

the nation is listening.

WHAT WILL
YOU SAY?





2016 IOWA CAUCUS GUIDE

Disability Rights IOWA
Law Center for Protection and Advocacy™

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WELCOME TO ID ACTION'S IOWA CAUCUS GUIDE

Dear Fellow Iowan:

While Iowa is not the largest or most diverse state in the country, it is one of the most important states when it comes to presidential politics. The Iowa caucuses are the first in the nation. That means Iowans are the first to voice their opinion on who should run for president. In the past, many candidates have dropped out of the race after doing poorly in the Iowa caucuses.

Iowa is the first state where the people get a chance to look the next president of the United States in the eyes and size them up. The issues Iowans bring up during the caucus season are reported throughout the country. Iowans truly set the tone of the presidential debate and the issues that candidates talk about. Iowans have a lot of power—but not everyone takes this opportunity to talk about their issues.

Because the Iowa caucuses require candidates to meet face-to-face with potential supporters, organized groups of people can have a real voice in the process. The bigger the group, the louder the voice. With more than 350,000 Iowans with disabilities, the numbers don't get much bigger! But a group's success depends on how active its members are. In other words, the more YOU are willing to do, the larger the impact of the whole group.

ID Action wants to help launch you and your group into action. We've prepared this Iowa Caucus Guide to answer some of your questions about the Iowa caucuses, the issues and the candidates to introduce you to the resources available through ID Action and above all to motivate you to get involved and stay involved. Candidates, parties and politicians too often believe that if a group of people is silent, it means everything's ok. We all know that's not true, so don't miss this important opportunity to be heard. We're counting on you!

Sincerely,



Rik Shannon

ID Action Project Manager

Iowans with Disabilities in Action (ID Action) is a nonpartisan, statewide initiative dedicated to generating greater civic and political participation among people with disabilities.

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EDUCATE YOURSELF: TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Caucus: A meeting where people belonging to the same political party pick the presidential candidate they want to represent their party in the general election.

Conservative: Often called the “political right,” used to describe someone who believes in less government and fewer government programs, holds traditional views and values, and prefers slower and more cautious change.

Delegate: Representative from a political party who is elected to represent the party at the county, district, state or national conventions.

Democratic Party: One of two major political parties in the United States and the nation’s oldest existing party. The Democratic National Committee (DNC) is the governing body for the Democratic Party, www.dnc.org.

Independent: A person who is not running as a member of a political party; they are running independent of any party.

Liberal: Often called the “political left,” this describes someone who supports government programs to provide services (such as health care), believes in a large government, favors monitoring of business, and thinks protecting civil and individual rights is important.

Moderate: A political moderate is an individual who generally holds the middle position between liberal and conservative.

Nonpartisan: Not allied with any one political party’s agenda.

Partisan: A strong supporter of one political party’s agenda.

Platform: The positions that a political party adopts at the beginning of the election campaign. Issues are added to a political party’s platform by resolution. Voters offer resolutions at their local precinct caucuses, where they are adopted and forwarded to the county, district, state and national conventions.

Primary: An election where voters go to the polls and cast their ballots directly for a candidate. In a presidential primary, the winner becomes that state party’s candidate for office in the general election.

Republican Party: One of two major political parties in United States; often called GOP, which stands for Grand Old Party. The Republican National Committee is the governing body for the Republican Party, www.rnc.org.

Resolution: A written position statement or statement of values. Resolutions are offered by people attending their local precinct caucus and, if accepted by other caucus participants, may be included in the political party’s platform.

EDUCATE YOURSELF: THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION PROCESS

There are 80,000 elections held each year in the United States. The most visible of these is the national election for president, held every four years. These days, the process for a national election lasts more than a year, taking up more than 25% of the current president's term. Though the national election process is actually quite a confusing one, here are the essentials.

the presidential nominating process

Each political party picks a presidential candidate who will represent the party in the general election. Parties hold either a primary election or a caucus in each state to determine that state's choice for the national party nominee.

The first step of a presidential campaign is the nomination campaign. During this time, the candidate competes with other candidates in the same party, hoping to win their party's nomination. The candidate works to convince potential voters that they are the best choice and tries to win the most **delegates**—the state representatives who promise to support the candidate at the national party convention.

The nominating process differs from state to state, but the goal is the same: to determine the state party's choice for president.

caucus vs. primary elections

There are two basic nomination processes: the caucus system and the primary elections. Caucuses and primaries are both ways for the general public to take part in nominating presidential candidates. At a **caucus**, a voter registered with a party gathers with other members from the same party to nominate a candidate. A caucus is a lively event. People attend the caucus to talk about issues, consider candidates, choose delegates, and discuss the party platform, or statement of principles. The rules for caucuses are different for each state and party.

A **primary** is more like a general election. Voters go to the polls to cast their votes for a presidential candidate (or delegates who will represent that candidate at the party convention).

the Iowa Caucus

Iowa uses a caucus system to choose its party nominees. Of all the country's primaries or caucuses, the first is held in Iowa. This is the first real test of the public's opinion and receives a great deal of attention from the media because of the influence the Iowa caucuses have on the outcome of future races. The first Iowa caucuses were held in 1972.

why is Iowa first?

While Iowa is not the largest state and does not have a large urban population, Iowa has many good things to offer:

- The Iowa caucus system makes candidates campaign in person and discuss issues with

voters face-to-face. Candidates can't count entirely on advertisements to get votes. They must go out and meet people.

- Iowa's population size ranks right in the middle of the 50 states.
- Iowans are politically aware. We study the issues and take our role in the nomination process seriously.
- Campaign costs are lower in Iowa. The candidate's one-on-one interaction with the people of Iowa is more important than the amount of money they must raise to campaign.

Iowa's Democratic and Republican parties conduct **precinct caucuses** (precincts are small local areas) that include a discussion of issues, a decision on presidential candidate of choice and the selection of delegates to represent the precinct at party county conventions. At the party's county convention, delegates will elect other delegates to go on to the district conventions and then to the state convention. Delegates elected at the state convention will go to the Democratic and Republican national conventions where each party selects their official presidential nominee. So, the Iowa caucuses are the beginning of a long process of delegate and candidate selection and issue discussion. It can be a confusing process so we've included a **chart on page 11** showing the road to the national conventions.

Republican vs. Democratic caucus

On caucus night, Iowans gather as Democrats or Republicans to elect delegates to the 99 county conventions. The Republican and Democratic processes are very different.

The Republican caucuses are more like a traditional election with a simple vote for the candidate you support. This vote is sometimes done by a show of hands or by voting on a paper ballot.

The Democratic caucuses are more involved, with people splitting into groups with others who support the same candidate. These groups are called "preference groups." A candidate must receive at least 15 percent of the votes in that precinct to move on to the county convention. If a candidate receives less than 15 percent of the votes, they are not considered "viable" and the supporters in that group have the choice to:

- Join a viable candidate group (one that has more than 15% of the votes)
- Join another nonviable candidate group to make it viable
- Join other groups to form an uncommitted group, or
- Choose not to move anywhere and not be counted.

While this might seem like a confusing system, it's actually quite simple. It is an exciting process where people fight for their candidates and try to persuade others to join them. The Iowa caucuses are your opportunity to show your support for a candidate publicly

and advocate for them with your neighbors. Each of the precinct caucuses is led by trained volunteers who can help with any questions you may have. The county party chairs listed at the end of this kit can also help you to better understand the caucus process in your county.

Because President Obama cannot run again, there is a very big field of both Democratic and Republican candidates running in 2016. While picking their party's candidate for president will be the main focus of the caucuses, Iowans participating in the caucus will also develop their party's stands on issues (through the resolution process, which is discussed on page 18) and pick party leaders to carry these messages on through the process. This focus on issues presents opportunities for advocates.

the national conventions

After all of the state primaries and caucuses are over, each party holds a national convention. Each state has representatives called **delegates**. The main purpose of a national convention is to announce the party's **platform** and nominate candidates for president and vice president. At each convention, a chair is elected and the delegates vote on a platform that is written by the platform committee.

By the third or fourth day of the national convention, presidential nominations begin. The chair calls the roll of states alphabetically. Each state nominates a candidate. A simple majority is required, although this may involve many ballots. The process of awarding the **delegates** is very complicated. In most cases, delegates cast their vote for the candidate that their state voted for in their primary or caucus, but they are not required to do so. The candidate who has the most support among the delegates at the national convention wins the party's presidential nomination.

the general election

The 2016 General Election: Tuesday, November 8, 2016

After the conventions, the campaign to win the **general election** begins. It's heated, it's expensive and it's exciting. You feel as if you can't escape it!

On the Tuesday following the first Monday of November, millions of U.S. citizens go to local polls to elect, among other officials, the next president and vice president of the United States of America. Their votes will be recorded and counted, and winners will be declared.

THE ROAD TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

Precinct Caucuses

Held in 1,682 precincts throughout Iowa
Monday, February 1, 2016 (date subject to change)



County Conventions

Held in each of 99 counties
Normally held in March



District Conventions

Held in each of the 5 congressional districts
Normally held in April



State Convention

National Delegate Selection
Normally held in June



Republican National Convention
July 18-21, 2016
Cleveland, Ohio

Democratic National Convention
July 25-28, 2016
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

EDUCATE YOURSELF: ISSUES

knowledge is power

You have the power to influence the policies and thinking of this country for years to come. You already have an opinion. Now learn more about the issues, compare the candidates' stands on these issues and make an informed decision. The next president of the United States will have the power to shape policies that directly affect your life. Let your voice be heard. Here is some information about some of the hot-button issues being talked about in this election.

WHAT ISSUES MOVE YOU?

civil rights

Americans have seen recent incidents of racial violence, including the murders of nine African-American church-goers in Charleston, South Carolina, by a white supremacist. Riots erupted in Ferguson, Missouri, after an unarmed black teen was killed by a white police officer. It seems every time you turn on the television there is another incident, which some say points to failed policies around race. Others say the U.S. has not had a policy about race since the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, and our leaders have been afraid to talk about it. Others say it's an economic issue, not one of civil rights. Americans with disabilities also continue to face challenges despite the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act 25 years ago. Iowa is fortunate to have strong election laws that make voting very accessible, but many states require IDs to vote and create barriers for those that lack transportation, do not have IDs or need to vote early. Some state voting laws have been challenged as violating civil rights. Some say voting is a states' rights issue and the federal government should stay out of it. Others say voting is a fundamental right of all citizens and the federal government has an obligation to make sure all voting laws are fair to all.

economy/jobs

The United States economy continues to grow slowly after the economic crisis that began in 2007, when unemployment was the highest in three decades. Even though unemployment numbers continue to go down, some feel our country's economy is not growing fast enough and that good-paying jobs are not available. Some want to raise the minimum wage to make sure everyone is paid a living wage, while others feel the solution is for government to "get out of the way" of private business by eliminating unnecessary regulations and cutting taxes. Others say that giving more Americans tax breaks (and allowing them to keep more of their income) will increase spending and improve the economy. Still others think the answer is fixing the tax code so those who earn more pay more.

education

The growing cost of education in the United States has caused concern among many people today. The Wall Street Journal recently reported that students leaving college in 2015 will have the most debt in history, graduating with an average student loan debt of \$35,000. Debt continues to climb, leaving recent graduates unable to buy a home or car or start a business. Some people believe that government should help pay for all, most or some

education. Others want to use loan forgiveness programs to encourage graduates to pursue degrees in professions where there are shortages (like nursing or engineers) or work in certain areas of the country (like poor urban areas or rural areas). Others are concerned with the quality of their child's K-12 education and question the value of standardized national education standards. Some believe that linking funding to test results only hurts those schools that are already failing, while others say it is the push those schools need to get creative and make improvements.

environment

People are concerned about protecting the environment, preserving our natural resources and addressing climate change. Federal and state governments are looking at our energy futures and trying to find the balance between protecting the environment and meeting our future energy needs. Many states (including Iowa) are in heated battles over oil pipelines crossing their borders. Some states are dealing with the environmental issues related to fracking (the process of using high-pressure water to get oil or natural gas out of rock). Historically, our nation's energy sources are based in fossil fuels like gas, oil and coal. Scientists say the mining and use of these fossil fuels is contributing to global climate change and is destroying our air and water quality. Some people believe more money should be spent on the research and development of alternative energy sources like wind, solar or biofuels. Others believe that we should increase the production of oil and gas in the United States in order to reduce our dependency on foreign oil. Still others think government should try to change behaviors of Americans so they choose to do things like recycle, drive electric or other fuel-efficient cars or install energy-saving windows or appliances (or convert their houses to use other energy sources like geothermal, solar or wind).

foreign policy

Foreign policy is how the U.S. government works with other countries. Some people believe the United States should be an active police force that takes charge in the world to promote democracy and protect human rights. Others believe the U.S. should promote democracy by forming strong alliances with other countries; one way that can be done is through an organization called the United Nations. This organization is a coalition of nations that works to secure and stabilize countries by providing aid such as money, goods or military assistance. Some dislike the United Nations, believing the U.S. gives up its independence by joining this group. Foreign policy has the ability to get us into, or keep us out of, wars. It also determines whether we will help when children are kidnapped or killed in other parts of the world and what we will do if our citizens are attacked while visiting outside of the U.S.

government spending

The U.S. government has borrowed more than \$18 trillion to keep its doors open. By the end of 2015, the U.S. debt is expected to grow to more than \$21 trillion. If the U.S. were to pay back this debt now, it would cost each American household \$154,434. Even though this debt continues to grow, our federal government continues to spend more money than they have. Unlike Iowa, the federal government does not have to pass a balanced budget. They can

spend more than they have in the bank each year, which causes this debt to continue to grow. It's no wonder government spending, the economy and the U.S. deficit (gap between spending and revenue) are big issues in the 2016 election. Congress has put in place measures to reduce spending and address the deficit, but some say it does not go far enough. Others say it balances the budgets on the backs of poor people and leaves businesses off the hook. Candidates have suggested tax increases, tax changes (like eliminating tax credits and deductions for children and house payments) and spending cuts to programs that may include social security and Medicaid.

immigration

Immigration has become a hot-button issue with candidates. Many states have passed tough laws to punish immigrants in our country illegally, while some cities have become "sanctuary cities" that have policies designed to protect illegal immigrants. Debate continues over the president's executive actions around immigration (that is, done without the approval of Congress). These actions give parents of children that have legal status the ability to stay in the country so the U.S. does not split up families by deporting those not authorized to be in the country with those that have legal status. Some argue that children of illegal immigrants should be given amnesty (allowed to stay in the US), and others believe that all people in the country without permission should be given a path to citizenship. Others point to offenders that continue to cross over our border repeatedly, committing serious crimes without consequence. At least one candidate has said that many Mexican immigrants are bad people and wants to build a wall at the border to keep them out. Some people believe immigrants are taking jobs away from Americans, while others believe they are doing the jobs Americans will not do in order to achieve the American Dream. Some wonder if immigrants are getting services paid for by taxpayers, and others say it is inhumane to deny basic health care and education to anyone, regardless of their citizenship status. Immigration continues to be one of the most hotly debated issues in this election cycle.

long-term care

Many people with disabilities, the elderly and others with chronic conditions that limit their ability to live independently need personal care and assistance to complete activities of daily living. These support services may be received in a nursing home, institution or other settings like the person's home. People are concerned about the growing costs of such services, who pays for them and where they are available. People relying on long-term services and supports to remain independent want to make sure choice is preserved so they can remain in their own homes as long as possible. Some people think the government should help those who don't have the means to pay for it themselves. Others think that there is waste in the system and believe cuts can be made without affecting services. Still others think this is not the role of government — that churches and other community groups should find ways to help their friends, family and neighbors. In addition, there is a lively debate over what services and supports are actually needed and if there are ways to provide more flexibility so the needs of each individual are met.

poverty/income inequality

More than 16 million children in the United States live in families earning less than \$23,550 per year (for a family of four). That's 22% of all children. Research shows that on

average, families need to earn twice as much in order to pay for basic expenses. Using that standard, nearly half (45%) live in families unable to provide for their basic needs. In 2013, 15% of all households (one in seven families) were food insecure, meaning they didn't know how they would pay for their next meal. On top of that, nearly six in every 10 poor adults are women, most raising families on their own. Some candidates say the way to fix this is to raise the minimum wage, so families can meet their basic needs (food, shelter, clothing). Some say that people need to earn a living wage, not a minimum wage. Others say businesses should do this without government regulation, and that the market should decide what an adequate wage is. Some do not believe this is a problem in America.

taxes

People are concerned about how much they must pay in taxes each year. There are a lot of different kinds of taxes — income tax, sales tax, use tax, property tax, capital gains tax, inheritance tax, corporate tax, etc. Taxes are used to pay for government services and are the main source of income for our government. Some people believe that taxes are too high. Others believe that a complete reform of the tax system is long overdue. Still others believe that we may need to increase taxes to keep up with demands for services. Some believe the middle class is paying too much and that “the rich” should be paying a greater share. Businesses may tell you they are paying way too much, while others will say businesses are finding too many loopholes (or locating outside the U.S.) in order to avoid paying any taxes. As you can see, taxes, government spending, and the economy are all interconnected.

war/veterans

Although we have now ended our Middle East wars, the United States continues to be involved in the war against terrorism with limited troop activity and the use of armed drones to attack terrorist locations. Americans continue to debate when and where troops should be sent and the level of commitment made. There is also a new debate about the use of drones in attacks. Some believe that the use of drones saves American lives, while others say it distances us from war, making it easier to kill without real thought to what is being done. Many Americans are concerned about the treatment of our veterans, many of whom have serious injuries, lost limbs or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). At the end of 2014, there were 2.7 million American veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. At least one in every five veterans (20%) has been diagnosed with PTSD or depression. More than half of those with PTSD never seek treatment, and it is estimated that 22 veterans commit suicide each day. Young male veterans under age 30 are three times more likely to commit suicide when compared to civilian males in the same age bracket, according to a new briefing released by the Department of Veteran Affairs (2014). About 25 percent of recent veterans report having a service-connected disability, the most common include missing limbs, burns, spinal cord injuries, hearing loss and traumatic brain injuries. In fact, one in every five veterans has some type of brain injury. Some feel more needs to be done for our veterans. Some say the Veterans Administration (VA) medical system is sufficient; others point out long waiting times for services. Some say the VA needs more money, while others say veterans should be able to go anywhere for services.

CANDIDATES	Civil Rights	Economy/Jobs	Education	Environment	Foreign Policy	Government Spending	Immigration	Long-Term Care	Poverty/Income Inequality	Taxes	War/Veterans	Other
Hillary Clinton (D)												
Martin O'Malley (D)												
Bernie Sanders (D)												
Jeb Bush (R)												
Dr. Ben Carson (R)												
Chris Christie (R)												
Ted Cruz (R)												
Carly Fiorina (R)												
Jim Gilmore (R)												
Lindsey Graham (R)												
Mike Huckabee (R)												
John Kasich (R)												
George Pataki (R)												
Rand Paul (R)												
Marco Rubio (R)												
Rick Santorum (R)												
Donald Trump (R)												

Candidates are current as of November 30, 2015

RESOLUTIONS: REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Many people think the caucuses are all about picking a candidate for president. That is certainly a part of it but not the only part. Caucuses are a time when you get together with others in your party to pick a candidate for president AND talk about the issues that will become a part of the party's platform.

A party platform is a document produced by a political party every two years that outlines that party's beliefs and values as well as its policy positions on important issues of the day. What you may not know is that party platforms start in precinct caucuses.

Anyone attending a caucus can propose a resolution that asks the party to take a position on a specific issue. For instance, if you believe that more money should be spent in developing high-speed rail, you may offer a resolution that says that the Iowa (Democratic or Republican) Party supports the investment of public funds to pay for the development of high-speed rail and other public transportation options.

Whatever your issue, you can influence your party's stand on that issue by writing and submitting a resolution for consideration at your caucus. It's not as difficult as it may seem, and each caucus will handle the resolution process differently.

1. Use the template on the next page to draft your resolution. You don't need to use this template—you can write your resolution on a napkin if you want (but we don't advise it).
2. If you are having trouble getting started, we have included a few sample resolutions that were actually offered at caucuses.
3. Go to your caucus and submit your resolution!

There are more than 1,600 precinct caucuses in Iowa, all chaired by a volunteer from your community. They may be your neighbor or your cousin's best friend. They will all run their caucus in slightly different ways. Typically the direction from the state parties is for the caucus to "discuss resolutions to be submitted to the county platform committee."

Some may require resolutions to be submitted in writing. Some may allow them to be offered verbally (someone just standing up and stating a position for consideration). Some may ask for the person offering the resolution to make comments and explain the position. Others will simply ask for a vote. Sometimes to save time, the volunteer running the caucus will ask for all resolutions to be sent to the district conventions (without discussion).

It is best to be prepared and have your resolution written before you go. It can be handwritten or typed. You just need one copy for the chair (but you might want to keep a copy for yourself, in case you are asked to speak). Just ask the chair when you arrive at your caucus how resolutions will be handled, so you know what to expect!

Offering resolutions at your caucus is the best way to make sure the voice of your party is YOUR VOICE.

Democratic Party Platform (2014):

<http://iowademocrats.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2014-Iowa-Democratic-Party-State-Platform.pdf>

Republican Party Platform (2014):

<https://www.iowagop.org/platform-2014/>

RESOLUTION TEMPLATE

Copy and use this template to help you draft your resolution, using the following pages (Guide & Samples) to help you get started.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON _____
Submitted by _____

Whereas _____

Whereas _____

Whereas _____

Therefore, be it resolved that _____

PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON (SUBJECT/ISSUE) _____

Submitted by _____ (Your Name) _____

Whereas

Present fact #1, which gives a reason why it is important to do what you ask in your resolution. These statements should contain facts that have been verified, not just opinions.

Whereas

Fact #2

Whereas

Fact #3. Present as many facts as needed to support the resolution. You can present one fact or three, but we do not recommend going beyond 5–6 facts.

Therefore, be it resolved that

“The (Democratic/Republican) Party shall ...

A good resolution identifies WHO should take action (in this case, the party and its elected officials), defines WHAT actions should be taken in as much detail as needed to insure the desired action(s) are well-defined, states WHEN the action should be taken (if relevant) and identifies HOW the action should be taken.

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

Not all resolutions need to be long. Here are two that were offered during the 2012 caucuses:

This is a resolution template given to child policy advocates during the 2012 caucuses. The organization promoting these issues asked its advocates to offer these resolutions at the caucuses. Advocates were told they could offer all of the resolutions at once or pick one or more they cared most about. Advocates were allowed to customize this list; many organizations do this, so if you are a member of a group you might ask if they have a caucus resolution they would like you to offer at your caucus. This is just an example to help you get started.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN IOWA

1. We support greater investments in Iowa's children.
2. We support increased state and federal funding to eliminate abuse and neglect.
3. We support increased state and federal funding to improve parents' ability to access quality pre-kindergarten and after-school programs for all Iowa children.
4. We support increased state and federal funding to raise Iowa children and families out of poverty.
5. We support providing health insurance to all of Iowa's children.
6. We support strong state and federal policies that provide opportunities to all of Iowa's children, youth, and families.

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

This is a resolution that was offered during the 2012 caucuses. While this is more detailed than the previous examples, you do not need this level of detail.

RESOLUTION FOR EXPANDED ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE DIAGNOSIS, CARE PLANNING AND RESEARCH

Whereas Alzheimer's disease increasingly takes its toll on people with Alzheimer's, their families, unpaid and paid caregivers and family and national budgets; and

Whereas 69,000 Iowans have Alzheimer's and it is the fifth leading cause of death in the state; and

Whereas Alzheimer's disease is a major driver of health care costs, with 131,854 unpaid caregivers providing \$1.7 billion in unpaid care in 2010 alone; and

Whereas Iowa is experiencing an increasing care gap between the number of people with Alzheimer's needing care and the available trained workers to care for them;

Therefore, be it resolved that as a party, we support public policy that:

- Expands diagnosis and care planning for people with Alzheimer's as well as for their families and caregivers.
- Increases commitment to Alzheimer's research to discover ways to successfully delay onset, prevent, and cure Alzheimer's.
- Supports implementation of the federal National Alzheimer's Project Act that is under development.

EDUCATE YOURSELF: PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

There are now 17 people running for President. While this means there are more candidates to learn about, it also means voters have more choices. Following is a list of Democratic and Republican candidates. The list includes some brief background information on each candidate. You can visit the candidates' websites to learn more about them and their positions on the issues that concern you. Taking the time to research and understand the candidates and their ideas helps you become a knowledgeable and informed voter. Find out which candidate fits you best.

Candidates are current as of November 30, 2015

Democratic presidential candidates

Hillary Clinton

www.hillaryclinton.com

- Graduated from Wellesley College, Massachusetts
- Law degree from Yale Law School
- First Lady 1992-2000
- U.S. senator for New York 2001-2009
- First woman senator from New York
- Secretary of state 2009-2013

Martin O'Malley

www.martinomalley.com

- Graduated from Catholic University, Washington, D.C.
- Law degree from the University of Maryland
- Mayor of Baltimore 1999-2007
- Governor of Maryland 2007-2015

Bernie Sanders

www.berniesanders.com

- Graduated from the University of Chicago, Illinois
- Mayor of Burlington, Vermont, 1981-1989
- U.S. representative for Vermont 1991-2006
- U.S. senator for Vermont 2007-present
- Worked as a carpenter and documentary filmmaker

Republican presidential candidates

Jeb Bush

www.jeb2016.com

- Graduated from the University of Texas at Austin
- Worked as a banker and consultant in Miami and Venezuela
- Governor of Florida 1999-2007

Ben Carson

www.bencarson.com

- Graduated from Yale University, Connecticut
- Worked as an X-ray technician, crane operator, bus driver and highway clean up supervisor
- Medical degree from the University of Michigan
- Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at John Hopkin's Medical Center

Chris Christie

www.chrischristie.com

- Graduated from the University of Delaware, Newark
- Law degree from Seton Hall University
- U.S. attorney for the District of New Jersey 2002-2008
- Governor of New Jersey 2010-present

Ted Cruz

www.tedcruz.org

- Graduated from Princeton University, New Jersey
- Law degree from Harvard Law School
- Solicitor general of Texas 2003-2008
- U.S. senator for Texas 2013-present

Carly Fiorina

www.carlyforpresident.com

- Graduated from Stanford University, California
- Received Masters of Business Administration from the University of Maryland, College Park
- Received Masters of Science in management from MIT Sloan School of Management
- Worked for AT&T, Lucent and Hewlett-Packard

Jim Gilmore

www.gilmoreforamerica.com

- Graduated from the University of Virginia
- Served with the military in West Germany during the Vietnam war as a counterintelligence agent
- Law degree from the University of Virginia Law School
- Attorney general of Virginia 1994-1997
- Governor of Virginia 1998-2002

Lindsey Graham

www.lindseygraham.com

- Graduated from the University of South Carolina
- Law degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law
- Colonel in the United States Air Force
- U.S. representative for South Carolina 1995-2003
- U.S. senator for South Carolina 2003-present

Mike Huckabee

www.mickhuckabee.com

- Graduated from Ouachita Baptist University
- Governor of Arkansas 1996-2007
- Fox News host

John Kasich

www.johnkasich.com

- Graduated from Ohio State University
- U.S. representative for Ohio 1995-2011
- Governor of Ohio 2011-2015

George Pataki

www.georgepataki.com

- Graduated from Yale University
- Law degree from Columbia Law School
- Governor of New York 1995-2006

Rand Paul

www.randpaul.com

- Medical degree from Duke University School of Medicine
- U.S. senator for Kentucky 2011-present

Marco Rubio

www.marcorubio.com

- Graduated from the University of Florida
- Law degree from the University of Miami Law School
- U.S. senator for Florida 2011-2015

Rick Santorum

www.ricksantorum.com

- Graduated from Pennsylvania State University
- Received MBA from the University of Pittsburgh
- Law degree from Pennsylvania State University Dickinson Law School
- U.S. representative for Pennsylvania 1991-1995
- U.S. senator for Pennsylvania 1995-2007

Donald Trump

www.donaldjtrump.com

- Graduated from the University of Pennsylvania
- President of Trump Organization
- Host of The Apprentice formerly on NBC

OTHER PLACES TO FIND INFORMATION ABOUT THE CANDIDATES

There are a number of websites that may be helpful as you search for information about the candidates and voting; below are a few. Please be careful when searching for websites, because many sites are partisan and may be owned by a candidate. While they may look official, they will not always have good factual and unbiased information.

MEDIA/NEWS CAUCUS SITES

The Des Moines Register:

www.desmoinesregister.com/iowa-caucuses/

- Includes calendar of candidate visits, links to candidate stands and information about the candidates, caucus history and news coverage
- Download the Iowa Caucus mobile app on your Android or iPhone to get on-demand information and breaking news

Iowa Public Radio:

<http://iowapublicradio.org/topic/iowa-caucuses-2016>

Iowa Public Television:

<http://www.iptv.org/iowapress/default.cfm>

PARTY CAUCUS INFORMATION

Iowa Democratic Party:
www.iowademocrats.org

Republican Party of Iowa:
www.iowagop.org

OTHER HELPFUL CAUCUS SITES

Iowa Caucus Project (Drake University):
<http://iowacaucusproject.org>

Greater Des Moines Partnership Caucus Initiative:
www.catchdesmoines.com/iowacaucus/

Iowa State University's Caucus Project:
<https://www.iowacaucusesmooc.org/>

Democracy in Action (project of George Washington University):
www.p2012.org

OTHER VOTING INFORMATION

League of Women Voters:
www.lwv.org and www.lwvia.org

Vote 411 (information on voting):
www.vote411.org

Disability Vote Project (American Association of People with Disabilities):
www.aapd.com/what-we-do/voting/

ID ACTION 2016 CAUCUS INITIATIVES

How ID Action can connect YOU to the Caucuses

ID Action has created several caucus initiatives with the goal of getting more people affected by disabilities to be active and involved in the Iowa caucuses. The success of these efforts depends on you!

Take a few minutes to review the descriptions below. If there is something you are interested in and you need more information, check the ID Action website at www.idaction.org, email us at contactus@idaction.org or call us toll-free at 1-866-432-2846.

- 1. Debate-Watching Party Grants:** Get 10 of your friends together and have a Debate-Watching Party. Grants of \$50 are available to buy food, rent a room or to cover other expenses.
- 2. Caucus Grant:** Grants of \$150 are available for educational workshops, grassroots get-out-the-vote activities, candidate forums or other creative activities that increase interest and involvement in the Iowa caucuses. Have an idea? Contact us now.
- 3. Online Links:** Go to the ID Action website for links to the resources and information you need to help you become a more informed voter and effective advocate. Visit us at www.idaction.org.

REPUBLICAN &
DEMOCRATIC
COUNTY CHAIRS

COUNTY	REPUBLICAN	DEMOCRATIC
Adair	Ryan Frederick ryanwfrederick@gmail.com	Christopher Nelson 641-740-0286 daryljan@netins.net
Adams	Alec Turner turner.arcpia@gmail.com	Martin Olive 917-282-8911 martiniolive@earthlink.net
Allamakee	Bob Hager bhager524@gmail.com	Katie Dodge 563-538-4314 katedodg@gmail.com
Appanoose	Lyle Brinegar lebrinegar@hotmail.com	Bob Thomas 641-895-0623 bob.thomas52544@gmail.com
Audubon	Peggy Toft pstoff79@gmail.com	Peggy Smalley 712-563-4322 pasmaley@mchsi.com
Benton	Tim Busch timcfi@yahoo.com	Rosemary Schwartz 319-504-9376 rschwartz53@msn.com
Black Hawk	Scott Atkins pfgscott@hotmail.com	Patricia (Pat) Sass 319-231-9786 pssass@mchsi.com
Boone	Gary Nystrom chair@boonecountygop.org	George Ensley 515-298-1423 george@Ensley-photo.com
Bremer	Wes Gade wes.gade@gmail.com	Stephanie Schwinn 319-504-6060
Buchanan	Richard Wearmouth rjwearmouth@gmail.com	Robert Shields 319-269-6795 bshields01@mchsi.com
Buena Vista	Randy Ericksen trinityelcaalta@evertrek.net	Jim Eliason 712-213-0449 vulcanphile@iw.net
Butler	Jason Johnson jjohnson@butlercoiowa.org	David Mansheim 319-983-4026 sfmansheim@yahoo.com

COUNTY

REPUBLICAN

DEMOCRATIC

Calhoun	Kevin Schreier kevinaschreier@gmail.com	Faith Blaskovich 712-464-3454 blasko@iowatelecom.net
Carroll	Craig Williams craigandcindy@windstream.net	Tim Tracy 712-830-7669 tracyhome@hughes.net
Cass	David Wiederstein 712-243-5406 david@southwestiowalaw.com	Sherry Toelle 712-246-4861 stoelle@mchsi.com
Cedar	Sally Miller sallym@icom.net	Larry Hodgen 319-560-7174 lh030545@hotmail.com
Cerro Gordo	Barbara Hovland hovland10@hotmail.com	John Stone 641-390-3271 john_r_stone@yahoo.com
Cherokee	Todd Bevard toddbevard@gmail.com	Brian Gerjets 712-229-0291 bgerjets2@gmail.com
Chickasaw	Nancy Josephson njoseph4801@gmail.com	Steven Lynch 563-238-2465 lynchsw@yahoo.com
Clarke	Ray Negley rnegley1@iowatelecom.net	Steve Waterman 641-342-2838 stevewaterman48@yahoo.com
Clay	Will Jones williowa@gmail.com	Bob Whittenburg 712-240-9119 bwbeerocr@smunet.net
Clayton	Ray Negley rnegley@iowatelecom.net	Roger Thomas rrthomas@alpinecom.net
Clinton	Dan Smicker dan.smicker@gmtel.net	Jean Pardee 563-242-8111 jpardee@mchsi.com
Crawford	Gwen Ecklund gwenecklund@mchsi.com	Larry Peterson 712-263-5574 peterson.larry@mchsi.com

COUNTY	REPUBLICAN	DEMOCRATIC
Dallas	Tyler DeHaan tylerdehaan11@gmail.com	Art Behn 515-491-6936 artbehn@gmail.com
Davis	Jeff Birkner jeff@ohmicsolutions.com	Cheryll Jones 641-680-0851 bacjones@netins.net
Decatur	Bob Bixby decaturegop@yahoo.com rjbixby@grim.net	Penny Worthington
Delaware	Jeff Madlom cjmادلوم@iowatelecom.net	Megan Jack 319-327-0439 megan.jack00@gmail.com
Des Moines	B.J. Jahn wrjahn@seialaw.com	Sandy Dockendorff
Dickinson	Mike Koenecke mikekoenecke@hotmail.com	Denny Perry 712-320-5693 dvperry@q.com
Dubuque	Jennifer Smith smithmissjenn@aol.com	Walt Pregler 563-583-5855 w.pregler@mchsi.com
Emmet	John Brickner johnbrickner@hotmail.com	John Wittneben
Fayette	Rick Hofmeyer rhofmeyer@hotmail.com	Gayle Tellin 563-578-8229 gtellin@iowatelecom.net
Floyd	Charley Thomson charleythomson@hotmail.com	Jeanine Wichman 641-420-0177 jwichman@myomnitel.com
Franklin	Shawn Dietz dietz4iowa@gmail.com	John Colombo 641-420-7610 colomboj@gmail.com
Fremont	Freddie Krewson krewsonsvilla@windstream.net	Brian Kingsolver 712-215-8633 b_kingsolver@hotmail.com

COUNTY	REPUBLICAN	DEMOCRATIC
Greene	Roger Olhausen rolhaus2@netins.net	Dale Hanaman 515-436-7684 dalehanaman@yahoo.com
Grundy	Brian Andersen chair@grundycountygop.com	Carol Gordon 319-824-3719 bcgordon@gcmuni.net
Guthrie	Dean Hopkins dhopkins@iowatelecom.net	Kathy Miller 641-744-9002 kathym3184@iowatelecom.net
Hamilton	Becky Kepler blkepler@hotmail.com	Kathy Getting 515-854-2250 kkgetting@gmail.com
Hancock	John Walker john@commonsenseia.org	Gary Gelner 641-843-3695 g.gelner@mchsi.com
Hardin	Rick Brockmeyer frate_1@hotmail.com	Sue Seedorff-Keninger 319-939-8720 keninger@mchsi.com
Harrison	Wayne Bahr wab@logonet.net	Deandra Smith 402-312-3439 smith.dr@hotmail.com
Henry	Bruce Weber bruceweb1@mediacombb.net	Mary Hoyer 319-258-2151 mfessary@gmail.com
Howard	Neil Shaffer neil.shaffer@ia.nacdnet.net	Laura Hubka 319-231-4396 laurahubka@gmail.com
Humboldt	Bud Douglas bud_douglas@msn.com	Vacant
Ida	Mary Clark mary_clark93@yahoo.com	Nels (Wally) Johnson 712-447-6526 nwandjjohnson@evertek.ent
Iowa	Alice DeRycke adderycke@netins.net	Stephen Hanson 319-936-8674 stephen.john.hanson@gmail.com

COUNTY

REPUBLICAN

DEMOCRATIC

Jackson	Terry Creegan TCreegan2@exede.net	David Kunzweiler 563-872-3283 DK872@iowatelecom.net
Jasper	Marshall Critchfield marshallcritchfield@gmail.com	Taylor Van De Krol 641-990-9069
Jefferson	Jeff Shipley j.j.shipley@gmail.com	Susie Drish 641-919-3741 ponyfarm1@aol.com
Johnson	Bill Keettel keettel@gmail.com	Martha Hedberg 319-621-9687 wllowwlk@aol.com
Jones	Gerald Retzlaff ggretzlaff@hotmail.com	Arlie Willems 319-480-0172
Keokuk	Tanya Webster dandtweb@iowatelecom.net	Mary Krier 641-622-3207 jmcrier4@yahoo.com
Kossuth	Wendell Steven wenven@medicombb.net wenven@outlook.com	Penny Rahm 515-295-3528 rahm5@netins.net
Lee	Terry Schrepfer taschrep4344@q.com	Rickard Larkin 319-470-7744 r_larkin@mchsi.com
Linn	Cindy Goulding chair@linncountygop.org	Bret Nilles 319-431-7261 banilles26@hotmail.com
Louisa	Angie Davidson angiedavidson@louisacomm.net	Stanley Staats 319-523-4720 louisademocrats@yahoo.com
Lucas	Paul Goldsmith paul.goldsmith.law@gmail.com	Joan Amos gmajohan123@yahoo.com
Lyon	Josh Bakker jlbakker@hickorytech.net	Patrick McCarty 712-472-3652 patmccarty13@yahoo.com

COUNTY

REPUBLICAN

DEMOCRATIC

Madison	Heather Stancil theredheadwrites@gmail.com	Robert Bell 515-229-8265 robert.becky.bell@gmail.com
Mahaska	Jaron Vos Mahaska.republicans@gmail.com	Eric Palmer 641-673-3025
Marion	T. Waldmann-Williams twcwm@gmail.com	Megan Suhr megansuhr@me.com
Marshall	Pete Rogers peterg@centurylink.net	Tom Swartz 641-751-5119 mainstreettimber@live.com
Mills	John Yates yatesfarm1@sprynet.com	Donna Crum 712-527-3375 drcrum112@q.com
Mitchell	Lowell Tesch ltesch@mitchellcoia.net	Cochairs Kurt & Paula Meyer 641-326-2255 meyer6601@aol.com paulameyer@mac.com
Monona	Timothy Jessen hosanna@wildblue.net	Kenneth Mertes 712-423-2602 kmertes@gmail.com
Monroe	Brad Stalzer bjstalzer@pella.com	Joe Judge 641-777-2900
Montgomery	Joshua Wiig josh4montgomery@gmail.com	Jason Frerichs 319-331-3117 jfrerichs_2007@hotmail.com
Muscatine	Fred Grunder fkgrunder@gmail.com	Don Paulson 563-299-1842 djpaulson1@wildblue.net
O'Brien	Kelly O'Brien obrien@tcaexpress.net	Kimberly Weaver 712-348-0109 KimWeaver@obcdems.org
Osceola	Mary Beltman beltdmt@evertek.net	Kathy Winter 712-461-1308 kmwinter@nethtc.net
Page	Dr. John Bowery spacehabitats@gmail.com	Jennifer Herrington 712-542-5336 herriphil@mchsi.com

COUNTY

REPUBLICAN

DEMOCRATIC

Palo Alto

Jesse Wolfe
jrwolfejr73@hotmail.com

Lori Hebel
712-298-0108
lorihebel@smarts.com

Plymouth

Don Kass
citizenk2@msn.com

Matt Vonhamme
712-223-1466
matt@vonnahmelaw.com

Pocahontas

Michael Ryan
pockypastor@gmail.com

Richard Gruber
712-335-3249

Polk

Will Rogers
will@polkgop.com

Tom Henderson
515-285-1800
henderson@whitfieldlaw.com

Pottawattamie

Jeff Jorgensen
pottawattamie.gop@gmail.com

Linda Nelson
712-256-2979
Lmn727@aol.com

Poweshiek

Nancy Weaver
mdw@iowatelecom.net

Charlene Doyle
641-522-7865
cryrapp@netins.net

Ringgold

Debra Larson
trlarson@iowatelecom.net

Neil Morgan
641-782-0672

Sac

Chris Mason
gbfcmason@gmail.com

Bruce Perry
515-979-5620
brucelperry@gmail.com

Scott

Judy Davidson
williamdavidsoniii@mchsi.com

Thom Hart
563-324-3119
thomhart@excite.com

Shelby

Larry Madson
lmadson@walnutel.net

Julie Theulen
712-755-1163
jtheulen@harlannet.com

Sioux

Mark Lundberg
mlund7891@gmail.com

Kim Van Es
712-441-7164
jvanes@mtcnet.net

Story

Brett Barker
brettbarker@gmail.com
brett-barker@uiowa.edu

Jan Bauer
515-292-3739
bauerjan@yahoo.com

Tama

Brian Oliver
tamacountygop@gmail.com

Mary Cherveney
641-484-2745
ddddd@iowatelecom.net

COUNTY

REPUBLICAN

DEMOCRATIC

Taylor	Stan Mattes smattes@frontiernet.net	Arlen Hicks 712-537-2569
Union	Laura Hartman savannah3year@msn.com	Carol Smith 641-202-6192 smith.c.j@hotmail.com
Van Buren	Ron Davenport hotelman@netins.net	Twyla Peacock 319-293-6388
Wapello	Trudy Caviness trudy@wapellocountygop.com	Melinda Jones 641-682-8398 melindapadley@gmail.com
Warren	Rick Halvorson rick.warrenco@gmail.com	David Betsworth 515-961-6409 betsworthd@aol.com
Washington	James Graham wrcchchair@gmail.com	Lorraine Williams 319-461-6301
Wayne	David Wampler wampler@grm.net	Terry Davenport 641-873-6683
Webster	Jim Oberhelman jim.oberhelman@gmail.com	Julie Geopfert 515-570-5017 demsvote@yahoo.com
Winnebago	Tom Kuhn thomas_kuhn@wctatel.net	Paulette Hammer 641-585-1710 rhammerpl@aol.com
Winneshiek	Thomas Hansen Tomh501@yahoo.com	Pat Brockett 563-277-1054
Woodbury	Kevin Alons kevin.alons@gmail.com	Penny Rosfjord 712-574-9827 jimandpenny@cableone.net
Worth	Jeff Gorbali gorballj@gmail.com	James Berge 641-529-0764 jamesberge@wctatel.net
Wright	Larry McBain bainer1@frontiernet.net	Nancy Duitscher 515-851-5406 nancyduitscher@gmail.com





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