

**Let the Games Begin!!!!** Community Comment: Mike Goldsby, March 26, 2015

**Let the Games Begin! The 2016 Presidential Campaign is officially underway. Man this is going to be a long 20 months until November 2016.**

**Ted Cruz made it official. The Texan Senator made his announcement at the Conservative Christian University founded by Jerry Falwell. Fox News reported he made his announcement in front of an enthusiastic crowd of 10,000 students at the Lynchburg Virginia University. Other media pointed out he was at a weekly convocation class, so student attendance was mandatory. Even so, it would be exciting to be at such an event.**

**Cruz will likely be the most conservative of any of the Republican candidates. For example, he advocated abolishing the IRS at his speech. Cruz was born in Canada to an American Mother and a Cuban born father. But his Tea Party supporters seem OK with that. He will keep his Senate Seat even if he is not nominated in the primaries.**

**Cruz has held State and Federal jobs since 1999. He has been a Texas State Senator for the past two years, the first Hispanic Senator elected in Texas.**

**Cruz may be the first official candidate, but a lot of potential candidates have been talking about the possibility of determining the feasibility of forming an exploratory group to look into a potential candidacy.**

**Why would candidates wait? Because an official candidacy triggers more accountability and more paperwork. A formal candidate has to report exact funds raised and where they are spent. A formal candidate has to announce who has made donations. The law lowers the allowable amount donated by an individual. So you can see why candidates flirt with making the announcement rather than making a commitment.**

**There is a large field of potential candidates on the Republican side. Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush has name recognition. Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, Kentucky Senator Rand Paul and Florida Senator Marco Rubio have all expressed some interest or intention to run.**

But they could be joined by New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee and Former Senator Rick Santorum from Pennsylvania. Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan have declared they will not run but Donald Trump might. And you can never count Sara Palin out. That is a pretty crowded field but also a lot of choices.

Fewer names on the Democratic side, with Joe Biden, Andrew Cuomo and Hillary Clinton all suggesting they might run. Clinton certainly has name recognition and domestic and foreign affairs experience, but she carries baggage as well.

But while this public candidate drama is unfolding, super political action committees are at work, behind the scene, influencing this process with as much money as they can muster. And it costs a lot to get into that game.

The Washington Post this Week quoted Lobbyist Kenneth Kies. "A couple presidential elections ago, somebody who had raised, say, \$100,000 for a candidate was viewed as a fairly valuable asset. Today, that looks like peanuts. People like me are probably looking around saying, 'How can I do anything that even registers on the Richter scale?'"

I guess that explains why I haven't been courted by any of the candidates.

This is Mike Goldsby for Community Comment