

**Memorandum**

To: Interested Parties  
From: DNC Communications  
Date: May 8, 2008

**Re: The Democratic Surge**

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During this election season nearly 35 million people have come out to support our Democratic candidates, and an estimated 3.5 million new voters have been added to the national voter rolls. As the AP reported this week, “these figures are up for blacks, women and young people. Rural and city. South and North.” In 17 of the first 24 primaries, voter turnout was the largest in four decades. [Associated Press, 5/5/08; USA Today, 2/29/08]

This record turnout during the primaries has been transformational for the Democratic Party as record numbers of new voters are being registered and our candidates are campaigning in all fifty states, running a truly national campaign.

“The message this election is clear: voters want change, not the third Bush term they’d get with John McCain,” said Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean. “Democrats are energized all across the country and we’re competing in all fifty states, proving that if Democrats show up and talk about our values, we will win. As we head towards November, I’m confident we will unite behind our nominee and harness this unprecedented enthusiasm to beat John McCain.”

Below is a closer look at the numbers:

**VOTER REGISTRATION AND TURNOUT**

In states all across the country, Democratic voter registration is at record levels. Many Americans are registering for the first time to participate in the primary, while others are changing their party registration to participate in the Democratic primaries and caucuses.

In the 20 states that had data available, new registrants have increased 65% over the same period in 2004. [Associated Press, 5/5/08]

**Not only has Democratic voter registration increased, Democratic voter participation has also increased:**

- From 2004 to 2008, for **all** states for which comparable data was available, Democratic turnout **increased** by significant margins—no state saw a decrease for Democrats and many states saw turnout increasing by thousands of percentage points.
- Turnout increases ranged from 18 percent in Arkansas to an astronomical 2,549 percent in Kansas.



- In contrast, comparing 2008 Republican turnout to the last contested Republican primary in 2000, Republican turnout either stayed relatively stagnant or decreased. Sinking turnout throughout the country for Republicans shows the contrast between Democrats and Republicans this primary season.
- In fact, for the 30 states for which comparable data is available, 27 of them saw more Democratic than Republican voters this year.

### **Democrats Are Gaining Among Young People...**

- Turnout for voters 18-29 has increased dramatically—tripling or quadrupling in many states—this election season. So far, more than 5 million young voters have participated, with an overwhelming number going for Democrats—building on gains made among this key demographic in 2004 and 2006. [civicyouth.org]
- This trend can be seen in state after state. In Massachusetts, for instance, youth turnout doubled, with young people voting for Democrats over Republicans nearly 3-to-1. 168,863 young people voted for Democrats while only 62,159 voted for Republicans, nearly tripling the numbers from 2004 [55,367] and 2000 [45,722]. [civicyouth.org]
- Recent polls confirm these results. According to a Pew study released last month, 58 percent of voters under 30 now identify as Democrats or lean Democratic, while only 33 percent associate with Republicans. The gap is even greater for young female voters—63 percent to 28 percent. [Pew Study, released 4/28/08]

### **And Independents...**

- In state after state this primary season, Democrats have been attracting many voters who identify as Independents.
- For instance, according to exit polls, 20% of people participating in the Iowa Democratic caucus identified as Independents and 3% identified as Republicans. In contrast, only 13% of people participating in the Republican caucus considered themselves Independent and 1 percent considered themselves a Democrat. [<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21225980>; <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21228177>]
- In Indiana, 23 percent of voters in the Democratic primary identified as Independents, and in North Carolina, 19 percent of Democratic voters identified as Independents. [cnn.com, accessed 5/7/08]

### **Key battleground states have seen groundbreaking Democratic activity:**

- In **Ohio**, twice as many people participated in the Democratic primary as in the Republican primary—2.2 million for Democrats to 1 million for Republicans—and thousands of Ohio Republicans switched parties to vote for a Democrat. In fact, in



seven counties in Ohio—Putnam, Brown, Shelby, Belmont, Warren, Delaware, and Clarmont—the vote totals for our two Democratic candidates in the 2008 primary exceeded the votes for John Kerry in the general election in each of those counties. [[Washington Post](#), 3/26/08; [Columbus Dispatch](#), 4/2/08; [Cincinnati Enquirer](#), 3/2/08]

- For the first time, **Pennsylvania** now has more than four million registered Democrats and voter registration now nears record levels based on Democratic voter registration. Since the beginning of the year nearly 300,000 Pennsylvanians switched party registration or registered to vote to support Democrats. In contrast, the Republican Party has lost 70,000 voters in the past year. [[Philadelphia Inquirer](#), 4/1/08; AP, 3/7/08; [Boston Globe](#), 4/12/08; [Washington Post's The Trail](#), 4/22/08] And of all the Democratic voters, 14 percent said they were newly registered Democrats. [CBS News, 4/22/08]
- Because of new voters, places like Bucks County and Montgomery County, which had trended Republican in the past, now register more Democratic than Republican registered voters, and places like Dauphin County in central Pennsylvania now register almost an even number of Democrats and Republicans. [[Boston Globe](#), 4/12/08; [The Patriot-News](#), 4/1/08]
- Democrats are poised to build on gains from 2006 in **Missouri**. During this year's primary, 825,000 voters came out for Democrats, while only 585,000 came out for Republicans, thus reversing the trend from 2000 when more voters supported Republicans than Democrats. [[LA Times](#), 2/10/08]
- **New Hampshire**, another battleground state, saw 75,000 people register as Democrats on primary day alone— more than double the number in 2000. [[LA Times](#), 2/10/08]

#### **Democrats are competitive everywhere:**

- **North Carolina** saw record-breaking turnout with nearly 1.6 million voters coming out for Democrats. In over 31 counties, turnout exceeded 40 percent of registered Democrats. Early and absentee votes accounted for 500,000 of those votes, which was more than six times the number of early and absentee voting in 2006 and more than half the total votes in the primary in 2004. [cnn.com, accessed 5/7/08; CQ, 5/7/08; Bloomberg, 5/7/08; [Winston-Salem Journal](#), 5/7/08]
- In **Texas** this year, more people voted in the Democratic primary than voted for John Kerry in the 2004 general election in the state. [[The Oregonian](#), 3/12/08]
- In **Virginia**, a state where Democrats are poised to make great gains in November, more than twice as many Democrats voted than Republicans—nearly 1 million for Democrats to half that for Republicans—and Democratic votes were two and a half times the number of votes in the 2004 primary. [Democracy Now!, 2/19/08]



- 58,000 new voters registered to vote in **Alabama** before Super Tuesday. [CNN, 2/6/08]
- **Mississippi** voter turnout rippled the predictions of the Secretary of State and the primary drew almost three times as many voters as the Republican primary. Over 430,000 people came out for Democrats while only 135,000 came out for Republicans. [ClarionLedger.com, 3/13/08]
- In **Georgia**, a state President Bush won with 58 percent of the vote in 2004, record turnout in the primary drew more than 1 million Democratic voters – exceeding the 960,000 Republicans who turned out. [USA Today, 11/1/04; WRDW News 12 Online, 2/6/08]
- In **Indiana**, more than 1.2 million voters came out to support the Democratic candidates, far surpassing the previous record of 1 million Republican and Democratic voters in the 1992 primary. Absentee ballots accounted for 173,000 of the votes, more than triple the number in the 2004 primary. In some counties, turnout was double that of 1992. Howard, Jackson, and Hancock counties reported ballot shortages and in Marion County, several thousand additional ballots were printed. In fact, turnout was so high Republican Secretary of State Todd Rokita said “We’re seeing turnout that mimics a presidential general election.” [Associated Press, 5/6/08; Associated Press 5/7/08; Bloomberg, 5/7/08]
- In **Utah** nearly 125,000 people participated in the Democratic primary, four times the number who participated in 2004. [Salt Lake Tribune, 2/7/08]
- In **Hawaii**, Democratic Party membership stood at 20,000 until this year when membership exploded. More than 5,000 people joined the Democratic Party of Hawaii in a single week this February. [Slate, 2/20/08]
- In **Nebraska**, the 2008 caucuses brought back thousands of voters from the Republican Party— 4,000 voters in Omaha alone registered as Democrats on caucus night. [Wall Street Journal, 4/5/08]
- The **Kansas** caucuses saw an overwhelming level of turnout, and caucuses overflowed throughout the state. Turnout increased by 2549 percent from 2004, from 1,400 to over 37,000 this year. [Kansas City Star, 2/13/08, Wichita Eagle, 2/6/08]

### **In the Midwest...**

- In **Iowa**, both parties campaigned fiercely in the run-up to the caucuses. Democratic registration went up 14% in 2004, while the number of Republicans fell by 1%. Caucus attendance for the Democrats went up 93%, while Republican turnout only went up 38% [LA Times, 2/10/08].
- In **Wisconsin**’s historically Republican 8th District, Democratic primary turnout dwarfed Republican turnout. [Washington Post, 3/26/08]



## In the West...

- **Nevada** is becoming a Democratic state. Since 2006, Democratic voter registration has overtaken Republican registration, and Democrats now have a 35,000 vote edge over the Republicans. [[Washington Post](#), 3/6/08]
- During the **Colorado** caucuses, 112,000 people came out for Democrats, while only 70,000 people came out for Republicans. This is significant considering that Colorado has gone for every Republican candidate since Dwight Eisenhower except Lyndon Johnson in 1964 and Bill Clinton in 1992. [Democracy Now!, 2/19/08]
- In **Oregon**, between March 3 and 18, 4,249 Oregon voters switched to the Democratic Party, 2,506 having switched from nonaffiliated and 1,743 switching from Republican. [[The Oregonian](#), 3/2/08]

## OTHER BELLWETHER RACES

Throughout this election season, Democrats have also made a number of important victories in special elections that show that up and down ticket, the political climate for Democrats is a positive one.

- Democrat Bill Foster defeated Republican Jim Oberweis to fill former Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert's seat in **Illinois**. Though Oberweis was highly favored to win this solidly Republican district and John McCain campaigned for him before the election, Foster dealt Oberweis a resounding blow, winning 53 to 47. [[Chicago Tribune](#), 3/9/08]
- In **Louisiana**, Democrat Don Cazayoux defeated Republican Woody Jenkins by a large margin to take a conservative district that was held by Republicans since 1974. [AP, 5/4/08]
- This win shows no Republican seat is safe. Of the 50 Republican House seats Democrats are targeting in November, 80 percent have higher Democratic performance than Hastert's old district in Illinois. [DCCC Interested Parties Memo, 3/8/08]

## WHAT THIS MEANS

As Democrats continue to see unprecedented enthusiasm for our candidates, the news continues to be worrisome for John McCain. Even after locking up the Republican nomination, 27 percent of Republican voters voted for another Republican candidate in North Carolina, and 23 percent of Republican voters voted for another Republican candidate in Indiana. [abcnews.com, accessed 5/7/08]

At the same time, Democrats are campaigning in all fifty states this primary season and bringing new voters into the process. As the numbers show, Democrats are poised for victory in '08.



DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY/CAUCUS TURNOUT SURGE

CONTEST	DEMOCRATS					2008 DIFF		REPUBLICANS				
	2004	2008		CHANGE	D - R	%	2000	2008		CHANGE		
Iowa Caucus	1/19	124,331	1/3	239,872	93%	121,181	102%	1/24	85,947	1/3	118,691	38%
New Hampshire Primary	1/27	221,309	1/8	288,503	30%	47,464	20%	2/1	238,206	1/8	241,039	1%
Nevada Caucus	2/14	9,000	1/19	117,599	1207%							
South Carolina Primary	2/3	293,843	1/26	532,151	81%	89,053	20%	2/19	573,101	1/19	443,098	-23%
Alabama Primary	6/1	218,574	2/5	536,626	146%	-27,196	-5%	6/6	203,079	2/5	563,822	178%
Alaska Caucus	3/20	700	2/5	8,880	1169%							
American Samoa Caucus Convention	3/8		2/5	285								
Arizona Primary	2/3	239,340	2/5	456,626	91%	-23,725	-5%	2/22	322,669	2/5	480,351	49%
Arkansas Primary	5/18	266,848	2/5	315,839	18%	96,942	44%	5/23	44,573	2/5	218,897	391%
California Primary	3/2	2,900,256	2/5	5,066,993	75%	2,773,781	121%	3/7	2,847,291	2/5	2,293,212	-19%
Colorado Caucus	4/16	15,000	2/5	120,971	706%							
Connecticut Primary	3/2	131,844	2/5	355,561	170%	205,402	137%	3/7	178,985	2/5	150,159	-16%
Delaware Primary	2/3	33,291	2/5	96,374	189%	46,312	93%	2/8	30,060	2/5	50,062	67%
Democrats Abroad Party Primary	2/6	3,000	2/5	23,105	670%							
Georgia Primary	3/2	626,738	2/5	1,060,851	69%	97,310	10%	3/7	643,188	2/5	963,541	50%
Idaho Caucus	2/24	4,920	2/5	21,224	331%							
Illinois Primary	3/16	1,217,515	2/5	2,038,614	67%	1,153,605	130%	3/21	736,921	2/5	885,009	20%
Kansas Caucus	3/13	1,400	2/5	37,089	2549%							
Massachusetts Primary	3/2	620,595	2/5	1,254,537	102%	788,366	169%	3/7	502,932	2/5	466,171	-7%
Minnesota Caucus	3/2	56,200	2/5	214,066	281%	151,866	244%	3/7	17,421	2/5	62,200	257%
Missouri Primary	2/3	418,339	2/5	825,050	97%	240,432	41%	3/7	475,363	2/5	584,618	23%
New Jersey Primary	6/8	214,804	2/5	1,134,708	428%	577,853	104%	6/6	240,810	2/5	556,855	131%
New Mexico Party Primary	2/3	102,231	2/5	149,779	47%							
New York Primary	3/2	715,633	2/5	1,819,515	154%	1,216,768	202%	3/7	2,161,518	2/5	602,747	-72%
North Dakota Caucus	2/3	10,504	2/5	19,012	81%							
Oklahoma Primary	2/3	302,385	2/5	417,207	38%	82,153	25%	3/14	124,809	2/5	335,054	168%
Tennessee Primary	2/10	369,385	2/5	624,764	69%	77,150	14%	3/14	250,791	2/5	547,614	118%
Utah Primary	2/24	34,854	2/5	131,403	277%	-152,356	-54%	3/10	91,053	2/5	283,759	212%
Louisiana Primary	3/9	161,653	2/9	378,346	134%	217,177	135%	3/14	102,912	2/9	161,169	57%

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY/CAUCUS TURNOUT SURGE

CONTEST	DEMOCRATS					2008 DIFF		REPUBLICANS				
	2004	2008	CHANGE	D - R	%	2000	2008	CHANGE				
Nebraska Caucus	5/11		2/9	38,670								
Virgin Island Caucus	4/17	788	2/9	2,026	157%							
Washington Caucus	2/7	100,000	2/9	244,458	144%							
Maine Caucus	2/8	17,216	2/10	43,866	155%							
District of Columbia Primary	1/13	44,357	2/12	131,103	196%	125,392	2196%	5/2	2,433	2/12	5,711	135%
Maryland Primary	3/2	481,476	2/12	878,174	82%	601,012	217%	3/7	376,034	2/12	277,162	-26%
Virginia Primary	2/10	396,223	2/12	986,203	149%	506,983	106%	2/29	664,093	2/12	479,220	-28%
Hawai'i Caucus	2/24	3,687	2/19	37,519	918%							
Wisconsin Primary	2/17	828,364	2/19	1,113,753	34%	703,146	171%	4/4	495,769	2/19	410,607	-17%
Ohio Primary	3/2	1,221,026	3/4	2,233,156	83%	1,222,292	121%	3/7	1,397,528	3/4	1,010,864	-28%
Rhode Island Primary	3/2	35,759	3/4	186,439	421%	159,443	591%	3/7	36,149	3/4	26,996	-25%
Texas Primary	3/9	839,231	3/4	2,868,454	242%	1,551,446	118%	3/14	1,320,653	3/4	1,317,008	0%
Vermont Primary	3/2	82,881	3/4	155,279	87%	118,549	323%	3/7	81,355	3/4	36,730	-55%
Wyoming Caucus	3/20	675	3/8	8,753	1197%							
Mississippi Primary	3/9	76,298	3/11	434,452	469%	299,148	221%	3/14	114,979	3/11	135,304	18%
Pennsylvania Primary	4/27	789,882	4/22	2,307,759	192%	1,517,795	192%	4/4	651,809	4/22	789,964	21%
Guam Caucus Convention	3/20		5/3	4,521								
Indiana Primary	5/4	317,211	5/6	1,272,471				5/2	406,664	5/6	411,489	
North Carolina Primary	4/17		5/6	1,549,137				5/2	322,517	5/6	500,640	
West Virginia Primary	5/11	252,839	5/13					5/9	109,404			
Kentucky Primary	5/18	229,916	5/20					5/23	91,323			
Oregon Primary	5/18	368,544	5/20					5/16	349,831			
Puerto Rico Primary	6/6		6/1									
Montana Primary	6/8	93,543	6/3					6/6	113,671			
South Dakota Primary	6/1	84,405	6/3					6/6	45,279			