

The Democratic Primaries: A Primer

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Back to tracking AZ Legislation! This may be the final “special topics” Legislative Alert for awhile as the AZ Legislature reconvenes in a couple of weeks and attention will be re-directed from the national scene to (mainly) state legislative work.

Republicans, too, have state primaries to choose a candidate, but these are largely uncontested and some actually cancelled as the Republican National Committee has put its full support behind DJT so he is the only viable Republican candidate.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_Republican_Party_presidential_primaries

The Democratic Primer Part I. (Click [here](#) to see the state-by-state delegate count, or scroll down).

Considerable emphasis is being placed on the “early primaries” for the Democratic nomination, although the chances are no candidate will have enough delegates until late in the process or even by the entire end of the “primary season” to gain the nomination. That means continuing drama throughout the spring. Some states with later primaries – like Arizona in mid-March could be the ones to put a candidate “over the top” or, the winning candidate will still not be known until after the second ballot at the Democratic convention, Milwaukee, WI, July 13-16. Here’s how it works:

- **Proportional Allocation; not “winner take all”** -- Candidates compete in a state’s primary to win delegates who are bound on the first round of voting at the Democratic national convention in July. However, winning a state’s primary does not mean as much as one might think, because delegates are apportioned proportionately to the votes they receive in the state’s primary election – not by the “winner take all” system.
- **For example--** There are 41 pledged delegates allocated to Iowa. Current polling in Iowa shows Biden, Buttigieg, and Sanders all with about 23% of the likely voters, Elizabeth

Warren with 15%, Klobachar with 7% and the others with just 2 or 3%.¹ **How many delegates would each get?** First, one of the rules is that a candidate has to get at least 15% of the vote to receive ANY delegates. Thus, if the primary were today and if the latest polls are correct Biden would receive 11 delegates, and so would Sanders and Buttigieg. Warren would receive 7 and no one else would get any.² If this were a “winner take all” system, the candidates with a tiny margin of victory over the others would get all 41 delegates. This makes the Democratic primary very different!

- There are a total of approximately 3,979 unpledged delegates. It will take half of those, 1,990 to win. At the end of February, if the current poll figures stay, here’s a probable result:

Biden – 59 delegates by end of February
Sanders - 40 delegates
Warren - 35 delegates
Buttigieg - 21 delegates

- **At the end of “super Tuesday on March 3” when 1,512 delegates will have been allocated, based on voting in 26 states, there still will be no candidate with even close to 1,990 delegates unless all but one of the front runners drops out. Here’s a possible total, based on current polls filling in with national averages when no state poll exists:³**

Biden – 656 delegates by end of Super Tuesday
Sanders - 481 delegates
Warren - 354 delegates
Buttigieg - 21 delegates (does not reflect his momentum out of Iowa)

- **At the end of it all (using mostly national polls as there are very few state ones), here’s a likely result:**

Biden – 1831 delegates going into convention
Sanders - 1263 delegates
Warren - 884 delegates
Buttigieg - (No way to estimate as polling not keeping up with his momentum

out of Iowa). However, suppose he continues to take votes from Biden and, in effect, splits the “moderate” vote with Joe Biden. The “moderates” would have about 1800 – 1900 total and the “progressives” would have about 2000 to 2100 going into the convention.

How many delegates does each state get? That’s a complicated formula based mainly on democratic votes in the last general election. <https://www.thegreenpapers.com/P20/D-Alloc.phtml>
This site has all the detail you want and more on the democratic allocation formula and delegates per state.

¹ CBS poll, 1/6/2019.

² Here’s the formula for excel: Sum the percentage for candidates with more than 15% to get a “percent available) figure (.23+.23+.23+.15=.84); then divide each candidates poll percent by the “percent available” (.23/.84=.27) and multiply by the number of delegates (.27*41=11).

³ Most of the states have NO state-wide polls or only very old ones (like, July). National figures used when no recent state polls.

BUT WAIT. There's more. What about those "super delegates"?

The Primer: Part II (Convention)

Super Delegates – Now called "unpledged" delegates, the so-called "super delegates" actually are appointed high-ranking Democratic stalwarts appointed from the ranks of current Governors, Congressmen/women and former elected Democratic public officials. Some media are calling them "lobbyists and insiders" but this is hardly a reasonable representation. The unpledged delegates have earned the trust of thousands of democratic voters and many (most) would agree they have earned (by virtue of their elections) something to say about the party's presidential nominee.

At the Convention, the **pledged delegates** **MUST** vote for the candidate to which they are pledged **on the first round of voting**. They are pledged to the candidate, based on the state primary process. A candidate – even if withdrawn from the race – cannot instruct his/her delegates to vote for someone other than the candidate they were pledged to. This means that the first round of voting results will already be known.

Second round of voting, however, the unpledged delegates (approximately 770 of them) will be able to cast a decisive vote and put one of the candidates over the top. With these votes added to the 3979 ($3979 + 770 = 4749$) it will require approximately 2374 to win.

If Biden goes into the convention with 1800 delegates, and if about 75 % of the unpledged delegates vote for him, then he would win. However, there is a reason it is called a "brokered" convention.

It is quite possible that the Sanders / Warren supporters will go into the convention with almost as many or more total delegates than the Biden / Buttigieg supporters so, whichever group comes together and agrees on a presidential slate (e.g. Biden / Buttigieg or Warren/Sanders), could win on the second or third ballot. Or, some entirely other nominees could be proposed and a massive shift could occur toward them, such as a Biden / Warren slate or a Klobachar / Buttigieg slate.

Time will tell.

STATE BY STATE DELEGATE COUNT: DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY⁴

⁴ The official totals show 3,979 pledged delegates and 771 unpledged, but the state by state figures add up to 3,980 (probably a rounding issue, and 764 unpledged delegates. This disparity has not been figured out yet!!

State	Date	Total Delegates	Pledged Delegates	Unpledged Delegates
Iowa	3-Feb	49	41	8
Nev	22-Feb	48	36	12
NH	11-Feb	33	24	9
SC	29-Feb	63	54	9
ABROAD	3-Mar	17	13	4
ALA	3-Mar	61	52	9
ARK	3-Mar	36	31	5
CA	3-Mar	494	415	79
CO	3-Mar	80	67	13
MAI	3-Mar	32	24	8
MAS	3-Mar	114	91	23
MIN	3-Mar	91	75	16
NC	3-Mar	122	110	12
OK	3-Mar	42	37	5
SAMOA	3-Mar	11	6	5
TEN	3-Mar	73	64	9
TEX	3-Mar	261	228	33
UT	3-Mar	35	29	6
VA	3-Mar	124	99	25
VT	3-Mar	24	16	8
ID	10-Mar	25	20	5
MICH	10-Mar	147	125	22
MISS	10-Mar	41	36	5
MO	10-Mar	78	68	10
ND	10-Mar	18	14	4
WA	10-Mar	108	89	19
MA				
ISLANDS	14-Mar	11	6	5
AZ	17-Mar	78	67	11
FL	17-Mar	248	219	29
ILL	17-Mar	184	155	29
OHIO	17-Mar	153	136	17
GA	24-Mar	120	105	15
PC	29-Mar	58	51	7
ALK	4-Apr	19	15	4
HA	4-Apr	33	24	9
LA	4-Apr	61	54	7
WY	4-Apr	18	14	4

WISC	7-Apr	97	84	13
CT	28-Apr	74	60	14
DE	28-Apr	28	17	11
MD	28-Apr	119	96	23
NY	28-Apr	320	274	46
PA	28-Apr	210	186	24
RI	28-Apr	36	26	10
GUAM	2-May	12	7	5
KS	2-May	45	39	6
IN	5-May	89	82	7
NEB	12-May	33	29	4
WV	12-May	34	28	6
KT	19-May	60	54	6
OR	19-May	75	61	14
DC	16-Jun	46	20	26
MT	2-Jun	25	19	6
NJ	2-Jun	147	126	21
NM	2-Jun	45	34	11
SD	2-Jun	21	16	5
VIR IS	6-Jun	13	7	6
unassigne d		5 474 4	5 3979	0 771

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Resistbot.io - How to use it.

Click on the “messages” icon on your I-phone, then click on the pencil in the top right-hand corner. You will get a “To: ” screen. Put in 504-09 and then in the message type “resist.” They will respond and ask for your zip code or address and what you want to do. This is a free service, reportedly developed by volunteers. It will ask for your zip code or address, and then you can send a fax, letter, make a phone call, send an e-mail to Sen. Sinema and McSally and the House member as well or even to Governor Ducey.

After you have sent several, it will ask you which of the various people you want it sent to. At first, it just sends to all three, later it will add state-level elected officials, too. You get more services after you’ve used it awhile!

Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation –

Senior Minister, Rev. Dr. Andy Burnette; Music Minister, Rev. Kellie Walker; Director of Faith Formation, Marci Beaudoin. Administrator, Sue Ringler. Located: 6400 W. Del Rio Drive, Chandler, AZ 480 899 4249 www.vuu.org For previous copies of the *Arizona Legislative Alert*, and for all weeks (so far) of the 50 Week Action Plan go to <https://www.vuu.org/legislative-advocacy>. VUU holds services at 10:30 to 11:30 on Sunday.

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