

National Democratic Party/Convention Delegate Selection Reforms

<u>Year</u>	<u>Commission Name</u>	<u>Popular Name</u>	<u>Chair</u>
<i>Presidential Nomination</i>			
1968	Special Equal Rights Committee	Hughes Committee	Richard Hughes (NJ)
	Commission on the Democratic Selection of Presidential Nominees	Hughes Commission	Harold Hughes (IA)
1972	Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection	McGovern-Fraser Commission	U.S. Sen. George McGovern (SD) & U.S. Rep. Donald Fraser (MN)
1976	Commission on Delegate Selection and Party Structure	Mikulski Commission	U.S. Rep. Barbara Mikulski (MD)
1980	Commission Presidential Nomination and Party Structure	Winograd Commission	Morley Winograd (MI)
1984	Commission on Presidential Nomination	Hunt Commission	James Hunt (NC)
	Commission on Low and Moderate Income Participation	Leland Commission	Rep. Mickey Leland (TX)
1988	Commission on Democratic Participation	Fairness Commission	Don Fowler (SC)
<i>National Party Process</i>			
1972	Charter Commission	Sanford Commission	Terry Sanford (NC)

Presidential Nomination Process Rules

1972

- ▶ *Written party rules* governing delegate selection
- ▶ *Direct election of ALL delegates* from a state on the same day, at the same time, in places of easy public access.
 - Required election of 75% of delegates from area no larger than a congressional district;
 - Permitted appointment of 10% at the state level;
 - Permitted competition for a delegate seat with the payment of a modest fee (\$10) or collection of a modest number of signatures from registered partisans (1%) on petitions within a specified period of time.
- ▶ *Affirmative action* to represent minorities – **blacks, women, and young people** (under age 30) – given their respective numbers in the population.
- ▶ *Proportional representation floor* of 15% for awarding delegates based on primary election or caucus voting results.
- ▶ Delegate selection process *half open*, permitting the participation of registered Democrats **and** independents.

1976

- ▶ Required state level of proportional representation for the award of delegates.
- ▶ Required *closed primary elections and caucuses*; only registered Democrats could participate.
- ▶ “Loophole” primary used in many states, a system by which all delegates were elected from congressional districts on a “winner-take-all” basis (not permitted in 1984, but brought back later).

1980

- ▶ Required 50% of delegates to be women.
- ▶ Permitted 10% “add on” of elected officials.
- ▶ Established a three month *window*, 1st Tuesday in March through 1st Tuesday in June, **but** Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire allowed to precede the window. (Created a problem of “front loading” or movement toward the beginning of the window, resulting in “Super Tuesday” (initially AL, FL and GA) and eventually other mini regional primary elections.
- ▶ Proportional representation floor changed to 15% 1st month, 20% 2nd month, 25% 3rd month.

1984

- ▶ Changed proportional representation floor to 20%.
- ▶ Created a “Super Delegate” category as an add-on for elected party/government officials (14.4% of the national convention total).
- ▶ Banned the use of the loophole primary for delegate selection.

1988

- ▶ Lowered the proportional representation floor to 15%.
- ▶ Expanded the “Super Delegate” category to 16% (bringing in all members of the Democratic National Committee and larger proportions of Democrats elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate (selecting from among themselves).
- ▶ Generally relaxed the rules in favor of the states, e.g., bringing back loophole primary elections.

Table 1. National convention delegate characteristics with mandated attention from the national Democratic Party, 1968-1988 (in percentages.)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Women</u>		<u>Blacks</u>		<u>Under Age 30</u>	
	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Rep</u>
1968	13	17	6	2	4	1
1972	42	34	16	5	22	8
1976	33	32	9	3	19	7
1980	52 ^a	31 ^a	14	4 ^a	13	5
1984	50	44 ^b	18	4	8	4
1988	51	33	21	4	6	4

Sources: Compiled from Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection, *Mandate for Reform* (Washington, D.C.: Democratic National Committee, April 1970), pp. 22-28; Jeane Kirkpatrick, *The New Presidential Elite* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation and The Twentieth Century Fund, 1976), pp. 231-23 for 1972; Barry Sussman and William Chapman, "Delegates Found More Conservative Than 4 Years Ago," *The Washington Post*, August 15, 1976, p. A6; Haynes Johnson, "Party Paradox: The Democrats Could Find Strength in Their Diversity," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 1980, p. 1; and Steven V. Roberts, "The Delegates 'Feel Good' About Candidate," *The New York Times*, August 24, 1984, p. A10; Democratic and Republican Delegate Surveys, *The Los Angeles Times-CNN Poll Reports*, 1988.

^aWarren E. Miller and M. Kent Jennings, *Parties in Transition: A Longitudinal Study of Party Elites and Party Supporters* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1986), p. 262.

^bA figure of 49% is reported in Thomas B. Edsall, "GOP Delegates Are Generally Affluent, White and Conservative," *The Washington Post*, August 19, 1984, p. A7.

Table 2. National convention delegate characteristics related to political participation 1972-1988 (in percentages.)

<u>Year</u>	<u>College Graduates</u>		<u>Income over \$50,000^a</u>		<u>Liberal Political Philosophy</u>	
	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Rep</u>
1972	58	59	47	64	54	5
1976	61	65	50	62	56	7
1980	66	63 ^b	44	xx	65 ^b	3 ^b
1984	71	62	42	57	60	1
1988	70	69	55	73	61	3

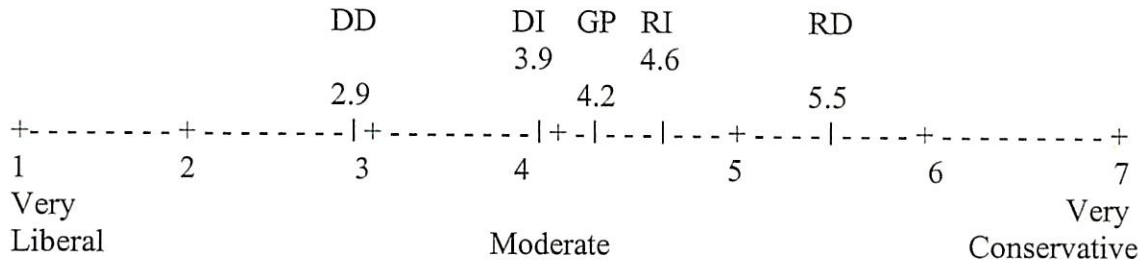
Source: Compiled from Haynes Johnson, "The GOP Delegate: Wealthier, Political Wiser," *The Washington Post*, August 19, 1972, pp. 1, A5; Barry Sussman and William Chapman, "Delegates Found More Conservative Than 4 Years Ago," *The Washington Post*, August 15, 1976, p. A6; Haynes Johnson, "Party Paradox: The Democrats Could Find Strength in Their Diversity," August 11, 1980, pp. 1 A9; Steven V. Roberts, "Delegates 'Feel Good' About Candidate," *The New York Times*, August 24, 1984, p. A. 10. The 1980 income figures were supplied by *The Washington Post*; Democratic and Republic Delegate Surveys, *The Los Angeles Times-CNN Poll Reports*, 1988.

^a\$50,000 in 1983 dollars, corrected with the consumer price index (CPI) for 1979, 1975 and 1971, yields categories roughly reflecting dollars of equal 1983 purchasing power, \$36,427, \$27,010 and \$20,325 for the respective years. For example, dividing the 217.4 CPA for 1979 by that for 1983 (298..) Equals an index of .7286 which multiplied times \$50,000 equals \$36,427. Assuming respondents to be equally distributed within an income category, the reported percentages were adjusted by dividing the nearest lower category by the number of its \$1,000 intervals multiplied by the number of intervals necessary to bring it to the standardized dollar category and adding that percentage to those reported above the necessary constant dollar amount.

^bReport to Respondents, "Convention Delegate Study," Center for Political Studies, Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

Figure 1

The self-selected political philosophy of national convention delegates, partisan identifiers and the general public, 1980.



Key: DD=Democratic Delegate
DI=Democratic Identifier
GP=General Public

RD=Republican Delegate
RI=Republican Identifier

Table 3. Position of national convention delegates on selected issues, 1980 and 1988 (in percentages).

<u>1980^a</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Rep</u>
1. The Equal Rights Amendment should be ratified	86 (A)	70 (D)
2. Balance the federal budget by cutting social programs	72 (D)	75(A)
3. The government should institute and operate a national health care program	65 (A)	91 (D)
4. Businessmen have too much power for the good of the country . . .	52 (A)	90 (D)
5. The government in Washington should see to it that everyone who wants work has a job	56 (A)	85 (D)
<u>1988^b</u>		
1. The Equal Rights Amendment should be ratified	90 (A)	71 (D)
2. Black people in the U.S. are still a long way from having the same chance in life that white people have	83 (A)	55 (D)
3. The government should raise taxes now as one means of dealing with the federal budget deficit	44 (A)	92 (D)
4. Large corporations have too much power for the good of the country	67 (A)	86 (D)
5. We should stop building nuclear power plants because of safety and waste problems	61 (A)	90 (D)
6. There should be a constitutional amendment outlawing abortion . .	94 (D)	63 (D)
7. The government should institute and operate a national health care program	82 (A)	85 (D)
8. There is nothing wrong with using the CIA to support governments that are friendly to the United States and to undermine hostile foreign governments	79 (D)	65 (A)

Key: A = Agree; **D** = Disagree

^aHaynes Johnson, "Party Paradox: The Democrats Could Find Strength in Their Diversity," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 1980, p. A9.

^bThomas B. Edsall and Richard Morin, "A Convention Taking the Right Path: GOP Delegates Are Far More Conservative Than the Party Rank and File," *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, August 15-21, 1988, p. 10.