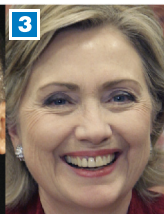


Hopefuls in 2008 White House race

Senator Barack Obama has taken the first step towards a White House run, raising the possibility the U.S. could get its first black president in 2008. The Democrat rising star has formed an exploratory committee to allow him to raise money and hire staff for his bid



Democrats who have formed exploratory committees*:

Chris Dodd Connecticut Sen.

John Edwards (1)
Former North Carolina Sen.

Dennis Kucinich Ohio Rep.

Barack Obama (2) Illinois Sen.

Tom Vilsack Iowa Gov.

Potential Democratic candidates:

Joe Biden Delaware Sen.

Wesley Clark Retired Gen.

Hillary Rodham Clinton (3)
New York Sen.

Al Gore Former Vice President

John Kerry Massachusetts Sen.

Bill Richardson New Mexico Gov.

*** Exploratory committee:** Allows candidates to legally raise and spend money without full disclosure of sources required of true candidates



Republicans who have formed exploratory committees:

Sam Brownback Kansas Sen.

Jim Gilmore Former Virginia Gov.

Rudy Giuliani (4)
Former New York City Mayor

John McCain (5) Arizona Sen.

Mitt Romney
Former Massachusetts Gov.

Tommy Thompson
Former Wisconsin Gov.

Duncan Hunter California Rep.

Ron Paul Texas Rep.

Tom Tancredo Colorado Rep.

Potential Republican candidates:

Mike Bloomberg New York Mayor

Newt Gingrich Former House Speaker

Chuck Hagel Nebraska Sen.

Mike Huckabee Former Arkansas Gov.

George Pataki Former New York Gov.