's strength in a direct showdown against Ford:

"Suppose the choice for President in the Republican convention

in 1976 narrows down to Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan. Which one would you prefer to have the Republican convention select?"

	PCT
Ford.....	58
Reagan.....	36
Undecided.....	6

Ford campaign strategists have been concerned about the possibility of a challenge from the right wing of the party. However, when the vote given the three men on the list who are identified with the conservative wing — Reagan, Goldwater and Senator James Buckley — is combined, the total conservative vote is outweighed by the more moderate vote by about 2-to-1. This ratio closely parallels the division in the Ford-Reagan match-up.

Ford is also the current top choice of independents for the GOP nomination in 1976, winning 26 per cent of their vote compared to 20 per cent for Reagan.

Ford also leads Reagan in a two-way contest (51 to 40 per cent), but by a smaller margin than among Republicans.

With Republican party affiliation at an all-time low, the GOP must obviously nominate a candidate who has the widest appeal among independents and dissident Democrats. And although independents lean 2-to-1 Democratic in their basic political outlook, they remain important to GOP presidential fortunes because they have voted Republican in every presidential election in the last quarter-century with the exception of 1964.

Following are the first choices of independent voters

## A Plea for Truth in Campaigning

Washington

Common Cause launched an attempt yesterday to introduce more truth, honesty and public access into political campaigning by setting a code of standards for candidates and monitoring their compliance during the 1976 election year.

The national citizens' lobby, which is headed by John Gardner, announced that it had submitted a checklist of campaign standards to 14 actual or potential presidential candidates and asked each of them to reply in writing whether they would promise to live up to the requirements.

The standards would require candidates to make public their personal finances, participate in public debates, renounce television commercials attacking their opponents, hold regular news conferences and interviews and, for incumbents, bar the use of taxpayer-supported staff assistance and transportation during campaigns.

New York Times

nationwide for the 1976 GOP nomination:

### FIRST CHOICES OF INDEPENDENT

	Pct.
Ford.....	26
Reagan.....	20
Goldwater.....	10
Rockefeller.....	8
Percy.....	6
Richardson.....	5
Baker.....	4
Connally.....	4
Hatfield.....	3
Buckley.....	1
Don't know.....	13

And here's how independents split in a two-way Ford vs. Reagan contest:

### INDEPENDENTS

	PCT
Ford.....	51
Reagan.....	40
Undecided.....	9