



MEMORANDUM

TO: State Chairs, State Executive Directors, and Interested Parties

FROM: Patrice Taylor
Director, Party Affairs and Delegate Selection

SUBJECT: Allocation of pledged delegates to presidential candidates who are no longer seeking the nomination

DATE: March 2, 2020

The Office of Party Affairs and Delegate Selection has received several inquiries about the status of pledged delegates should the field of Democratic presidential candidates change prior to the nomination at the National Convention. This memorandum provides a quick overview of the Party's Rules on this matter.

District-Level Delegates

- District-level delegates and alternates are allocated in proportion to the results of the primary or caucus vote in the respective district to each preference (presidential candidate or uncommitted) that receives at least 15% of the vote (the "threshold¹"). [Rule 14.B]
- A presidential candidate who meets the 15% threshold in a district is entitled to their proportionate share of delegates and alternates in the district, regardless of their current status as a presidential candidate.

At-large and PLEO Delegates

- At-large and pledged party leader and elected official ("PLEO") delegates and alternates are allocated based on the statewide results of the primary or caucus to each preference (presidential candidate or uncommitted) that meets the 15% threshold based on the statewide results. [Rule 11.C]

¹ In all situations where no preference reaches the applicable threshold, the threshold shall be half the percentage of the vote received at each level of the delegate selection process by the front-runner. [Rule 14.F]

- If a presidential candidate who met the threshold and qualified to receive at-large and PLEO delegates is no longer a candidate **before** at-large and PLEO delegates and alternates are selected, their share of these delegates and alternates is proportionately divided among the remaining candidates who have also met the statewide threshold. [Rule 11.C]
- At-large and PLEO delegates pledged to a presidential candidate who then ends their candidacy **after** those delegates are selected will remain national convention delegates pledged to that candidate.

Pledged Delegate Obligations

- Delegates to the Democratic National Convention who are elected based on the results of a primary or caucus are “pledged” to support the presidential candidate they were elected to represent as a delegate. Specifically, these delegates are pledged “in all good conscience [to] reflect the sentiments of those who elected them. [Rule 13.J]
- The presidential preference of pledged delegates as certified at the time of their selection to the DNC Secretary does not change based on the status of their presidential candidate’s status as a candidate and is used by the DNC Secretary in determining whether automatic delegates will be permitted to also vote on the first ballot for president at the National Convention. [Call Art. IX.C.7.b]

As always, thank you for all that you do and don’t hesitate to let us know if you have any questions or need any additional information.