Granholm Signs Bill Moving Presidential Primary to January 15th

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September 4, 2007

LANGSING - Governor Jennifer M. Granholm has signed into law Senate Bill 624 that establishes January 15, 2008 as the date for a statewide presidential primary for the 2008 presidential election cycle. The bill passed with bipartisan majorities in both the state house and state senate and is supported by leaders from both state parties. It was filed with the Office of the Great Seal this morning, has immediate effect, and is now Public Act 52 of 2007.

Granholm said she expects every credible candidate to appear on the ballot in Michigan.

"An early Michigan primary can lead to greater emphasis on issues that matter to all Americans," Granholm said. "We want candidates to talk about how they plan to enforce trade policies that are so critical to our manufacturers, the need for universal access to affordable health care, and how they plan to reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil. In short, Michigan voters want to hear how every candidate will confront the issues that are so critical to our state and that he or she will face as president."

Under the new law, any political party that received less than 20 percent of the total vote cast for president at the last presidential election is not eligible to participate in the presidential primary. Based on 2004 results, only the Republican and Democratic parties will be participating political parties in the 2008 presidential primary.

"While political maneuvering will no doubt continue, our move to January 15th is final," Granholm said. "Our richly diverse electorate deserves a primary process that requires candidates to address the issues they will be held accountable for in the general election. The January 15th primary in Michigan accomplishes precisely this goal. With our move, we expect that this critical discussion will take place before, not after, party nominations are decided."

After 2008 the presidential primary and the consolidated local elections, which also move to January 15th under the new law, will be held on the 4th Tuesday in February as current law provides.

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MDP Presidential Caucus Will Move to Earlier Date if Any State Violates DNC Rules

Caucus currently scheduled for Saturday, February 9, 2008

LANSING – In response to numerous inquiries from the press and others concerning the date of the 2008 Michigan Democratic Party (MDP) Presidential Caucus, MDP Chair Mark Brewer made the following statement today.

"I have consulted with Michigan Democratic leaders and the consensus is that the MDP will hold its Caucus on Saturday, February 9, 2008 provided all other states abide by the DNC scheduling rules," Brewer said. "There is also a consensus among our leaders that if any state schedules its caucus or primary in violation of the DNC's rules, Michigan will move its Caucus to an earlier date. That earlier date may be on or before the date of the offending state's caucus or primary."

"It is our hope that all states will honor the DNC's scheduling rules and the important reforms which authorize four states to hold contests on certain dates before the window opens," Brewer continued. "No state should undermine those reforms which have made the pre-window contests more representative and diverse."

Under DNC rules only 4 states are permitted to their caucus or primary before the window opens on Tuesday, February 5, 2008 – Iowa Caucus (January 14), Nevada Caucus (January 19), New Hampshire Primary (January 22) and South Carolina Primary (January 29).

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Michigan Democratic Party Statement on January 15th Primary

"The leadership of the Michigan Democratic Party today announced their intention to comply with the new state law establishing a January 15, 2008 Presidential primary, and to select their delegates to the Democratic National Convention on that day."

"Michigan Democrats are taking this step in direct response to the New Hampshire Secretary of State's statement of intent on August 9th, supported by the Democratic leadership of New Hampshire, to hold the New Hampshire primary before January 19, 2008, in direct violation of the DNC Rules that state that New Hampshire's delegates cannot be selected at a primary held earlier than January 22, 2008."

"Michigan Democrats believe that no state should enjoy a privileged position every four years in selecting our party's presidential nominee. New Hampshire's stated intent to move their primary before January 19th, in direct violation of the DNC rules, is an effort to perpetuate their self-appointed privileged position. That makes the delegate selection process in other states, including Michigan, less meaningful, and results in the candidates paying less attention to the issues that are important to Michigan and other states."

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