

From the Office of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz

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For Immediate Release

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BYSIEWICZ ANNOUNCES PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY PICKS
Nine Democrats given slots on March 2 ballot

Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz announced the names of nine Democratic candidates that will be placed on the Connecticut Presidential Preference Primary ballot on Tuesday, March 2, 2004. Bysiewicz also announced there will be no Republican primary unless qualified GOP candidates petition onto the ballot.

State law requires Bysiewicz to select candidates that in her opinion are "generally and seriously advocated or recognized according to reports in the national or state news media." At least seven other states have similar laws designating media reports as the basis for selecting presidential primary candidates. Many states, such as New Hampshire, simply charge a filing fee.

"In Connecticut, the Secretary of the State is given the responsibility of deciding who has earned a place on our presidential primary ballot based on the substance of news coverage of the various candidacies," Bysiewicz said. "In my opinion there are nine Democrats and one Republican who have met the threshold of a viable, legitimate candidacy."

Bysiewicz determined that Democrats Carol Moseley Braun of Illinois, Wesley Clark of Arkansas, Howard Dean of Vermont, John Edwards of North Carolina, Dick Gephardt of Missouri, John F. Kerry of Massachusetts, Dennis J. Kucinich of Ohio, Joe Lieberman of Connecticut and Al Sharpton of New York met the statutory threshold for presidential primary candidates. By law, "Uncommitted" will be a 10th choice for Democratic voters on March 2.

The exact order of how the names will appear on the Democratic ballot will be chosen by lottery on January 27. Candidates have until January 26 to withdraw from the ballot. Through a petitioning process, Connecticut's presidential primary ballot is also open to qualified citizens not directly selected by Bysiewicz. Petitions are available from the Secretary of the State's office and must be returned to local Registrars of Voters by January 16. To be placed on the ballot, candidates must obtain signatures from one percent of their party members. That translates to 6,235 Democrats or 4,221 Republicans.