



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: THE NASS REGIONAL PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES PLAN

Q: When plans group by region, doesn't that give a candidate from that region an inherent advantage (especially if that region votes first)?

A: Of course this is possible, but the larger the number of states in each region/pod, the more difficult it becomes to gain such an advantage. Besides, voters and the media are smart enough to know when someone is being favored for that reason. It happens now, just on a smaller scale. It's called home state advantage and it's the reason so many states move their contests earlier to help a native candidate succeed. Whether the U.S. uses a regional system or a pod system or a random lottery system, someone is going to have to vote first. Let's use a transparent, logical system that is easy for voters to understand and most importantly, gives every state and region the chance to go first.

Q: Will campaigns ignore smaller states in the regional groupings in favor of larger ones with more delegates?

A: While it's true that this could happen in a regional system (as well as nearly all of the plans that have been introduced), NASS members feel that the overall value for those states—and their voters—is in the regional conversations that would have to take place, forcing the candidates to focus on issues of interest in every part of the country and not just those that take priority in early voting states.

Additionally, because the NASS plan allows for regional campaigning, it increases the likelihood that candidates will be inclined to take advantage of proximity to reach as many states as possible before voting begins. Since the NASS plan does not require every state in a given region to vote on the same day (states are free to schedule their primary or caucuses anytime on or after the first Tuesday after the first Monday of their designated month), candidates may not have to pick and choose between big and small states.

Q: How would you get state legislative buy-in for a regional primaries plan?

A: The ideal would be for both the DNC and the RNC to adopt the NASS plan. States that violate party rules would then be penalized according to party standards. (Incidentally, all of the plans considered by the RNC Rules Committee have a regional or a pod component, so all of the plans will raise this concern.)

Q: If a legislature refuses to go along with an assigned date in a regional system, should the state party come up with the funds to hold the contest?

A: Yes. However, the regional system should be adopted by both national parties to minimize the opportunity for legislatures to object.

Q: Under the NASS plan, what is the likelihood that a candidate would have a majority of delegates to win the nomination after one or two rounds/pods of voting?

A: Under the NASS plan, the delegate allocations are pretty much evenly distributed among the four regions. It would be impossible for the competition to end after the first round of voting, and relatively unlikely that either party's nominee would end by the second round of voting. However, it should be noted that almost all of the plans that have been considered by the RNC Rules Committee *could* result in this possibility. NASS members feel that it's better to have two or three full regions making the decision than a handful of early voting states.

Q: How will the NASS plan impact candidates with low name recognition and small budgets?

A: By preserving the historical role of Iowa and New Hampshire, the NASS plan allows lesser known, underfunded candidates to compete in the early contests that stress retail politics over big budget campaigning. The regional groupings could also help long-shot candidates by making it possible to make aggregate, multi-state media advertising buys to save money and to reach more voters. They will also require less candidate travel time and distance in order to campaign.

Q: Who would carry out the lottery to select the initial voting order of the regions, and when would it take place?

A: This would be determined by the national parties.