

2016 Presidential Primary Elections and Caucuses

Susan Gill, Citrus County Supervisor of Elections

November 12-13, 2016

United States Presidential Election Process

- ▶ Presidential Primary elections and caucuses held in each state and territory are part of the nominating process.
- ▶ Some states only hold primary elections - some only caucuses - others a combination of both.
- ▶ Generally conducted between January-June before the general election in November.

What is the Difference between the Presidential Primary & Caucus?

- ▶ Primary elections are run by the state and local governments.
- ▶ Caucuses are private events that are directly run by political parties. A meeting of supporters or members of a specific political party or movement.

What is an Indirect Election?

- ▶ The Presidential Primary and Caucuses are indirect elections.
- ▶ Instead of voters directly selecting a particular person running for President, it determines how many delegates each party's national convention will receive from their respective state.
- ▶ The delegates then in turn select their party's presidential nominee.
- ▶ Each party determines how many delegates are allotted to each state.

Political Delegation Membership

- ▶ Delegation also includes both Democratic and Republican “unpledged” delegates, usually current and former elected officeholders and party leaders, who can vote for whomever they want.

The National Democratic and Republican Conventions

- ▶ The parties officially nominate their candidate for President at their respective conventions.
- ▶ Pledged delegates, members of the party committee, are expected to vote in accordance with the rules of their state party.
- ▶ Unpledged delegates (super delegates) may vote for whomever they choose.
- ▶ Conventions held in the Summer of 2016.

Voting at the Conventions

- ▶ Depending on state law and state party rules, when voters cast their ballots for a candidate in a presidential caucus or primary, they may be voting to actually award delegates bound to vote for a particular candidate at the state or national convention, or they may simply be expressing an opinion that the state party is not bound to follow in selecting delegates to the national convention.

Recent Elections

- ▶ In recent elections, the eventual nominees were known well before the actual convention took place. The last time a major party's nominee was not clear was in 1976, when incumbent Gerald Ford narrowly defeated Ronald Reagan.

Caucus States and Territories

- ▶ Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Minnesota, Nevada, North Dakota, Wyoming
- ▶ American Samoa, Guam, Virgin Islands
- ▶ All other states and Puerto Rico use Primary Elections or a combination of voting formats.

Early Primary/Caucus States

- ▶ Monday, February 1
 - Iowa Caucus
- ▶ Tuesday, February 9
 - New Hampshire
- ▶ Saturday, February 20
 - Nevada Caucus (Dem)
- ▶
 - South Carolina (Rep)
- ▶ Tuesday February 23
 - Nevada Caucus (Rep)
- ▶ Saturday, February 27
 - South Carolina (Dem)

March 1, 2016 Super Tuesday

- ▶ Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado Caucuses, Georgia
- ▶ Massachusetts, Minnesota Caucuses, North Carolina
- ▶ Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia

Remaining March 2016 Primaries and Caucuses

- ▶ Saturday, March 5 Kansas Caucus, Kentucky (REP)
- ▶ Louisiana, Nebraska (Dem Caucus)
- ▶ Tuesday, March 8 Hawaii Caucus (REP), Mississippi,
Michigan
- ▶ Sunday, March 13 Puerto Rico (REP)
- ▶ Tuesday, March 15 **FLORIDA**, Ohio, Illinois, Missouri
- ▶ Tuesday, March 22 Arizona, Utah
- ▶ Saturday, March 26 Alaska Caucus (DEM), Hawaii Caucus (Dem)

Remaining States

- ▶ Tuesday, April 5 Wisconsin
- ▶ Tuesday, April 19 New York
- ▶ Tuesday, April 26 Connecticut, Delaware,
Maryland, Pennsylvania,
Rhode Island
- ▶
- ▶
- ▶ Remaining states in primary elections in May and June 2016.