

United States Congress



September 21, 2007

The Honorable Howard Dean  
Chairman  
Democratic National Committee  
430 S. Capitol St. S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Chairman Dean:

It's been nearly a month since rules and bylaws officials of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) voted against Florida's Jan. 29 primary and decided to strip the state of its delegates to the national convention in Denver next year.

The sanctions means that when Florida Democrats go to the polls next January – and, they *will* go to the polls -- their votes for a presidential nominee won't determine the allocation of delegates to the convention. This decision punishes the state's 4.2 million Democrats, though it was the state's Republican-controlled Legislature that moved the primary date forward.

In the weeks since the DNC's decision, we have put forward several plans for restoring order to the primary schedule so that the national party can, like most Americans, recognize Florida's primary.

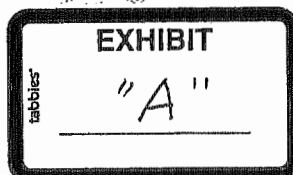
First, we proposed a solution whereby the four pre-designated early states could move their primaries ahead of Florida's to preserve the sequence of the early primary schedule set by the DNC, which could have been done without passing any new laws. The DNC rejected this plan.

Then, we proposed a solution whereby the January 29 Florida vote still could be binding, but wouldn't be ratified until a state convention was held in March – long after the official counts in the early-state primaries. The DNC also rejected this plan.

Meanwhile, the only idea offered in return was to have Florida Democrats hold a non-binding primary on Jan. 29 and then a later caucus, or vote-by-mail, to select the state's delegates, which came with an offer of insufficient funding by the DNC. In the end, the result still would have been a less inclusive process over the wishes of the voters.

We now have just over a week before the deadline set by the DNC for the state party to comply with national rules. The Florida Democratic Party cannot in good faith waste millions of dollars on a caucus, or a mail-in vote, that preserves a broken primary process. It's neither reasonable for the DNC to expect such, nor necessary to meet the requirements of the DNC's rules.

- more -

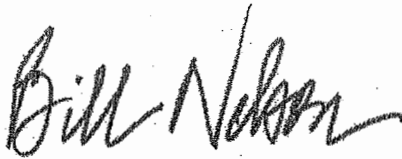


On January 29 there will be multiple elections and other important issues on the ballot in Florida, whether the DNC recognizes the vote or not. However, for the sake of the National Democratic Party, we respectfully request that you lift the sanctions against Florida by close of business on Monday, September 24. Doing so may also help avoid a legal challenge based on voter rights versus political party rules.

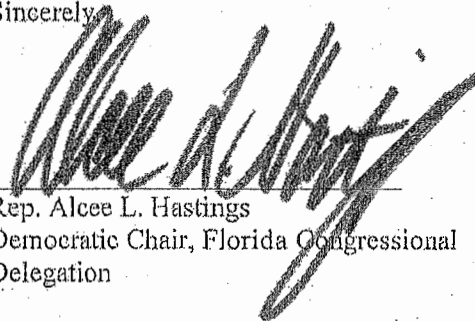
In return, Democratic legislative leaders in Florida will try one more time in the upcoming special session to convince the Republican-controlled Legislature to move the state's primary back to a date acceptable to the DNC.

We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Sen. Bill Nelson



Rep. Alcee L. Hastings  
Democratic Chair, Florida Congressional  
Delegation

cc: The Honorable Steven A. Geller  
Minority Leader, The Florida Senate

The Honorable Dan Gelber  
Minority Leader, Florida House of Representatives



Democratic National Committee

September 21, 2007

Honorable Bill Nelson  
United States Senate  
716 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Alcee Hastings  
United States House of Representatives  
2353 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Nelson and Congressman Hastings:

I am in receipt of your recent letter concerning the date of the Florida 2008 presidential primary.

In your letter, you ask that I lift the sanctions imposed against the Florida Democratic Party by close of business, Monday, September 24, 2007. You also suggest that my doing so may help to avoid a legal challenge.

As you know, Florida's 2008 Delegate Selection Plan was found in Non-Compliance by the DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee (RBC). This finding of Non-Compliance included the automatic delegate reductions imposed under the *2008 Delegate Selection Rules*. Additionally, the RBC, exercising a power conferred exclusively on them under the Rules, imposed a further reduction in the delegation, equal to a total 100% delegate loss. The decision to impose the additional reduction was approved by a very substantial majority of the RBC.

As the Florida Democratic Party was fully informed a month ago, the delegate reductions become effective if the Florida Democratic Party fails to submit a revised and compliant Plan by September 29, 2007.

Proposed solutions that you reference in your letter would not comply with the Rules in that both proposed solutions keep the January 29, 2008 primary as a binding event that would allocate delegates among presidential candidates.

As I have said before, I remain committed to discussing solutions to this issue that comply with the Delegate Selection Rules overwhelmingly adopted by the full DNC over a year ago.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Howard Dean".

Gov. Howard Dean, M.D.  
Chairman

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