

Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal enters 2016 presidential race

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New Orleans: Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal said Wednesday he was entering the already crowded Republican race for president in 2016, and the 44-year-old son of Indian immigrants quickly tried to set himself apart as "the youngest candidate with the longest resume."

Short video clips on his website showed Jindal and his wife, Supriya, talking to their three children about the campaign to come. "Mommy and daddy have been thinking and talking a lot about this, and we have decided we are going to be running for president," he tells them.

Jindal planned a kickoff rally later Wednesday. Aides said he plans to focus on social conservatives.

The Oxford-educated Jindal talked a governor into appointing him state health secretary when he was 24, with little background in either health management or government. Jindal won election to Congress at 32 and became governor four years later.

Unpopular at home, Jindal waited until the state legislative session had ended and lawmakers found a way to close a \$1.6 billion budget gap before he scheduled his presidential announcement. But he has been building his campaign for months with frequent trips to key early indicator states, particularly Iowa, where he has focused on Christian conservatives.

Raised a Hindu but a convert to Catholicism as a teenager, Jindal has talked of his religious faith in small churches across Louisiana. As he readied his presidential campaign, the governor met pastors across several states and put out an executive order to grant special "religious freedom" protections to people in Louisiana who oppose same-sex marriage.

His rivals in the presidential race include Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, who also are trying to appeal to evangelical voters.

Jindal has drawn distinctions from other Republican contenders by noting he has published "detailed plans" on health care, defense, education and energy policy. He has suggested governors are better equipped to become president because they have run state governments, balanced budgets and implemented policy.

- AP