

## **Immigration Announcement May Overshadow Romney Bus Tour**

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**Highlight:** As he begins his **bus tour** Friday, Mr. **Romney**, who has lain low and focused much of his time on fund-raising since winning the Republican nomination, now will likely be forced to wade into an issue that he had steered clear of for most of the campaign.

### **Body**

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BOSTON - Mitt Romney begins a five-day bus tour on Friday, during which he had hoped to make his case to small-town voters that President Obama's economic policies are failing everyday Americans. But the Romney campaign may find it more difficult to stay on message in the wake of the Obama administration's announcement that it would stop deporting younger immigrants who came to the United States as children.

Mr. Romney, who has lain low and focused much of his time on fund-raising since winning the Republican nomination, now will likely be forced to wade into an issue that he has steered clear of for most of the general election campaign after a nominating fight in which he took positions that alarmed some immigrant rights groups. A Romney spokesman said on Friday that the campaign would be issuing a statement on the policy change.

Four buses will carry Mr. Romney, his aides and the press to rural New Hampshire on Friday, with later stops in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Iowa, Wisconsin and Michigan.

"All six of those states were won by President Obama in 2008," said Russ Schriefer, a senior strategist, during a rare on-the-record briefing at Mr. Romney's headquarters here. "So we're certainly campaigning on their turf, as opposed to what would be considered our turf."

The Romney campaign is entering a new phase in the general election. Its fast-growing staff, which already fills a few floors of a former furniture warehouse in Boston's north end, just spilled over into a new building nearby. Now it is trying to expand its voter base, as well.

The bus tour is a departure from Mr. Romney's recent approach to campaigning in two key ways. While the Republican nominee has recently focused on highlighting the woes of small businesses in and around big cities, his outreach this time to small-town America is deliberate and conspicuous. Among these "smaller towns off the beaten path," as Mr. Schriefer put it, are Troy, Ohio, Quakertown, Pa., and DeWitt, Mich. His first stop - the 300-acre Scamman farm in Stratham, N.H. - is where he officially began his campaign a year ago.

"Lot of ice cream, lot of cheeseburgers, lot of classic retail," said Rick Gorka, Mr. Romney's traveling spokesman. (Incidentally, one of those cheeseburgers will be with Representative John A. Boehner in the House speaker's home state of Ohio.)

Also, as the Romney campaign has sought to capitalize on President Obama's recent gaffes, the Republican is opening himself up to the types of moments that have led him to stray from his intended message in the past.

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Rather than relying on rallies of handpicked party loyalists, "we're expecting people who are not traditional Republicans to come out and listen," Mr. Schriefer said. That effort to reach a broader audience includes a Father's Day interview on CBS's "Face the Nation," Mr. Romney's first Sunday interview of the 2012 cycle not on "Fox News Sunday."

Mr. Romney's rapport with his big-name surrogates will be scrutinized just as much as his interactions with everyday voters. His list of guests include those who appear to have received callbacks in the vice-presidential audition process, including Senator Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire and former Gov. Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota in New Hampshire on Friday.

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