# US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION – REPUBLICAN PRIMARIES

## DONALD TRUMP

**AGE**: 69

**IMPLIED ODDS**: 7/2

Chairman and President of The Trump Organisation; Founder of Trump Entertainment Resorts; Chairman of Trump Plaza Associates; Host of *The Apprentice*.

**PLATFORM**: *Make America Great Again*

### WHITEHOUSE ANALYSIS

Donald Trump has been a surprisingly dominant feature of the Republican primary contest, particularly given that most observers wrote off his candidacy as a publicity stunt. However, his high profile status as a host of *The Apprentice*, coupled with a media savvy campaign that has seen him use shock value and offensive comments about his opponents, has meant that he has received the lion's share of attention. He has also taken hard line positions on issues close to Republican voters' hearts, such as immigration and opposition to political correctness, and expresses his views using intemperate language which has again kept him in the headlines. His use of anti-establishment rhetoric, alongside his perceived status as a Washington outsider – despite his position as a well connected businessman – has also seen him win the support of those cynical about politics as usual. However, while he has constantly led in opinion polls, he remains the most divisive Republican candidate with more people expressing dislike for him than support. While he is unlikely to obtain the nomination, Republican grandees fear his outspoken approach on gender issues and immigration will toxify the party brand and make it harder for the eventual nominee to win over swing voters once the election is underway.

## JEB BUSH

Governor of Florida, 1997-2006; Adviser, Lehman Brothers; Adviser, Barclays; Board of Directors, InnoVida, Swisher Hygiene, Rayonier.

**AGE**: 62

**IMPLIED ODDS**: 15/8

**PLATFORM**: *Right To Rise*

### WHITEHOUSE ANALYSIS

The son and brother of former presidents, Jeb Bush's family name is a blessing and a curse, bringing with it the loyalty of Republican operators and influencers and instant recognition but also feeding concerns about the dynastic nature of US presidential elections. A moderate and popular former governor of a swing state, his fluency in Spanish and his Mexican wife's origins are seen as useful in helping the Republicans to appeal to a growing Hispanic electorate which has largely been sympathetic to the Democrats. He has been the most successful fundraiser, tapping the vast Bush network for $114m in donations, and has taken thoughtful positions on issues such as education and immigration. However, his campaign has been seen as lacklustre and uninspired, while he has also swung to the right on issues such as immigration to try and match the popularity of Donald Trump amongst a Republican electorate that is seen as more strident and right-wing than the country as a whole. He has also struggled to shake off his brother's legacy, being drawn into debates about the Iraq war. Nonetheless, he remains the most likely nominee, and is seen as the Republicans' best hope of defeating Hillary Clinton, the likely Democratic nominee, next November.

All odds taken from Ladbrokes

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## MARCO RUBIO

**AGE**: 44

**IMPLIED ODDS**: 11/4

Senator for Florida, 2011-Present; Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, 2006-2008; Member of the Florida House of Representatives, 2000-2008.

**PLATFORM**: *A New American Century*

### WHITEHOUSE ANALYSIS

One of three Cuban Americans in the United States Congress, Rubio has been spoken of as a potential presidential candidate since his election to the Senate in 2010. Considered a darling of the Tea Party movement and a devout Catholic who has emphasised social issues, in recent years he has moved to a more centrist position on areas such as immigration reform. A foreign policy hawk who has spoken of the need to strengthen America's military, he nonetheless voted against intervention in Syria. An advocate of lower taxes, he supports the introduction of a flat tax, balanced budget and the abolition of capital gains tax. His status as a Senator for Florida, regarded as an essential swing state since George W. Bush's controversial victory there in 2000, lends credibility to his claim to be able to defeat Hillary Clinton. With the Republican field starting to narrow, he has benefited from the decision of some of his opponents to drop out and has been edging forward in recent opinion polls. With Donald Trump not expected to maintain his frontrunner position into the New Year and with Jeb Bush struggling to gain momentum, he should be seen as a likely nominee.

## CARLY FIORINA

**AGE**: 61

**IMPLIED ODDS**: 10/1

Honorary Fellow, London Business School; Business Commentator, *Fox Business Network*; Chief Executive Officer, Hewlett-Packard; President, Lucent; Senior Vice President, AT&T.

**PLATFORM**: *New Possibilities, Real Leadership*

### WHITEHOUSE ANALYSIS

The only woman in the race, like most candidates Fiorina struggled to make an impact until she was subjected to remarks about her personal appearance by Donald Trump in an interview with *Rolling Stone*. Her televised slapdown of Trump on Fox News attracted attention and won her plaudits for standing up to his perceived chauvinism. Her powerful backstory, being able to trace her career from secretary to CEO. makes her a compelling candidate, and she is frequently mooted as a potential running mate for Bush or Rubio. Although her business background should be an asset, her performance at Hewlett-Packard has come under intense scrutiny and she has been criticised for a range of alleged sins including layoffs, offshoring and sanctions busting. A well known philanthropist, commentator and advocate of good causes, she has failed to make a big impact in the political sphere, suffering a heavy defeat in her candidacy for the Senate in 2010. She has thus far run a reasonably competent if uninspiring campaign although her team has at time been bedevilled by organisational difficulties. While she is still some way behind in the polls, she has started to register in third place after Trump and Bush and remains in serious contention for the nomination.

**\*All odds taken from Ladbrokes**

# US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION – REPUBLICAN PRIMARIES

## DR RAND PAUL

**AGE**: 52

**IMPLIED ODDS**: 33/1

Senator for Kentucky, 2011-Present; Ophthalmologist.

**PLATFORM**: *Defeat the Washington Machine*

### WHITEHOUSE ANALYSIS

Dr Paul had hoped to combine the grassroots energy and youth activism that his father's presidential campaign generated in 2012 with a much more professional and mainstream approach. He has also sought to reach out beyond the Republican base by asking challenging questions about racial injustice and inequality of opportunity, and appeal to younger voters who are less loyal to party brands and more issues-orientated. An avowed non-interventionist, Paul has also challenged Republican orthodoxy on defence policy while also reining in the excesses of his father's positions on foreign affairs. However, his attempt to enter the political mainstream has alienated those who flocked to his father's presidential campaigns, while at the same time the Republican establishment has failed to embrace him, seeing his foreign policy position as being on the fringes of political debate. He has also failed to make his voice heard in a crowded field, and like other candidates he has emphasised socially conservative issues which jar with some of his core libertarian supporters. Although his campaign initially generated some excitement, his is languishing in in low single figures and struggling to gain traction or credibility.

## BEN CARSON

Neurosurgeon; Director of Paediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Detroit; Professor of Neurosurgery; Emeritus Professor, Yale Corporation.

**AGE**: 64

**IMPLIED ODDS**: 12/1

**PLATFORM**: *Heal, Inspire, Revive*

### WHITEHOUSE ANALYSIS

Ben Carson's candidacy initially attracted little attention and like the other contenders he has struggled to make himself stand out, particularly with Donald Trump hogging the limelight. He hasn't been aided by an unusual delivery style, with his soft spoken mannerisms and habit of closing his eyes when he speaks suggesting that he lacks energy or enthusiasm. However, as a world renowned surgeon with some impressive achievements and a long history of civic duty, combined with a life story about how he pulled himself out of poverty, he has started to be seen as a potential candidate who might help the Republicans reach out to minority voters – particularly given the lack of prominent African American Republicans on the national stage. In recent weeks he has started to push himself forward, coming within the margin of error against Donald Trump in a national poll and scoring well in important primary states. Like many of the candidates, his strong views on social issues may mean that he would struggle to win over moderate voters in swing states, and while he has made a virtue out of the fact he has never held elected office, his lack of experience and gravitas in areas like foreign policy have been obvious during the debates and will likely prove an insurmountable handicap.

**\*All odds taken from Ladbrokes**

**Issues-led communications**