



ABOUT THE NPC

National Presidential Caucus set for December 7, 2007

Americans to initiate thousands of caucus groups across the nation to deliberate in advance of "National Primary"

To help Americans prepare for the onrush of a de facto "National Primary" slated for February 5, 2008, when two presidential candidates may suddenly emerge as "finalists" based on the front-loading of State primaries, a consortium of partisan, bipartisan and non-partisan interests have initiated and enabled the first-ever National Presidential Caucus, wherein thousands of local, self-organized, web-enabled, and face-to-face gatherings across the country will convene in caucuses on December 7, 2007.

Especially in this critical election cycle, citizens need more and better ways to prepare for the very short, intense official voting period beginning with the Iowa Caucus on January 14, 2008 through what's been coined by the media as the "National Primary" on February 5, 2008. Part mass straw poll, part mass focus group, the National Presidential Caucus will advance discussion and deliberation on the issues and candidates in greater numbers, in greater depth and in person.

The National Presidential Caucus builds on the phenomenon of '03/'04 election season where the Internet enabled nearly 5 million self-appointed citizens to organize and participate in 1,000s of local political "Meetups", Town Halls and House Parties.

"It is a challenge to overstate the importance of who will be chosen as the next U.S. President," said Don Means of Digital Village, Coordinator of the National Presidential Caucus. "Our democratic process, as currently practiced, has proven unsatisfactory to the great majority of Americans. Even with hopeful new signs of Internet-enabled participation, our national elections remain essentially poll-driven, mass media campaigns and little more than an ugly spectator sport, though one with enormous stakes."

Citizen-led and open, the goals of the National Presidential Caucus are to:

- Help the country better prepare for the vital business of selecting its next president, not in haste, but through tens of thousands of informed face-to-face discussions and thoughtful deliberations.
- Foster deeper and more meaningful access to the country's political system toward the goal of helping revitalize American democracy.
- Create a new voice for those willing to participate in person.

Open Call to Participate

Registration for the National Presidential Caucus is scheduled to officially open in early September at <http://www.nationalcaucus.com>, followed by a preliminary Straw Poll Caucus on November 9th, 2007. The National Presidential Caucus main event will commence in thousands of cities and small towns on December 7, 2007 across the nation. Americans everywhere are invited to participate and join the National Presidential Caucus locally by starting or finding a local gathering at <http://www.nationalcaucus.com>, where they will be able to find support services for organizer registration, searchable group listings, general notifications. The National Presidential Caucus is open to all civic and political organizations that wish to take part as a special event or as part of their regular activities on the condition that the meeting be publicly accessible.

"Local libraries are especially invited to serve as Caucus venues and help folks engage in important civic deliberations," said Don Means. "Internet-enabled Libraries would be ideal for supporting registrations and for posting Caucus results and uploading pictures, blog posts and even video clips from the meetings."

The National Presidential Caucus encourages participants to use any and all web services to ensure a successful caucus, including Meetup, Facebook, MySpace and other web-based meeting & social organizing tools. Caucus participants will be also encouraged to share videos on the "National Caucus" channel on YouTube, the preferred online video service for the initiative.



ENDORSEMENTS

Warren Rudman, Former United States Senator (R-NH) and Americans for Campaign Reform Co-Chair:

“Democracy works best when large numbers of citizens participate and make their views known. The National Presidential Caucus is a creative initiative to use technology to promote gatherings all across the nation to address the most important issues facing us in these critical times.”

Bill Bradley, Former United States Senator (D-NJ) and Americans for Campaign Reform Co-Chair:

“Harnessing the power of the internet to foster citizen participation through the National Presidential Caucus is an innovative way to encourage citizens to discuss the choices that face us, both in terms of issues and candidates. The National Presidential Caucus is a wonderful opportunity for grassroots activists to impact the national issues agenda.”

Tim Draper, Founder, Managing Director, Draper Fisher Jurvetson:

“Internet driven transformation of the US political system and democracy itself is one of the most significant developments since the founding of the country, and yet we must resist over reliance on only electronic means of participation. The National Presidential Caucus will enable the kind of face to face discussion and deliberation that remains the bedrock of free speech and free assembly.”

Phil Noble, Founder, Politics Online:

“The internet is transforming political processes all over the world, especially democratic ones. The National Presidential Caucus is that rare combination of the newest digital tools for online participation with the oldest form of communication, face to face. The world watches as its oldest democracy tries to cope with these disruptive technologies during the critical process of selecting the next president.”

James Fishkin, Director, Stanford University’s Center for Deliberative Democracy:

“The National Presidential Caucus provides an unprecedented opportunity to combine citizen deliberation with mass participation. New technologies make new forms of politics possible. In order to assess the process, the National Caucus has agreed to make data from its exit polls available to Stanford’s Center for Deliberative Democracy to consider two basic questions: When citizens discuss the issues and become more informed do they change their views? Does it make a difference whether or not participants vote by secret ballot, as in most American elections or vote publicly, as is the common practice in events like the Iowa Caucuses?”

Howard Rheingold, Author, “Smart Mobs”:

“Democracy is not just about voting — it’s about citizens communicating with each other about issues and candidates. The National Presidential Caucus is a wonderful opportunity to bring citizens back into an increasingly professionalized election process, and to give citizens the power to influence electoral processes that have been taken out of our hands.”

Dr. Larry J. Sabato, Director, Center for Politics, University of Virginia:

“One of the greatest challenges our country faces is in connecting all Americans to their political process—improving civic education and participation, and combating easy cynicism. The National Presidential Caucus is a creative attempt to do just that, as we face the critical election of 2008.”



ENDORSEMENTS

Pevevill Squire, Professor, Political Science, University of Iowa:

"The National Presidential Caucus provides Americans outside of Iowa an opportunity to engage in the nomination process in a meaningful way. The caucus allows voters to do more than simply register their preferences, it affords them the rare and valuable opportunity to deliberate with others over their choices. And the choices National Presidential Caucus participants make are likely to be noted in Iowa and elsewhere."

Doug Bailey, CEO, Unity '08:

"The National Presidential Caucus is a fabulous way to let the people back into the process. It's a straw vote when you don't even have to be bussed across the country to Ames Iowa to take part. Imagine that — the voice of real people might actually be heard."

Jim Dean, Chair of Democracy for America:

"The presidential nominating process has long been dominated by the few. The National Presidential Caucus breaks that tradition and allows all Americans to have their voices heard. With the Internet as their tool, thousands of grassroots activists — rather than a privileged few — will set the national agenda. I can't wait!"

Carol C. Darr, Director, GW's Institute for Politics, Democracy & the Internet:

"The big donors are placing their bets. The mainstream media is having a say. The bloggers are opining. The interest groups are making endorsements. And before you know it, we will have two de facto nominees. The National Caucus gives ordinary citizens a chance to weigh in before it's too late to make a real difference."

Bob Fertik, President of Democrats.com:

"Who says only Iowans can choose the next President? On December 7, turn off your computer and head to the nearest National Presidential Caucus. Bring your ideas, your passions, and your friends!"

David All of the David All Group and founder of TechRepublican.com:

"We've long noted there's a transformative effect by Internet enabled face-to-face meetings. In 2004, the Bush-Cheney campaign witnessed over 8,000 house "Parties for the President" distributed throughout the nation. The National Presidential Caucus provides a forum for all Americans to get involved in this distributed, participatory format to help improve our democratic process -- and The David All Group and TechRepublican.com are happy to help ensure its success."



IN THE PRESS

The Washington Post

August 19, 2007
Page A2 - The Fix

Countdown

110 days: The National Presidential Caucus, an online venture aimed at preparing voters for the flurry of votes set for next January and February, takes place. The goal is to use the Internet to organize face-to-face meetings of voters around the country. Former senators Bill Bradley (D-N.J.) and Warren Rudman (R-N.H.) have endorsed the concept.

Full story:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/18/AR2007081800935.html?sub=AR>

The Wall Street Journal

August 16, 2007
Page A4

Democracy Heads to Web Laboratory

Novel Online Forums Reshape Presidential Debates, But Will Voters Engage?

In December, a separate nonprofit group is planning a national Internet presidential caucus. Stanford University's Center for Deliberative Democracy and the University of Virginia's Center for Politics are among the groups that have signed on to help with the event, which would still require voters to meet in person to decide on their favorite nominee. Information about local caucusing sites and the results would be compiled and posted online.

"If there's going to be a national primary, then you ought to have a national caucus first," says Myles Weissleder, a former Meetup.com executive who is helping to plan the event.

Full story: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB118722249353998997.html>

National Journal's "The Hotline"

June 18, 2007

NATIONAL PRESIDENTIAL CAUCUS : Not Just for Iowans Anymore

Moved by what they see as a need for citizens to have "more and better ways to prepare for the very short, intense" presidential primary calendar in '08, a consortium of political groups, including Politics Online, Unity '08, Democracy for American and the University of Virginia's Center for Politics, have initiated a National Presidential Caucus to take place 12/7/07.



IN THE PRESS

CBS News

June 18, 2007

A National Caucus?

With up to two dozen states looking to hold a presidential primary next February 5, we're already looking at a national primary on that day. So why not a national caucus?

Full story: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/06/18/politics/purehorserace/main2944815.shtml>

Associated Press

June 20, 2007

McCain Decries Early Primary Trend; McCain: Early Presidential Primaries Hurt Voters, Candidates

The goal of the National Presidential Caucus is to have thousands of local, self-organized, Web-enabled and face-to-face gatherings across the country convene on Dec. 7, more than a month before the first votes are cast for the Democratic and Republican nominations. (6/20/07)

Full story: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/06/19/ap/politics/main2951210.shtml>

ABC-7 News San Francisco

June 20, 2007

Local Group Pushes For National Caucus

The Iowa caucuses are the first true test for the presidential election, which means a disproportionate number of candidate visits and media attention. But now a Sausalito-based group is working to change that . . . What if there was another caucus before Iowa? A national caucus stretching from coast to coast?

Full story and video: <http://abclocal.go.com/kgostory?section=politics&id=5399815>

InternetNews.com

June 20, 2007

Muscling Meetups Into a National Presidential Caucus

Organizers of the latest online political initiative hope to trump the early primary season by holding a nationwide presidential caucus on Dec. 7. The plan is to build on the more than five million people who used the Internet in the 2004 election to organize political meetups, town hall meetings and house parties.

Full story: <http://www.internetnews.com/bus-news/article.php/3684281>



IN THE PRESS

Cybercast News Service

June 20, 2007

'National Presidential Caucus' Planned for December

Fifteen states will hold primary elections on Feb. 5, and in preparation for that "national primary," a non-partisan group of political and technology analysts is organizing a "National Presidential Caucus," which will give Americans an opportunity to discuss issues and candidates before voters in a few states decide the frontrunners.

Full story: <http://www.cnsnews.com/ViewPolitics.asp?Page=/Politics/archive/200706/POL20070620b.html>