

Romney On Immigration: 'The More Mitt Speaks, The Less Believable He Becomes'

Targeted News Service

December 26, 2007 Wednesday 12:54 AM EST

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Length: 1783 words

Byline: Targeted News Service

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

The presidential campaign of Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., **issued** the following news release:

"If Republicans are voting for Mitt **Romney** because they think he would be tougher on illegal **immigration** than John McCain would be, they need to explain how **Romney** suddenly switched from supporting McCain's position just two years ago to attacking it (with distortions) this year. ... The difference is, Republicans know for sure that McCain isn't hiding his true position. The same cannot be said of **Romney** and Giuliani." -- New Hampshire Union Leader

"In this primary, the more Mitt **Romney** speaks, the less believable he becomes." -- New Hampshire Union Leader

Last Year, **Romney** Supported "Path Toward Citizenship" For Illegal Immigrants, Said Republicans Breaking With President Bush On **Immigration** "Made A Big Mistake"

"Gov. Mitt **Romney** Expressed Support ... For An **Immigration** Program That Places Large Numbers Of Illegal Residents On The Path Toward Citizenship ... **Romney** Said Illegal Immigrants Should Have A Chance To Obtain Citizenship." (Evan Lehmann, "**Romney** Supports **Immigration** Program, But Not Granting 'Amnesty,'" The Lowell Sun, 3/30/06)

Romney: "I don't believe in rounding up 11 million people and forcing them at gunpoint from our country ... With these 11 million people, let's have them registered, know who they are. Those who've been arrested or convicted of crimes shouldn't be here; those that are here paying taxes and not taking government benefits should begin a process towards application for citizenship, as they would from their home country."

(Evan Lehmann, "**Romney** Supports **Immigration** Program, But Not Granting 'Amnesty,'" The Lowell Sun, 3/30/06)

"[M]assachusetts Gov. Mitt **Romney**, Has Made It Known That He Supports The President's **Immigration** Position, Saying That Republicans Who Have Broken Rank With Bush 'Made A Big Mistake.'" (Liz Sidoti, "McCain May Alienate Some Conservatives," The Associated Press, 9/20/06)

In 2005, **Romney** Called McCain **Immigration** Proposals "Reasonable" And "Quite Different" From Amnesty

In November 2005, **Romney** Spoke "Approvingly Of Efforts By McCain And Bush To Solve The Nation's **Immigration** Crisis," Calling McCain's Proposal "Quite Different" From Amnesty And Deeming It "Reasonable." "When Mitt **Romney** swooped into the heart of John McCain country this week, he brought a pointed message on illegal **immigration**: McCain's approach is the wrong one. ... But that is markedly different from how **Romney** once characterized McCain's bill, elements of which are receiving new attention in Congress and from President Bush. ... In a November 2005 interview with the Globe, **Romney** described **immigration** proposals by McCain and others as

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'quite different' from amnesty, because they required illegal immigrants to register with the government, work for years, pay taxes, not take public benefits, and pay a fine before applying for citizenship." (Scott Helman, "**Romney**'s Words Grow Hard On **Immigration**," The Boston Globe, 3/16/07)

* **Romney** In November 2005: "I think an amnesty program is what -- which is all the illegal immigrants who are here are now citizens, and walk up and get your citizenship. What the president has proposed, and what Senator McCain and Cornyn have proposed, are quite different than that. They require people signing up for a -- well, registering and receiving a, if you will, a number -- a registration number. Then working here for six years and paying taxes -- not taking benefits. Health, Medicaid, food stamps and so forth, not taking benefits. And then at the end of that period, registering to become a citizen, or applying to become a citizen and paying a fee. And those are things that are being considered. And I think that that's -- that those are reasonable proposals."

* (Audio: www.boston.com, Scott Helman, "**Romney**'s Words Grow Hard On **Immigration**," The Boston Globe, 3/16/07)

Listen To **Romney** Call McCain **Immigration** Position "Reasonable" And "Quite Different" From Amnesty

Romney Sends "Vague And Seemingly Inconsistent Messages" On **Immigration** As "His Public Statements Suggest He Actually Agrees With Major Tenets Of The [McCain] Proposal"

New Hampshire Union Leader: "Republicans Know For Sure That McCain Isn't Hiding His True Position [On **Immigration**]. The Same Cannot Be Said Of **Romney** And Giuliani." "If Republicans are voting for Mitt **Romney** because they think he would be tougher on illegal **immigration** than John McCain would be, they need to explain how **Romney** suddenly switched from supporting McCain's position just two years ago to attacking it (with distortions) this year. ... The fact is, neither **Romney** nor Giuliani nor McCain has a pure conservative record on **immigration**. The difference is, Republicans know for sure that McCain isn't hiding his true position. The same cannot be said of **Romney** and Giuliani." (Editorial, "**Romney**'s Migration: He Shouldn't Need To Lie," New Hampshire Union Leader, 12/19/07)

Time Magazine: "[W]hen **Romney** Slowed Down And Focused On A Single **Issue** -- **Immigration** -- At A Press Conference In Dover, N.H., The Brazen Cynicism Of His Candidacy Became Almost Embarrassing." (Joe Klein, "Mitt **Romney**'s Disappointing Campaign," Time, 5/31/07)

Tampa Tribune: **Romney** "Sent Vague And Seemingly Inconsistent Messages" On **Immigration**. "As **immigration** reform continues to divide the candidates in the Republican presidential primary, Mitt **Romney** sent vague and seemingly inconsistent messages on the **issue** in a campaign swing through Florida Thursday. [R]omney said he opposes the current reform package in the Senate, but wouldn't say what it would take to fix it." (William March, "**Romney** Vague On **Immigration**," Tampa Tribune's "March On Politics" Blog, 5/25/07)

* Tampa Tribune: "In The Past, **Romney** Has Appeared To Support Allowing Illegal Immigrants To Apply For Citizenship Without Having To Leave The Country First."

(William March, "**Romney** Vague On **Immigration**," Tampa Tribune's "March On Politics" Blog, 5/25/07)

Miami Herald: **Romney**'s Statements "Suggest He Actually Agrees With Major Tenets" Of Plan He Claims To Oppose. "Republican presidential candidate Mitt **Romney** said he 'strongly opposes' an **immigration** plan also denounced by his party's conservative wing, yet his public statements suggest he actually agrees with major tenets of the proposal in Congress." (Beth Reinhard and Lesley Clark, "**Romney**'s **Immigration** Stance At Odds With State GOP Leaders," The Miami Herald, 5/24/07)

Palm Beach Post: **Romney** Offered "Mixed Message On Illegal Immigrants ... Saying He Supports Allowing Them To Apply To Become Permanent Residents But Opposes Current Legislation That Would Allow Them To Do Just That." "Mitt **Romney** offered a mixed message on illegal immigrants Thursday, saying he supports allowing them to apply to become permanent residents but opposes current legislation that would allow them to do just that. ... While **Romney**, the former governor of Massachusetts, said he would 'not deny' illegal immigrants the 'opportunity to

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apply for permanent residency or citizenship,' he would not say how he would change the proposed legislation to make such application acceptable." (Brian Crowley, "**Romney Skirts Solution To Immigration Issue**," Palm Beach Post, 5/25/07)

St. Petersburg Times: "Facing Scrutiny In Florida On **Immigration**, Republican Presidential Candidate Mitt **Romney** Shed Little Light On His Policy During Campaign Stops Thursday." (David DeCamp, "**Romney** Offers Little On **Immigration**," St. Petersburg Times, 5/25/07)

St. Petersburg Times: **Romney** "Did Not Provide Many Details About How He Would Deal With Illegal Immigrants Already In The Country." "**Romney**, a former governor of Massachusetts, opposes the **immigration** bill in Congress supported by key Floridians, including Gov. Charlie Crist and Sen. Mel Martinez, both Republicans. The bill would give an estimated 12-million illegal immigrants a route to legal residency and citizenship. **Romney**, however, did not provide many details about how he would deal with illegal immigrants already in the country."

(David DeCamp, "**Romney** Offers Little On **Immigration**," St. Petersburg Times, 5/25/07)

The Boston Globe: **Romney** "Has Offered No Specific **Solutions** Of His Own To The **Immigration** Crisis ... [And] Is Facing Increasing Questions About What He Would Do About The Problem." "[W]hile **Romney** has been aggressive with his barbs, he has offered no specific **solutions** of his own to the **immigration** crisis. With McCain and his surrogates pushing the **issue** hard, **Romney** is facing increasing questions about what he would do about the problem." (Scott Helman, "Critics Press **Romney** On **Immigration** View," The Boston Globe, 6/1/07)

Hotline Blog: "[I]f You're Wondering Precisely What Mitt **Romney** ... Would Actually Do With The 11-12M Illegal Immigrants Already Here, Well, You'll Have To Wait A While. No Specific Proposals Are Forthcoming, We Are Told." ("McCain Is A Lone Wolf On **Immigration**," The Hotline's "On Call" Blog, 5/23/07)

The Politico: "**Romney** Continues To Punt On What To Do With The 12 Million Illegal Immigrants In The Country." (Jonathan Martin, "The 'A' Word," The Politico, 5/25/07)

Romney's Current **Immigration** Attacks Called "Not True," "Misleading," "Lie"

Fox News' Chris Wallace: Mitt **Romney's** **Immigration** Attack "Is Not True." WALLACE: "Let me turn to another subject. Mitt **Romney** is putting out a mailer in New Hampshire now that says that you support Social Security benefits for illegals, which is not true." (Fox News' "Fox News Sunday," 12/26/07)

* Watch

Fox News' Chris Wallace Call **Romney's** New Hampshire Mailer "Not True"

The New York Times: **Romney's** New Hampshire Mailer Provides "Misleading Information About [McCain's] Positions On **Immigration**." "The pamphlet goes on to provide misleading information about the rivals' positions on **immigration**. It says, for instance, that Mr. McCain supports giving Social Security to illegal immigrants. In truth, Mr. McCain supported legislation that would allow illegal immigrants who come forward, pay fines, then wait their turn to become citizens the chance to collect Social Security -- but only after they are citizens." (Marc Santora, "**Romney** Goes Negative," The New York Times' Caucus Blog, 12/7/07)

New Hampshire Union Leader On **Romney Immigration** Attack On McCain: "That Is A Lie." "Earlier this month **Romney** sent a flyer to New Hampshire households stating that McCain would grant Social Security benefits to illegal aliens. That is a lie. Both McCain and **Romney** would grant benefits to immigrants only after they receive citizenship." (Editorial, "**Romney's** Migration: He Shouldn't Need To Lie," New Hampshire Union Leader, 12/19/07)

TNS JF78JF-071227-1313940 18MASHJofrey

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Romney On Immigration: 'The More Mitt Speaks, The Less Believable He Becomes'

Publication-Type: Newswire

Subject: US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES 2008 (96%); **IMMIGRATION** (93%); US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES 2012 (92%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (91%); CITIZENSHIP (91%); US REPUBLICAN PARTY (90%); HEADS OF GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS (90%); CAMPAIGNS & ELECTIONS (90%); US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS (90%); CITIZENSHIP LAW (77%); ARRESTS (77%); CRIMINAL OFFENSES (77%); NATURALIZATION (77%); MIGRATION **ISSUES** (72%); CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS (64%)

Company: ASSOCIATED PRESS (52%)

Person: MITT **ROMNEY** (93%); JOHN MCCAIN (90%)

Load-Date: December 27, 2007

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