



NEWS RELEASE

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National Association of Secretaries of State Joins DNC, RNC Committee Leaders in Call to Push Back Start of Presidential Primary Season for 2012

Kentucky Secretary of State Trey Grayson, Co-Chair of NASS Subcommittee on Presidential Primaries, Requests Action at Republican National Convention as Party's September Deadline for Change Approaches

Washington, DC – As the political parties prepare to convene their national nominating conventions, the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) today joined DNC and RNC rules committee leaders at the National Press Club in Washington, DC for an unprecedented, bipartisan call for the parties to push back the start of the presidential primary season for 2012.

"There is no question that this year's primary season began too early," said Trey Grayson, Kentucky secretary of state and co-chair of the NASS Subcommittee on Presidential Primaries. "If the parties will not consider adopting a more rational system of regional primaries, secretaries of state are advocating for a nominating calendar that begins no earlier than February, so election officials won't find themselves strained to prepare for elections during the busy, end-of-year holiday season next time around."

Grayson was joined at the announcement, hosted by the nonpartisan Open Caucus Institute, by RNC Standing Committee on Rules Chairman David Norcross, DNC Rules and Bylaws Co-Chair James Roosevelt, Jr. and Open Caucus Institute Director Don Means. The group came together to foster awareness for primary reform discussions at both conventions and to emphasize the Republican Party's looming September 2008 deadline on this issue. Unlike DNC rules, which offer greater flexibility in making changes to the nominating process, GOP rules limit reform discussions to its national conventions every four years.

NASS currently supports a regional primary plan that would place states and territories into geographical blocks (East, South, Midwest and West) that would vote with their designated region during a four-month period, beginning in March of each cycle. The voting order of the regions would then rotate every four years. The traditional lead-off contests in Iowa and New Hampshire would still come first to give lesser-known, under-funded candidates the chance to use retail politics to establish themselves as competitors in the larger, regional competitions that would follow.

On July 28 at the 2008 NASS Summer Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan, NASS members adopted a formal resolution calling for the start of the primary season to be moved out of January in the event that the national parties are unable to adopt the more comprehensive NASS Rotating Regional Presidential Primary Plan.

"I'm pleased after thorough discussion and debate there was a consensus among individuals that change needs to take place to restore order to the nomination calendar," said Iowa Secretary of State Michael A. Mauro, co-chair of the NASS Subcommittee on Presidential Primaries. "The process—unlike in this year's election—needs to start later."

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