



## Newcomer to Senate race beats Mack, LeMieux in Pinellas County straw poll

Little-known but fiery U.S. Senate candidate Marielena Stuart earned a surprise victory in a straw poll of Pinellas County Republicans on Monday, wowing the crowd with tea party rhetoric and demonstrating just how volatile the race to unseat Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson is two months before the Aug. 14 primary.

"I am very excited," Stuart said after the announcement. "I am on my way to Washington."

Straw polls don't often carry much weight — take Herman Cain's sizable win during Florida's Presidency V straw poll in September. But the Pinellas group got it right early on in the 2010 Florida Senate race, choosing Marco Rubio over hometown Gov. Charlie Crist months before Crist left the Republican Party.

Stuart nabbed 110 votes, former Sen. George LeMieux took 69, and frontrunner Rep. Connie Mack -- who didn't show for the poll -- took 12. Former Rep. Dave Weldon got five votes, and retired Army Col. Mike McCalister, who also didn't attend, got four.

LeMieux was the only candidate who attacked Mack for missing the straw poll.

Mack, the four-term congressman who received a slew of recent endorsements from the GOP establishment, has declared himself the clear choice to face Nelson but has not fared well in straw polls.

The other candidates are polling in only single digits, but they're not ready to concede before the primary.

"He won't come before you because he wants to just be crowned for this election. Well, we're not going to have a coronation in Florida. We're going to have an election," LeMieux said.

Posted by Katie Sanders at 9:23 PM on Monday, Jun. 11, 2012

Comments selected for this archive:

I was at that PCREC meeting and Marielena Stuart was apple pie, Chevrolet and brilliant. She is knowledgeable on world affairs and would beat the socks off the politicians if she would get the exposure she deserves. Standing ovations, foot stomping, clapping and hooting of approval for her points of observation and ideals for a free America. I have never seen a reaction of this group like last night. Never. She will be loved by the people of America.

Floridians should open their ears and hear this woman of integrity! Here's a taste! Pass it on.

<http://soundcloud.com/marielenastuart2012/marielena-stuart-memorial-day>

She has a facebook page and website. [www.stuart.com](http://www.stuart.com)

Can we get a REAL CONSERVATIVE elected? I think we can. Here she is America!

Posted by: Deb | June 13, 2012 at 01:27AM

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I was there. It was an American moment. This was not Tea Party rhetoric, but truth that all of us need to know. Communism, socialism, Agenda 21 are the dangers that face us and if you are not knowledgable, you need to be. This woman was beaten and left for dead by the communists. Truth is the only answer to restore our Constitution. We need to get behind Marielena Stuart and send a REAL PATRIOT to Congress.

Posted by: Barbara Bartlett | June 13, 2012 at 12:23PM

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