

Ron Paul Gains New Currency

By, Shawn Zeller
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He's still a long shot for the presidency, but Republican Rep. [Ron Paul](#) of Texas has leapfrogged into a distinction usually reserved for chief executives — and dead ones, at that: His visage now graces a coin.

To be sure, the disks were not struck by the U.S. Mint. They are, rather, a rival currency called the Liberty Dollar, which lately has been fighting a court battle over a mint consumer advisory not to use the dollar coins — which are designed for barter transactions — as legal tender.

Paul is a natural choice to grace the Liberty Dollar — as well as the steeper \$20 silver and \$1,000 gold editions of the currency — because he shares the Indiana company's preference for currency backed by precious metals. Paul's campaign spokesman Jesse Benton says his boss supports "legalized competition between Federal Reserve notes and other specie currency" by allowing people to pay for goods and services with gold or silver.

Still, Benton says that however flattering the homage may be, Paul isn't endorsing the use of Paul dollars. Indeed, he stresses that the campaign wants to keep collecting the Federal Reserve-sanctioned funds that other presidential hopefuls are using to fund their efforts. "We would greatly prefer that folks would just donate rather than buy a Ron Paul dollar," he says. "We think that's the best way to help out Ron Paul."