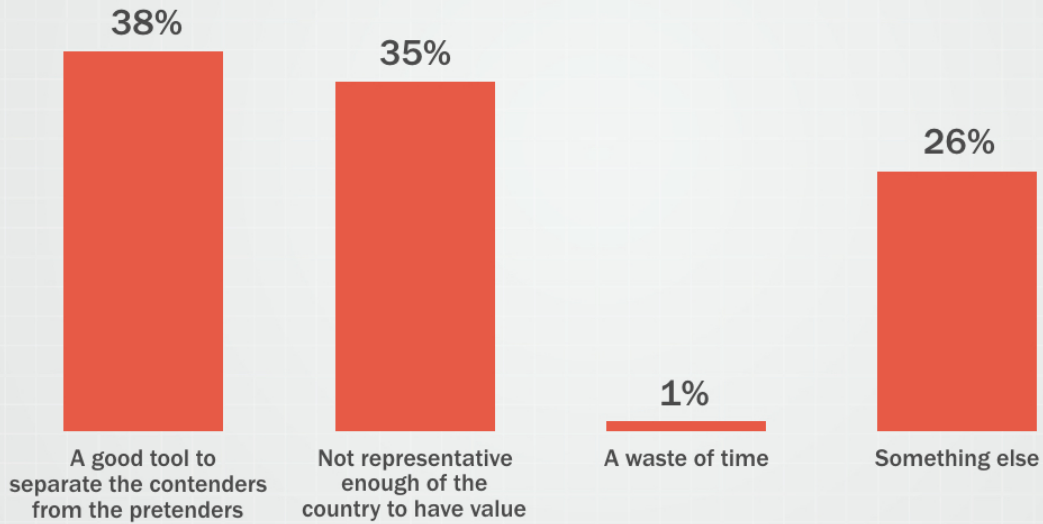


# “INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll  
for the week of 5 February 2016*

# INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

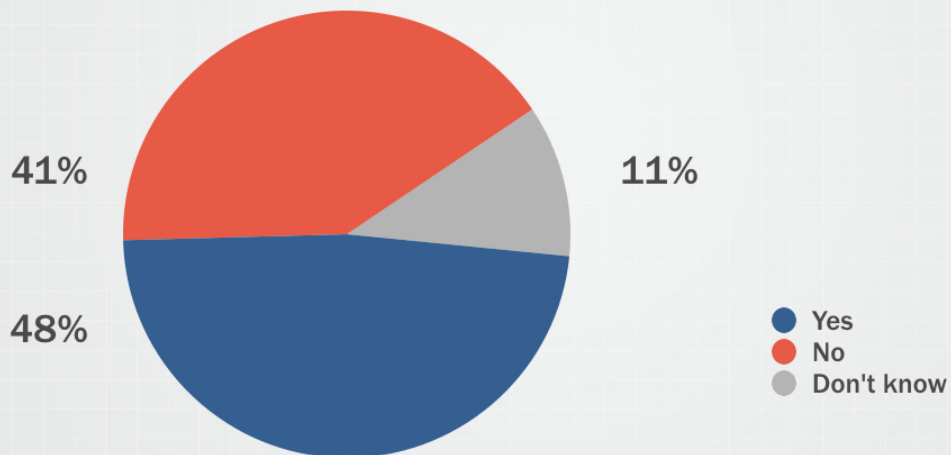
WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO THINK OF  
THE IOWA CAUCUSES?



Inside Intelligence is an informal survey of political and government insiders in Texas and is not meant to measure public opinion.

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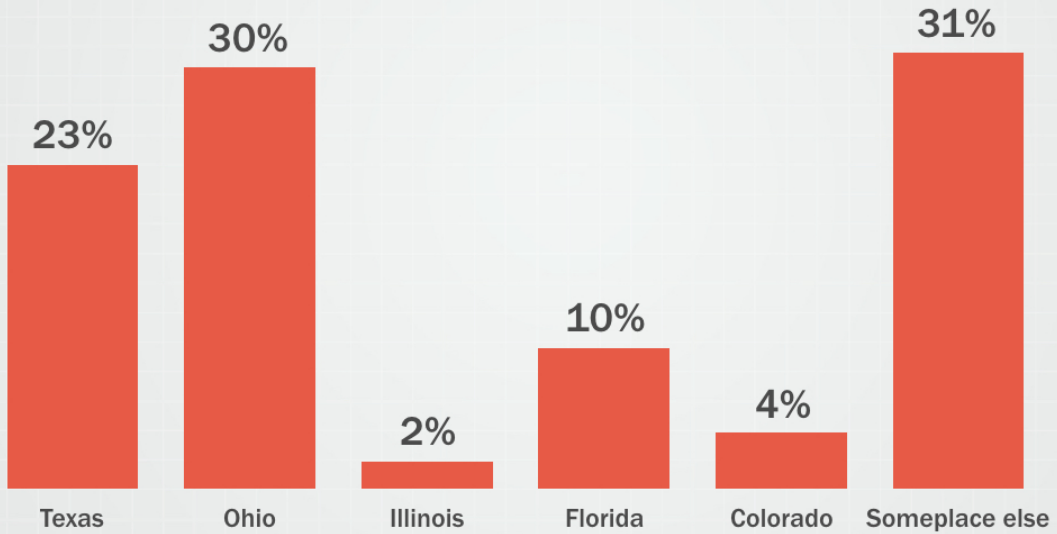
SHOULD THE MAJOR PARTIES TAKE AWAY IOWA'S  
FIRST IN THE NATION VOTING STATUS?



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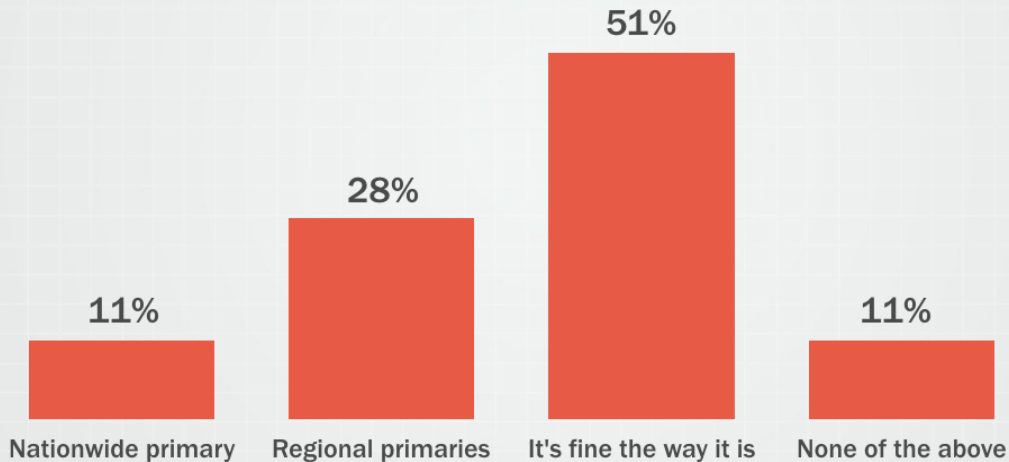
WHICH STATE PRIMARY SHOULD GO FIRST?



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# INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO CHOOSE  
A PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE?



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## ***What's the best way to think of the Iowa caucuses?***

- "The Iowa caucus is a great tool to make America believe everyone campaigning for the presidency has a fair shot. The state is perfect for retail politics and perfect for those without a war chest. If Florida or Texas were the first states, those without a \$40 MILLION war chest would've never launched a campaign."
- "A way for the public to see how the candidates treat the fine people of Iowa even if their primary is not the final determinate for President. Process for the candidates."
- "The way for a bunch of corn farmers to pass the time in the dormant season."
- "A vehicle for terrible questions like this one."
- "An excellent way to raise much needed campaign cash both before and after the caucuses."

- "The best idea the Iowa hotel and restaurant industries ever had."
- "February is a great time to drive your Chevy to levee outside Clear Lake and pay your respects to Buddy, Ritchie and the Big Bopper at the site where music died that fateful day in 1959."
- "I wouldn't say a 'good tool,' but more like a 'moderately decent tool.'"
- "It's just a beginning. We have to start somewhere."
- "Always a good window as to who the white evangelicals want to foist on the rest of the country."
- "If there was a message from such a small sampling, it would be confirmation that people are really pissed off and tired of the status quo!!!"
- "A fun first political event."
- "It's best not to think about Iowa. Doing so will only frustrate you, if you're sane."
- "Somewhere between the first option and the second. It's a useful tool, but it's also not representative enough to have a ton of value. Just some value."
- "I don't know if it's a waste of time, but they definitely get more attention than necessary. At the end of the caucus, which was reported as an overwhelming victory for Cruz, he has eight delegate votes, Trump and Rubio

each have seven. The nominee will need over 1200 delegate votes to secure the nomination. For the Democratic race, which is perceived to be the closer race, Clinton has 29 delegates and Sanders has 21. One of these candidates will need over 2,000 delegate votes."

- "The caucuses in Iowa are too different a process from a primary, and the state is too demographically dissimilar from the rest of the country."
- "Ask Michele Bachmann, Mike Huckabee, and Rick Santorum."
- "A huge boost to Rubio, who went a long way to taking the lane for all who don't want Cruz or Trump (a LOT of folks!)."
- "A beat down that gets more attention than it likely deserves."
- "Bitter, clinging to guns and religion."
- "It is what it is... tradition. About the same number of votes as you get in Harris County. But, hey, tradition."
- "Practice time for the main events to follow."
- "Santorum and Huckabee were their previous picks... nuff said."
- "I gauge the caucus results against expectations. Did the candidates meet, exceed, or fall short of them? Cruz and Rubio exceeded, so they're looking good. Trump fell short, so he's not."

***Would the major parties be wise to take away Iowa's first in the nation voting status?***

- "Doing so would force us to acknowledge the oligarchs are running the show."

- "Iowa functions like a focus group for the country — voters there expect to see every candidate, ask them questions and see how they operate on turf that is completely foreign to media land. It allows the bases of both parties — the state has both an extremely right wing and an extremely left wing — to measure the candidates up close."

- "Someone's got to do it. Right now, that's Iowa. Of course, we would be much better off if it was Texas."

- "The sense that it doesn't matter which party you vote for, you get the same results, is palpable. It's wrong, of course, but people feel that Washington never changes, and for that reason, insurgents in both parties are strong."

- "To steal a line from Field of Dreams, 'Is this heaven?' 'No it's Iowa.' And Iowa is a field unto itself and does not translate to the greater Union as a political barometer."

- "Iowa's priority position is a odd remnant of the McGovern campaign. Let's try something rational, like a large representative state (I chose Ohio in the next question, but couldn't write in the comment box without changing my answer there to 'someplace else')"

- "Too soon to tell, let's wait to make that call after New Hampshire, South Carolina, Nevada, and maybe even Super Tuesday."

- "So you move it from a state that is fairly representative of the country and

move it to another state that might be. What is accomplished by doing that? Nothing."

- "Let it rotate."

- "It was FUN to watch. We need ways to narrow the field. It's better to do it with the Iowa caucuses than to have a massive nationwide primary election."

- "It's traditional. But just one caucus, not even a primary. Partisans only. Lots more to come."

- "Would be hard to replicate the buzz factor elsewhere. But, still not very predictive of ultimate outcome."

- "How could they do that even if they wanted to? Isn't it up to Iowa to decide when to conduct its caucuses?"

- "Who died and made Iowa 'first in the nation?'"

- "Yes, but they won't do it. Too much pandering to Iowa voters."

- "It lets the crazy rise to the top."

- "It's tradition ... whether worthwhile or not. What else would everyone do every four years in the snow with no mountains?"

- "Maybe Washington, D.C., should be the site of the first, they could caucus together and then we would definitively know who not to vote for?"

- "Why? It's first in the nation. Leave the corn alone. My people call it maze..."

- "Somebody has to go first. The process is valuable because it develops

over time. If a fully 'representative' state went first, then the election would be over after one state, no?"

- "The Iowa caucuses are why we have spent who knows how much on ethanol

subsidies. 100% special interest. I'd move them back."

- "Who cares?"
- "It's fine, small enough for a lot of one-on-one campaigning."

***If you could choose which state primary/caucus goes first, it would be...***

- "Wouldn't move it."
- "Hawaii. Because those poor campaign staffers trudging in the snow need a break."
- "Regional primaries with five or six regions of approximately equal population. The order of regions could be rotated or randomly shuffled every four years."
- "Depends on goal of 'first.' At least we know what we are getting from Iowa and can put it in an historical context."
- "Maybe a four-state start, with an equal mix of red and blue states."
- "I read this week that Illinois and Pennsylvania are more reflective of U.S. demographics on race, religion, age, higher education and economic indices. And they are both swing states."
- "Leave it alone. Change is good. Change is really good. But, in this case what does it accomplish? Every state that wants it can argue their point. As the theme song from Frozen says, 'Let it go, Let it go, let it go!!!!!!'"
- "I'm fine with New Hampshire. It is small enough that the voters get some

personal time with the candidates as opposed to a bigger state where money and media have more impact."

- "All five of those at once."
- "Iowa is fine. Even though they're little, a somewhat homogeneous population, they seem to take it seriously."
- "The Super Tuesday states."
- "Leave Iowa alone. It's all they have."
- "Alaska"
- "Regional primaries on a rotating basis."
- "None. No one gets to go first."
- "It shouldn't be one individual state, it should a few or at most a handful of states that represent various geographic regions of the country: southeast, west, northeast, and Midwest. Let's see how candidates manage resources and craft a message that appeals simultaneously to various parts of the country."
- "South Carolina"



- "A galaxy far far away"
- "Iowa is fine by me."
- "Maybe a purple state with open primaries?"
- "Small state where retail is required."
- "Pennsylvania. They have all the demos: Jersey shore to Pittsburgh steel mills and everything in between."
- "Guam"
- "Iowa"
- "Leavenworth, where Mrs. Clinton will be when the 2020 campaign season begins."
- "Duh!"
- "We're in Texas, geez."

### ***What's the best way to choose a presidential nominee?***

- "The national primary sounds good, but is impractical. It would take too much money and wouldn't allow for any real grassroots campaigning. The debates give the nation a chance to watch the process, but real campaigning has to be done state by state."
- "The primaries, ideally, should rotate. This would be very difficult to pull off in reality, but it's the ideal."
- "Every primary by state, on the same day"
- "It's fine the way it is but forces the candidates to the extreme left and right of the political spectrum. Most people are in the middle and they don't vote."
- "Draw names out of hat."
- "And rotate the order of regions each cycle."
- "Choose the nominees by holding a series of elections in the major college football/basketball conferences. Say it out loud: The Big XII Primary. Has a nice ring too it."
- "You argue and debate this till the cows come home. Again, Let it go, let it go, let it go!"
- "A regional primary that rotates would be a possible scenario."
- "This is a decision that should take a long time. This is a hard job. The American people need the opportunity to watch the candidates in action, watch them grow, see if they can handle it. If they can't manage a rough campaign, they really cannot handle the presidency."
- "Convention"
- "National open primaries"
- "Double-Secret Super Tuesday"
- "Put states into play that now don't matter because of the way delegates are awarded."
- "A far from perfect system, but it works ... at least most of the time."

- "Shrink the 'season' for \$ raising and campaigning to a period from Jan.1-Nov of the year prior to inauguration."

- "It's now a rather bewildering logistical challenge, and a good test of candidate organization."

- "Whatever system is utilized, retail one-on-one discussions between candidates and voters needs to be a

significant part. A regional system or even a large state first in the nation approach would tend to favor the candidate with the best TV and paid messaging. Both parties need more connection between voters and their candidates and officeholders, not less."

- "Democracy would be great if it weren't for elections. There is no perfect system."

***Our thanks to this week's participants:*** Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Brandon Aghamalian, Clyde Alexander, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Dave Beckwith, James Bernsen, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, Raif Calvert, Lydia Camarillo, Kerry Cammack, Marc Campos, Corbin Casteel, Elna Christopher, Kevin Cooper, Randy Cubriel, Beth Cubriel, Curtis Culwell, Denise Davis, June Deadrick, Glenn Deshields, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jack Erskine, Bruce Gibson, Stephanie Gibson, Eric Glenn, Kinnan Golemon, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Jim Henson, Steve Holzheuser, Deborah Ingersoll, Mark Jones, Walt Jordan, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Dale Laine, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, Luke Legate, Myra Leo, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Kathy Miller, Mike Moses, Nelson Nease, Todd Olsen, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Robert Peeler, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Jay Propes, Ted Melina Raab, Patrick Reinhart, David Reynolds, Boyd Richie, Carl Richie, A.J. Rodriguez, Grant Ruckel, Jason Sabo, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Robert Scott, Steve Scurlock, Ben Sebree, Christopher Shields, Jason Skaggs, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Larry Soward, Dennis Speight, Sherry Sylvester, Sara Tays, Trey Trainor, Vicki Truitt, Ware Wendell, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Seth Winick, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.