

Tim Pawlenty

By **FEIFEI SUN** Monday, Feb. 14, 2011

Age: 51

Last held public office: Governor of Minnesota, 2003-2011

A finalist to be John McCain's running mate in 2008, Tim Pawlenty can claim a feat few others have pulled off: He governed a Blue state with a Democratic legislature for two terms and came away with a conservative record. He closed budget gaps without raising taxes, put conservative judges on the bench and nabbed an A rating from the libertarian Cato Institute in 2010.

Pawlenty's problem is that few voters outside of Minnesota know about him, and even fewer Republican activists find themselves bedazzled by his mild-mannered midwestern charms. Despite numerous visits to Iowa and New Hampshire and a heavily promoted publicity jaunt for his book, *Courage to Stand*, Pawlenty still lacks the visibility of some of his opponents, like Sarah Palin and Mitt Romney. Less than 40% of Americans recognized his name in a January Gallup poll, and even fewer, 13%, held a favorable view of the Republican. **(See Pawlenty as part of those who might take on Obama in 2012.)**

Pawlenty has some veteran aides advising him, but he lacks the pull to create fundraising fireworks. He has a long way to go to catch up to the front of the pack.

Representative quote: "The individual mandate in Obamacare is a page right out of the Jimmy Carter playbook. The left simply doesn't understand. The individual mandate reflects completely backwards thinking. They, the bureaucrats, don't tell us what to do. We, the people, tell the government what to do!"

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