Primary Permutations and Politics

Moderator: Senator Daniel A. Ivey-Soto, New Mexico
Panelist: Dr. Charles Bullock, University of Georgia
Panelist: Elaine Kamarck, Brookings Institution, Washington D.C.
Panelist: John Opdycke, Open Primaries, New York
Panelist: Representative Mark A. Pody, Tennessee
Did you know?

▪ 9 states have closed primaries—where only people registered in the party can vote.

▪ 7 states have partially closed primaries—political parties can choose whether to allow unaffiliated voters or voters not registered with the party to participate in their primaries, while still barring members of the opposing party.
Did you know?

- 15 states have open primaries—where all registered voters can vote in the primary of their choice.

- 6 states have partially open primaries—voters can cross party lines, but they must either publicly declare their ballot choice or their ballot selection may be regarded as a form of registration with the corresponding party.
Did you know?

- 3 states (CA, LA, WA) use “top two” primaries, where all candidates for all parties are listed on one ballot. The top two vote-getters move on to the general election, regardless of party.

* Nebraska uses this system for legislative races.
Did you know?

- 9 states have primaries open to unaffiliated voters, who may participate in any party primary they choose.
- CO recently went in this direction in 2016.
Did you know?

- 10 states hold primary runoffs—required if no candidate receives a majority of votes.
- In NC, a runoff is held if no candidate receives at least 40% of votes.
- VT only holds runoffs in the event of a tie.
Did you know?

- Primaries were created to give voters a say in nominating processes (as opposed to party regulars making selections in smoky back rooms).
- Though primaries were part of the Progressive Era reforms of the early 1900s, they didn’t hit full stride until the 1970s.
Did you know?

- In 2016, presidential preference primaries (PPPs) were run with state primaries in 17 states.
- In the remaining 33 states, PPPs were a separate election.
Did you know?

- To choose their candidates, 15 states use caucuses for one or both parties for presidential preference primaries.
Want to know more?

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