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PRECINCT CAUCUSES IN MINNESOTA:

a
dialogue
for
voters



VOTER INFORMATION

from
Minnesota
Statutes

ELECTION DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE



GO TO YOUR PRECINCT CAUCUS AND BRING A FRIEND WITH YOU

What is a Precinct Caucus?

It is a meeting of neighbors who share a common concern for the operation and policies of local, state and federal government. It is also the basic beginning of the political process in Minnesota. The rules of each political party provide (by state law) that a party caucus be held in every election precinct each general election year to elect officers and conduct business (M.S. 202.21 and 202.22).

What is a Political Party?

A political party is a group of people with similar concerns about government. For state recognition as a political party in Minnesota, a political group must have received votes in every county and at least 5% of the total vote cast in the last general election. (Minnesota Statutes 200.2 Subd. 7). At present the two parties qualifying according to state law are the Democratic-Farmer-Labor and Independent-Republicans of Minnesota.

What is a Precinct?

A precinct is an election district with usually one polling place. In a city, a precinct may include only a few blocks; in a rural area a precinct boundary may be as large as a township. There are nearly 4,000 precincts in Minnesota.

When and Where are Caucuses Held?

All precinct caucuses will be convened at 8:00 P.M. on February 24, 1976. Notices concerning the location of the precinct caucuses will be available after February 3, 1976, at your county auditor's office and will be published by February 18, 1976.

For Your Information:

(note here data from your county auditor)

Your precinct: _____
Location of caucuses in your precinct, February 24, 1976: _____

Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party

Independent-Republicans of Minnesota

What Happens at a Precinct Caucus?

Among the concerns the caucuses will consider are the election of caucus officers, election of precinct officers, delegate selection to the county or legislative district convention and issues that may be included in the party platform. Nominations for delegate selection must remain open for at least the first 1/2 hour of the caucus. All elections taking place during the caucus are by secret ballot. By law caucuses must last at least one hour.

Who May Participate?

Anyone who is now a qualified voter or will be qualified to vote on November 2, 1976, and a resident of the precinct where the caucus is held may participate. No previous party affiliation is required. You should be prepared to state that you intend to support that party in the next general election or have supported that party in the last general election. Caucuses are open political party meetings. They are gatherings of neighbors who share political affiliation and express concerns about governmental policy. Persons who will not be qualified to vote by November 2, 1976, may attend their caucus as an observer.

What is the Purpose of a Precinct Caucus?

Precinct caucuses offer voters their first opportunity to express a preference concerning candidates who will be elected in November. Participation in a caucus is a means by which a voter may influence the issues of campaigns and the party platforms that will evolve on the state and national level.

How are Candidates Endorsed and Selected?

Candidates for U.S. Senate and U.S. Congressman as well as State Senate and State Representative, may be endorsed for election at state, congressional district or county/legislative district conventions. Candidates for President of the United States will be selected at national conventions in the summer of 1976. Minnesota delegations to these conventions will include persons who were selected as delegates during congressional district and state conventions.

Who Determines a Party's Platform?

Anyone participating in a precinct caucus may offer a resolution for consideration. Although the resolution may be written, it need not be in formal language. Resolutions that are approved will be presented at the county/legislative district convention where the resolution will be considered and if approved, sent on to the congressional district convention where the same process follows and from there to the state and national conventions where the party platforms are developed.

How Do I Become a Delegate?

Each precinct is allotted delegates according to the number of votes cast in that precinct for the party's candidates in the last general election. Each precinct nominates and elects delegates to the next level (county/legislative district) convention. To become a candidate for the office of precinct delegate, you may wish to inform your neighbors of your interest and qualifications for that office. Delegates from the precinct caucuses will compete in county or legislative district conventions for congressional district and state delegate seats.



1976 Precinct Caucuses have been recognized by the Minnesota American Revolution Bicentennial Commission (MARBC) as an Official Bicentennial Event.

This pamphlet, *Precinct Caucuses in Minnesota: a dialogue for voters*, is being distributed by the Minnesota Bipartisan Bicentennial Project, composed of the Secretary of State, Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party and Independent Republicans of Minnesota.

MAKE A DATE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS FOR FEBRUARY 24, 1976 8:00 PM

To acknowledge the importance of precinct caucuses, the legislature has restricted certain activities on the evening of precinct caucuses. The following law eliminates conflict with certain local events and enables a large number of people to attend:

Minnesota Statutes 202.271, Subdivision 1. No school board, county board of commissioners, township board, village council, or city council may conduct a meeting after 7:00 p.m. on the day of a political party precinct caucus.

Subd. 2. Every employee who is entitled to attend a political party precinct caucus is entitled, after giving the employer at least ten days written notice, to absent himself from his work for the purpose of attending the caucus during the time for which the caucus is scheduled without penalty or deduction from his salary or wages on account of his absence other than a deduction in salary for the time he absented himself from his employment.

Subd. 3. No state college may schedule an event which will take place after 7:00 p.m. on the day of a political party precinct caucus unless permission to do so has been received from the state college board. No state community college may schedule an event which will take place after 7:00 p.m. on the day of a political party precinct caucus unless permission to do so has been received from the state community college board.

Subd. 4. No school official may deny the use of a public school building for the holding of a political party precinct caucus if the school office has received a written request for the use of the school building 30 days or more prior to the date of the caucus.

Subd. 5. No public elementary or secondary school may hold a school sponsored event after 7:00 p.m. on the day of a political party precinct caucus.
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Additional information?

Please contact:

Office of the Secretary of State
180 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155 (612) 296-2805
Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party
730 E. 39th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55407 (612) 827-5421
Independent-Republicans of Minnesota
555 Wabasha Street
St. Paul, MN 55101 (612) 291-1286

Compiled And Published By
JOAN ANDERSON GROWE
Secretary of State



Place
Postage
Stamp
Here

To: