

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

December 1, 2022

Dear Rules and Bylaws Committee:

I would like to commend you for the hard work you have put in over the course of the last two years. As I shared with your co-chairs, Jim Roosevelt, Jr. and Minyon Moore, earlier in the week, and as you gather to consider changes to the Democratic Party's nominating calendar, I want to be clear about the principles I believe we as a party should allow to guide our process:

- 1) We must ensure that voters of color have a voice in choosing our nominee much earlier in the process and throughout the entire early window. As I said in February 2020, you cannot be the Democratic nominee and win a general election unless you have overwhelming support from voters of color – and that includes Black, Brown and Asian American & Pacific Islander voters. You should not be the Democratic nominee and win a general election unless you show working class Americans that you will fight for them and their families.

For decades, Black voters in particular have been the backbone of the Democratic Party but have been pushed to the back of the early primary process. We rely on these voters in elections but have not recognized their importance in our nominating calendar. It is time to stop taking these voters for granted, and time to give them a louder and earlier voice in the process.

Too often over the past fifty years, candidates have dropped out or had their candidacies marginalized by the press and pundits because of poor performances in small states early in the process before voters of color cast a vote. As I said then, 99.9% of Black voters had not had the chance to vote at that point, and 99.8% of Latino voters had not had the opportunity. That is unacceptable in 2024 and it must change.

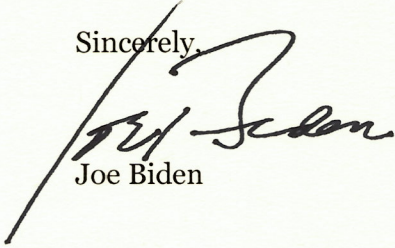
- 2) Our party should no longer allow caucuses as part of our nominating process. We are a party dedicated to ensuring participation by all voters and for removing barriers to political participation. Caucuses – requiring voters to choose in public, to spend significant amounts of time to caucus, disadvantaging hourly workers and anyone who does not have the flexibility to go to a set location at a set time – are inherently anti-participatory. It should be our party's goal to rid the nominating process of restrictive, anti-worker caucuses.
- 3) Our early states must reflect the overall diversity of our party and our nation – economically, geographically, demographically. This means more diverse states earlier in the process and more diversity in the overall mix of early states. Working class families are the backbone of our economy. Union households must be represented in greater numbers than before. We need to include voters from many backgrounds, not to ratify the choice of the earliest states, but as full stakeholders in making the choice.
- 4) There should continue to be strong representation from urban, suburban, and rural America, and from each region of the country, and states that prioritize making voting easier in both primary and general elections should represent their regions.
- 5) The Rules and Bylaws Committee should review the calendar every four years, to ensure that it continues to reflect the values and diversity of our party and our country.

I got into politics because of civil rights and the possibility to change our imperfect union into something better. I have made no secret of my conviction that diversity is a critical element for the

Democratic Party to win elections AND to govern effectively. My commitment when I ran for president was that my Administration would look like America, and it does. My Administration has the most diverse Cabinet in history and the most diverse group of presidential appointees in history. My nominee to the Supreme Court was the first Black woman – and most qualified candidate – to ever be nominated.

Just like my Administration, the Democratic Party has worked hard to reflect the diversity of America – but our nominating process does not. For fifty years, the first month of our presidential nominating process has been a treasured part of our democratic process, but it is time to update the process for the 21st century. I am committed to working with the DNC to get this done.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Biden". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the name.

Joe Biden