



FINDS LACK OF PASSION FOR GOVERNOR AND MAYOR'S OFFICE CANDIDATES IN MEDELLIN

Published: New York Time April 21, 2011

Resumen.

Las recientes encuestas electorales parecen reflejar una floja partida en la carrera por los puestos de gobernador y alcalde en la ciudad de Medellín, cuya meta se definirá el 26 de octubre de 2011. A medida que se acerca la meta, la batalla electoral cobrará fuerza y todas las estrategias serán usadas incluyendo las de la guerra psicológica. Mientras que los candidatos construyen sus organizaciones y se aprestan a comenzar la batalla electoral, los votantes parecen no tener una opinión formada y más bien esperan estar más cerca de los comicios antes de solidificar sus opiniones.

Abstract.

Electoral poll seems to reflect a loose game in the race by the positions of governor and mayor in the city of Medellín, whose goal will define October 26 of 2011. As the goal approaches, the electoral battle will acquire force and all the strategies will be used including those of the psychological war. As the candidates go about building to their organizations and raising electorate this time around, voters seem content to wait until the first caucuses and primaries get to closer before solidifying to their opinions.

Article.

With less than a months to go before the October caucuses, voters have yet to form strong opinions about most of their potential candidates for governors and Mayor's office in 2012, according to the latest poll.



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Only those possible contenders who regularly appear on television or in the news— or have made bids before — are well known enough to elicit significant views from their fellow partisans. And of that group, only one, former Governor Gaviria, is viewed favorably by more than half of the electorate.

The poll would seem to reflect the late start to the primary season, with many of the major likely candidates seeking to hoard their money and avoid making any missteps that they might have to live with later, when voters go to polls or caucus rooms.

While it may not be unusual for voters' attention to be focused elsewhere at this stage of a campaign, the survey at the very least provides a reality check for a race that has received frenetic coverage at times on cable news and the Internet even though nearly 60 percent of voters cannot point to a single candidate about whom they are enthusiastic, according to the poll.

A host of potential candidates have a lot of work ahead — and money to spend — to make themselves better known to their party faithful and other electorates.

For instance, former Mayor Fajardo of Medellín may be drawing media attention as presidential contender, but nearly 80 percent of electorate respondents to the poll said they did not know enough about him to say whether they viewed him favorably or unfavorably (20 percent say they view him positively and 3 percent say they view him negatively).

Former Gov. Gomez of Antioquia may be well known along the corridors of Conservatism and Catholicism— where he was once a lobbyist — and among El Colombiano -based reporters who covered him as a one-time Conservatism Party



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chairman. But 85 percent of Conservative voters said they did not know enough about him to offer an opinion.

Gomez, the one-time vice-presidential candidate and former governor of Antioquia—is the best known of the possible candidates, according to the poll. She is viewed the least favorably by the general public: Twice as many respondents over all said they had an unfavorable view of her (55 percent) as said they had a favorable view (26 percent).

Former Mayor. Sergio Fajardo of Medellin, who ran unsuccessfully for the presidential post in 2008, was not far behind her in terms of name recognition. Among all Antioquia voters, he is viewed slightly more positively than negatively, with 28 percent expressing favorable views and 24 percent expressing unfavorable views.

The poll was taken regionally Friday through Wednesday with interviews of 1,116 registered voters. It has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points for all voters and plus or minus four percentage points for Antioquia voters.

While that might indicate that there is a receptive audience for the enterprises mogul Luis Perez as he raises questions about Mr. Gaviria's political citizenship, the poll also pointed to potential roadblocks for him should he pursue a formal candidacy.

Mr. Perez has been getting considerable attention as a possibly strong contender, but just about as many Liberals view him favorably as view him unfavorably — 35 percent favorably and 32 percent unfavorably— and nearly 60 percent of Conservatives interviewed said they did not believe he was a serious candidate. (Far



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more of all voters view him unfavorably — 46 percent — than view him favorably, 25 percent.)

How well a candidate is known at this stage of a campaign is not necessarily a reflection of where they will stand when the race engages in earnest. For instance, at this point eight years ago, 77 percent of electorate surveyed by CEO said they did not know enough about Mr. Fajardo to form an opinion of him. Yet he was one of the better-known candidates by the time he dropped out in February 2008.

And the best-known and best-liked candidate at the time of that poll — taken in March 2011 — was former Mayor Fajardo of Medellin, whose campaign ultimately fizzled.

As the candidates go about building their organizations and raising electorate this time around, voters seem content to wait until the first caucuses and primaries get closer before solidifying their opinions.