

7-14-2016

Veepstakes

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Recommended Citation

University of Dayton. "Veepstakes" (2016). http://wayback.archive-it.org/4727/20160921052651/https://www.udayton.edu/news/articles/2016/07/christopher_devine_on_mike_pence.php

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NEWS

Thursday July 14, 2016

Veepstakes

The following are initial comments from Christopher Devine, assistant professor of political science, on the latest developments in Election 2016:

"Media reports indicate that Donald Trump will select Indiana Gov. Mike Pence as his running mate on the Republican ticket. This is a relatively safe pick, particularly in comparison to the other two apparent vice presidential finalists, Newt Gingrich and Chris Christie.

"Pence is not as bombastic or exciting as those two contenders; in fact, many describe him as fairly boring. I think that's a useful contrast to Trump, who needs no help in getting media attention or attacking his opponents.

"Pence's selection seems intended to bring stability and experience to the Republican ticket, so as to reassure voters who consider Trump too volatile and inexperienced to serve as president. Also, Pence may help to reassure conservative Republicans, as someone long associated with socially conservative causes and who endorsed Ted Cruz, albeit without much enthusiasm, in the Indiana primary.

"Vice presidential candidates typically do not deliver states or demographic groups, and I think Trump was wise not to seek those illusory advantages with this selection. Instead, he has picked someone who will neither scare off or attract many voters, thus having little electoral effect.

"What's more important, if Trump wins the presidency, is that he will have in Pence a key advisor with legislative and executive experience who can also credibly serve as president should he be called upon to succeed Trump."