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Really appreciate you joining.

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We're gonna give folks another 30 seconds to join before we start our program.

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But we're we're really glad to have you here today. Thank you for being a part of this.

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Okay, let's kick things off.

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Again. Thank you for being here for our delegates, our democracy webinar with Elaine Kmart. We're excited to share a little bit more about our organization, and engage in a rich conversation with Elaine, who is.

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The world's expert on the Dnc. Rules process.

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And how parties nominate a candidate.

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I'm Chris Dempsey. I'm leading delegates. Our democracy, which is a grassroots effort.

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Encourage you to visit our website just updated this morning to look a little better than our 1st website.

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We're growing every day and getting stronger as an organization. So please visit, please sign up to learn more and stay in touch with us.

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In the days ahead.

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We have a very simple set of goals that delegates our democracy.

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We believe that the Democratic party is.

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Essential at saving democracy, and we think that conventions are essential at putting forward strong nominees who can beat Donald Trump in November.

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But we know that we need credible sources of information to share with delegates.

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We want to be a place that delegates the public. The media can come and get good information about how the process works. Today's Webinar absolutely part of that mission.

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We want to create 2 way communication with delegates so that we can hear from them, and they can hear from us at the same time that network and learn how they're feeling about the process.

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And we want to support and defend delegates.

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As the Convention moves forward and support that process.

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We are concerned. There's an information vacuum right now.

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And that.

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Trump, and Republicans will use that as a weapon against the Democratic nominee.

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We want to make sure that we are defending delegates. They are human beings, they are community members, their party leaders, their folks that have a stake in democracy and have really important decisions ahead of them. We wanna make sure that they're humanized and understood as the people that they are.

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So let's talk about who these delegates are, and how they're thinking.

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We've reached out and had one on one. Communications with scores of delegates in recent days.

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And we're proud to be able to share some information about what we've learned about how they're thinking.

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We are not focused on members of Congress. We're not focused on the highest echelon of party leaders. We're focused on grassroots.

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And what we're hearing is that a lot of these folks haven't had very good communication and have are uncertain about the process ahead. And again, we think we can help fill that information.

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There are a range of opinions out there from delegates about.

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The nominee and the President's decision that he has ahead of him.

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Some delegates say to say to us that they are behind the President 150, that they're so committed to.

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President Biden, that if he were to endorse some other candidate upon withdrawing that they would be behind that candidate and have the President's back.

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Other delegates tell us that.

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They love President Biden, that they respect him, but that they fear that he is no longer the strongest candidate.

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And they are sad to say that they would withdraw and create a more open convention process.

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Many delegates are unsure. We had one delegate tell us that he worked hard and whipped to be elected as a delegate in his State.

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And he committed to.

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Representing the views of those voters when he did that. But he's now unsure about how those voters.

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Feel about the nominee, the process, and how the party can unite going forward.

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Almost without exception.

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Delegates tell us that they are lacking good information about the process, and we understand why.

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State parties, and the Dnc. Might be reluctant to share good information about what the process could look like if the President were to withdraw.

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What what an open convention could look like.

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But that's making delegates anxious. And again, part of the role that we're trying to to fill.

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Delegates tell us.

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For example, that they just don't feel there's good information being spreading information in in the press, just like everybody else. They're not sure.

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What's accurate and what might happen.

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We've had. Delegates tell us that they feel like there's some gatekeeping happening, that information is being withheld from them, and that even when they reach out to.

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Party leaders that they're not getting good credible information back about.

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What that process might look like.

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And there's real anxiety out there from delegates.

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Knowing that if the President were to withdraw.

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That this is a process that will be new to people that really hasn't happened in a generation, and that there are risks there.

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Part of our goal at delegates, our democracy and the goal of today's webinar is to try to.

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Calm that anxiety to get good information out there from the world's experts about how this would look if the President were to withdraw.

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The the conversation that's happening, or the transition that these delegates.

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You know, a little under 4,000 delegates who have been elected from the bottom up to be members of this convention.

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Is a transition from.

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Party goer to party doer.

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And they are treating that as a significant responsibility. We, we believe that we believe that these are.

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Real players in our democracy that they're not robots, that they're humans, and that the process that.

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Could ask them to choose. The next democratic nominee is a legitimate process. We're going to hear more from Elaine today about how that fits with the long history of parties.

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In our country.

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I want to be very clear that our effort is not about persuading the President to withdraw. That's the President's own decision, and one he alone.

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Can make.

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Our effort is about preparing for a situation in which he does withdraw, and making sure that the party is strong and the party is united as it comes out of the convention, and we're in the strongest position possible.

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To beat Donald, Trump.

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I created this group because I believe that conventions matter.

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And I've got experience doing that.

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20 years ago I was a intern at the Dncc. In Boston, a volunteer coordinator where we turned. A church basement a few blocks from the Boston.

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Into a checkpoint for volunteers that we're helping make the convention actually.

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Happen.

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I was proud to play that role, and, you know, got to take this fun photo at the on the stage on the last night of the Convention.

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And then found myself, 20 years later.

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At the State Convention as a statewide candidate in Massachusetts, where I earned over 2,000 votes.

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From convention, goes, convention, delegates.

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In Massachusetts.

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Earning the endorsement of the mass Democratic party. In that case, so I am a believer that conventions matter and that they are legitimate processes. I'm also glad that in the intervening years between.

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2,004 and 22. I got some better fitting pair of pants.

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You know, and not that 9 late 90 s. Early 2,000, you see, on the left.

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But conventions do matter, and that's why we're here.

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Today. So we're so proud to be able to host Elaine Kmark.

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Who is the expert on this subject? I'm gonna.

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As I introduce her. Borrow from politico, who described her.

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This way.

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Elaine is a longtime member of the Dnc's Rules Committee, and a scholar at the Centrist Brookings Institution.

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She served as Walter Mondale's director of Delegate selection.

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As a senior advisor to Al Gore's 2,000 campaign, and as a member of Bill Clinton's White House staff.

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She's also a 10 time Dnc. Delegate and literally wrote the book on how primaries and conventions work.

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We are so honored to have you have her here today for the delegates, our democracies.

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Launching webinar. So thank you, Elaine, for being a part of this conversation. We're really glad that you're here.

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Well, thank you, Chris, for having me, and and that was a good opening to the discussion today.

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Thank you.

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So Elaine delegates our democracy emphasizes the essential role that delegates play in democracy.

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Could we start with the historical context? Would you tell us.

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The role that delegates played historically in selecting a party.

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Sure.

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The 1st nominating convention was 1831.

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And from 1831 until today.

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The same process has essentially held. It is delegates who nominate the President on behalf of their party.

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Along the way. What happened was that we introduced a lot of primaries into the process, and, moreover, the primaries became binding.

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That is the critical.

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Issue here. The primaries were instrumental in choosing who went to conventions prior to the days of binding primaries. Basically, the primaries were pretty irrelevant. Sometimes they played a political role in that. And I can talk about that in 19 in the 1960 race. But by and large primaries didn't really matter.

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And delegates were chosen by party leaders and elected officials in their States, or through a caucus convention process, where they would get elected by their fellow Democrats or Fellow Republicans. This was the same in both parties. Through a process that started at the precinct level and ended at the State level. So.

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Delegates have always been the end of the process. They've always been the people who nominated the President. The difference was that when we started having binding primaries. You could.

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Count, beginning in.

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January or February.

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Excuse me.

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With the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary. You could count how many delegates were going to each Presidential candidate, and because they were pledged to the candidate. A winner could.

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Emerge in May, April, May, or June, depending on the race. And so the delegates, by the time they went to the convention, we're really as you said, and I love that slide. They were party goers, right? They were going to wear funny hats and cheer at the right time. And basically they were like extras on a movie.

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Stage.

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Prior to 1,972. The delegates also had an important role. They were deciders. They made the final decisions on who was going to be nominated. Now there are a lot of other play actors in here. There were powerful big city mayors like Mayor Daley. There were powerful governors, like Governor Lawrence of Pennsylvania. There were all sorts of, you know, actors, but.



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Basically, the decision came down to the delegates.

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Because we've had this switch where the primary sort of choose the delegates. Most people don't realize that.

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Delegates still choose the nominee of the party.

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And I'll just end with this. When I was a young woman.

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Working at the Dnc. I got to bring the piece of paper to Walter Mondale, the former Vice President, upon his acceptance speech where he had to sign to say that he accepted the nomination of the Democratic party. That unleashed Federal Election Commission money. It also got him on a bunch of state ballots.

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etc, and that was the end of the process. It was something he had to sign and something the delegates had to do.

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That's right.

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Right, and and that paper existed because of the votes of the delegates, not because of the primary.

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Not because of the votes of the primaries.

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Yes.

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That's right.

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So so, Elaine. In that introduction you used both the word bound and the word pledged, and I think we need to talk about the difference between those things and what's really actionable here.

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The the Dnc. The Dnc rules have.

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This really essential quote.

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All delegates to the National Convention, pledged to a Presidential candidate.

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Showing all good conscience, reflect the sentiments of those who elected them.

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And before we get into you know how that may have changed since the primaries took place. Can you just talk a little bit about.

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Pledge, verse bound, and sort of what legal requirements or party requirements are in place.

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For delegates to vote a particular way.

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Yeah, in the Democratic party, and the parties are different. Here in the Democratic party delegates have to be run pledged to a presidential candidate, or they can run this pledge to uncommitted. Not many people do that, but they can run pledge to uncommitted, and that means that when they go to the convention. The assumption is that's who they're gonna vote for.

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Now the rule you just cited creates a loophole.

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And the loophole is in all good conscience.

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That was added after the very, very difficult and bitter convention fight.

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Where, at that point.

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The rules of the party said that if you were a Carter delegate and you wanted to switch your vote and vote for Kennedy.

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The chair of your delegation could remove you from the floor and replace you with an alternate who is loyal to President Carter?

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So there was an actual enforcement mechanism in place.

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When Ted Kennedy, when Senator Kennedy decided to take his challenge to Carter all the way to the Convention, they had a big Pr campaign going, and they called this rule the Robot Rule.

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Because, in fact, there was no individual decision making on the part of of delegates. Once they got to the convention.

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That rule was reinforced at the 1980 Convention.

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Mostly, however, because it became the test vote for Carter's strength in the convention, and Carter had the most delegates. His delegates were not flocking to Kennedy as the Kennedy campaign had hoped they would, and in fact, they won that vote.

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However.

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In the interim. In the years between 1,980 and 1984, the robot rule.

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And was replaced by the rule in all good conscience.

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So basically democratic.

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Delegates.

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Can go into the convention, and in all good conscience vote for somebody else.

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It doesn't happen very much. It it I can't say that it's never happened. It might have happened a couple of times, but never in such a way is to affect the outcome.

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Of the vote.

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So they are essentially

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You know they're supposed to vote the person they were pledged to support. But if something comes up.

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For instance, just a just to have a little amusement here. If their candidate was indicted and found guilty of felonies, you might want to say that in all good conscience you couldn't vote for that person right? And obviously, the Republicans don't have such a rule.

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Now the confusion comes from the republican rule.

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The Republican rule, says.

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Delegates are bound as to the results of the primary.

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If a delegate on the floor.

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Wants to vote differently than the primary vote.

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The secretary of the Convention, who's reading out the results.

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Can ignore.

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That vote.

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And simply report the vote as it came out of the primary in that State.

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Unless they are the delegates are released by.

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The Presidential candidate in writing.

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So this whole concept of releasing the delegates is relevant on the Republican side. It is not relevant on the Democratic side. There is no such thing as Joe, biting, releasing his delegates. And Joe Biden gets this. I don't know why the rest of the press doesn't get it, Joe Biden said in his NATO Press conference, he said, quote the delegates can do whatever the hell they want to do.

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And that is basically.

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Thank you for clarifying that for us.

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So there's sort of 2 parts to that phrase about in all good conscience. There's.

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There's that piece in all good conscience, and then there's.

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Reflect the sentiments of those who elected them.

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How do you interpret that part of the sentence? There? What does that mean? Is that.

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Is that purely the primary result? Is it potentially.

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Polling. Is it maybe an endorsement by the candidate.

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If it were, say, President Biden, who decided to withdraw and then endorse somebody, how should we think about reflecting the sentiments of those who elected them?

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Well, I think it was originally written, and usually means reflecting the sentiments of the person who won their primary or their congressional district. That's that's what it usually means.

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People will argue, okay, that the sentiments of and some of the people in that you showed quotes from will argue that.

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Well, actually, my voters have changed.

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Right because of events that happened.

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After the conclusion of the primaries. See, we've never had a situation quite like this where the primaries were over.

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Very clear cut winner. Okay? And yet something was discovered on closed whatever you want to call it.

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After the end of the primaries that caused people to severely doubt whether or not their nominee should proceed.

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We've never! We've never faced this

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We could have back in the early in the early part of the 21st century. You'll remember there was a senator named John Edwards, who ran for President.

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And what we knew.

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If you rerun history. Okay.

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And say John Edwards did. Well, let's say John Edwards was racking up a majority of delegates in that year.

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What we now know also from that in during that period of time John Edwards had.

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Had an affair with his mistress. His wife had cancer. He'd gotten his mistress pregnant. He'd hit his mistress in a beach house in Malibu using Federal funds. Now the Federal election funds illegally to do that. Okay, he was. It was quite a mess, quite a scandal. I think that had he been going into the convention as a nominee, and that story broke, obviously a lot of delegates would have said.

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In all good conscience. I can't vote for this guy.

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Okay, so but it it would have to be something pretty big, and and I'll tell you why.

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Delegates are elected by their community.

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By people in their community.

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So if you just, for on a whim.

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Right, decided that you were not gonna vote for.

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Bill Clinton or John Kerry, or whoever, just on a whim. And your your voters didn't agree with you. You ta! You'd have to face some anger when you got home. There's there is accountability built into this because the delegates are elected, so it has to be a good reason, and frankly, it has to reflect what you think are perhaps the changing.

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The changing feelings of the people who elected you.

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Thank you. I wanna pause for a moment here and just encourage attendees of today's webinar to submit questions.

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We're gonna try to take some questions from the audience. We may even be able to.

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Promote some folks and have them on screen and have them ask the question, live? We'd like to be able to do that. We also have solicited questions as part of the registration process, and we will ask.

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A few questions that were submitted ahead of the webinar by.

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Registrants of today's webinar.

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I wanna talk a little bit more, Elaine, about the delegates you saw in the presentation I gave earlier.

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Some characterizations, and actually some direct quotes.

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From.

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Delegates that we have spoken to from across the country of different backgrounds, different ages.

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They come to the party in different ways, or the convention in different ways.

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Could you talk about? You know how you see.

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Delegates, especially the the kind of grassroots and rank and file members, the the 4,000 who are.

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Elected through the through the State by state process. Just talk about them a little bit.

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Who are they? What are they like? How should.

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The public at large. Think about the people that are gonna be, you know, in the room and and voting for the next Democratic nominee.

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I'd say, by and large, they are community activists of one sort or another. Okay, so they have either.

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Spent a lot of time working in local campaigns.

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And therefore have a lot of friends and colleagues, and know a lot about the system, and they've managed to have their friend, friends, and family elect them sometimes they can be a part of an important interest group in the party. So in the Democratic party.

00:21:44.000 --> 00:22:09.000

A teacher, a social studies teacher who's an active member of the aft. The American of teachers might become a delegate in the Republican party. A deacon in an evangelical church might become a delegate. You know. So you you have the sort of broad tent parties people becoming delegates from there. And but the most important thing to realize about them is that.

00:22:09.000 --> 00:22:11.000

They are elected.

00:22:11.000 --> 00:22:35.000

Okay. The the district delegates are elected in congressional districts, and then there's some at-large, but they, too, are elected usually either by a State Convention, which is composed of a lot of people who again are elected to be able to go to the State Convention, or they're elected by the State Committee, in the State, which is, by the way, also elected.

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So I mean, there's there's a whole hierarchy of party organization in most States, and you know, for the delegates who want for the people who want to be delegates. They understand that hierarchy, and they fit themselves into it in in some way.

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Yeah, I mean, you're making an important point here that these delegates.

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Right.

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Are elected through a democratic, small d democratic process. And even if it's not.

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The highest profile set of elections, or one that voters always are paying close attention to.

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It is a democratic process. And so these are folks that have come up from the grassroots from the neighborhood level in many cases, and they find themselves in the hall as a representative of many more people.

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Yeah, that's right. And and believe me, the people who elected them.



00:23:22.000 --> 00:23:25.000  
Are very proud.

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To send them to the convention every once in a while. You know that if you can. If the delegate can't afford it, they'll take up a collection to get so they can pay for their airfare. They can pay for a hotel room, you know. I mean, it's very much a community.

00:23:39.000 --> 00:23:40.000  
Operation.

00:23:40.000 --> 00:23:41.000  
Yeah.

00:23:41.000 --> 00:23:50.000  
Elaine, I want to switch to an event that's happening today. The Dnc Rules Committee is meeting and you are a member of that committee for many years.

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Can you tell us.

00:23:51.000 --> 00:24:00.000  
Before we get into the details of today's meeting. Just tell us about the role of the Dnc Rules Committee what it is who makes it up, and what kinds of decisions it makes.

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Well, there's 2 little confusing. There's 2. Okay. There's the rules and Bylaws Committee of the Democratic National Committee, and that's the committee I've been on for a long time.

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And we basically create the rules for the delegate selection process itself.

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And we write the call to the Convention. Then, as we are closer to the Convention and we have actual delegates, they choose a Democratic National Convention rules Committee. And that's who's meeting later today. And they will have to look at the call to the Convention and does. They will discuss things like whether or not there should be a virtual.

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A roll call prior to the convention.

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And that that's what they're gonna do later today. I don't think they're gonna make any decisions today or take any votes, but they're gonna air all the reasons, why the virtual roll call is being discussed.

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And I want to talk more about that. But just before we get there, so.

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So who are the people that are on that convention committee rules committee? I I know Governor Paul is a Co. Chair. But can we talk more about just who those folks are?

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They, too, are elected important to know, and usually what happens is once the full State delegation is elected. So your districts are elected. You're at large. Delegates are elected. The delegation itself elects the members of the rules, platform, and and credentials committees. So these are people who are elected out of the State delegations.

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Those committees are a portion proportionally to the vote of the Presidential candidates in the primary most of the this time.

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There's no proportionality, because Biden won everything, and nobody else won any delegates to.

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Speak of, but they're they're elected also by the State delegations.

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Great. So you suggested a moment ago that you thought that maybe they were not gonna take a vote today.

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I kind of wonder if that's maybe a change in in recent, you know. Given the events of recent days.

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And and how, when you say that, tell us why you say that, and what you think.

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The most likely outcome is in terms of.

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This committee establishing a voting process in the days ahead.

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Okay.

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The reason anybody ever talked about a virtual vote. To begin with, right.

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Was that Ohio has a statute that says that to get on the Gen. November you have to have sent them your official nominee. By August the 9.th

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Well, obviously, that wasn't going to happen since our convention begins on August 19.th

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Now in past years the Ohio Legislature has simply voted an exception to this rule. And the Governor signed it. It happened whether the candidate was a Democrat or a Republican. They just did. It was sort of pro forma this year. There was some Mega Republicans who decide to play games with this, and.

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Threaten that the Dnc. Would not be able to get its.

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Nominee on the Ohio ballad.

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As you can imagine.

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Caused great concern, and the Democrats started thinking of ways.

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To make sure that.

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There was an official nominee in time to get on the Ohio.

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In the interim the Legislature and the Governor passed an exception. The problem was, they did it much later than had been done in previous years. So Ohio also has a law that says a new law can't go into effect for 90 days.

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Well, 90 days from when they passed that.

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Is September.

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And so that's the question. There's there's this ambiguity there. Does this mean? They will put.

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Joe Biden, or whoever it is, on the ballot or not. So the Dnc. Proceeded along this route. As a safety measure, because, in fact, there was no opposition to Biden, you know, to speak of it. You know it when they started this. It didn't look very controversial.

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Once the that disasters debate happened.

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The, and there started to be calls for Biden to get out.

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All of a sudden things ramped up.

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Right. And all of a sudden everybody got paranoid about. Why are they having this debate? Are they trying to rubber, stamp it before the convention of just paranoia about the Republicans in Ohio.

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Now.

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Here's the important thing to remember.

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If they have a virtual.

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If they have a virtual role, call.

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And then Biden drops out before the convention.

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The rules committee simply goes back.

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And says.

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Oh, we're gonna pass a rule to have a roll call on Wednesday night.

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Like we always do. In other words, this doesn't mean.

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We're stuck with one person if that person isn't willing to run and I think that's why this is turned into sort of a

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Mountain in a molehill. You know what I mean. It really is not as big a deal as it seems. There would still be questions about Ohio.

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But I also think that you know the Dnc. Will go to court has gone to court on this then, and I'm pretty sure they'd win.

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Well, thank you for turning down the temperature a little bit on that conversation, and.

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Reducing some of the anxiety because that has been a major focus. But what I'm hearing from you is that.

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You feel pretty comfortable with the idea that an in-person vote at the Convention.

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Would be valid and legal, and would allow the.

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Democratic nominee to appear on the ballot in 50 States and DC. And Territories, etc.

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Yeah, I mean, absolutely there there can be if the Rules committee.

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Votes it, and the convention accepts the rule.

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There would be an in person vote is absolutely legal. Now, there's 3 states where there's these questions right? And the Dnc might have to go to court.

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But.

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Given. Remember, we had an analogous experience earlier in the season when.

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People tried to keep trump off the ballot.

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In primary ballot in some States, because they said he was an insurrectionist, and he was violating the 14th Amendment. Well, guess what those lawsuits didn't go anyplace.

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Okay, the courts decided. No, you can't, doesn't really apply to this. You can't do that, so I find it. I find it very unlikely.

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That the courts would leave off a ballot.

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Anybody who was the.

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Actual nominee. Other party.

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I just I just don't see that.

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So

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I'm gonna ask a you know, a difficult question here, because I'll again. I want to be very clear that.

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Delegates are. Democracy is, is not organizing to persuade the President to step down. But we have seen that there have been some credible news, reports that he is considering.

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Doing so, and that that could happen as soon as this weekend.

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Elaine, if that were to happen. Let's say that it happened this weekend purely as a theoretical question.

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What happens next in terms of the legal process, but also the broader political process. What what would you expect would happen.

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Well, look.

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Nothing needs to change legally.

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Okay, there would be. We'd proceed to go to the convention. What would happen is, we would see.

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Which? Who wants to run?

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Okay, we don't really know that yet. Okay, we presume that Kamala Harris would want to run.

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Okay, we have. All sorts of people are being mentioned.

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To run, but none of them have said they want to run. In fact, they've said quite the opposite.

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Okay, so we don't really know who would that would be. The 1st thing is, decide looking and seeing. Is there anybody out there? Who wants to run.

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The second thing would be, and the the hardest thing would be determining. Who would be on a roll call.

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And therefore who would be considered legitimate.

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By the party.

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And the closest guide we have to. That is a provision in the call to the Convention.

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Which says that A. To, in order to be listed on the nominating role in order to be on the roll call.

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A Presidential candidate has to gather signatures from 300 to 600 delegates.

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Natural delegates. Those signatures have to. A delegate can only sign one petition, they can't go sign everybody's petition, and no more than 50 can come from one State.

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Otherwise California could always, always nominate the candidate and so.

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That's the threshold. That's sort of the minimum threshold.

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To be placed on a ballot and allowed to have and have your name put into nomination, and the candidate has to sign that.

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Right. So the candidate has to accept that.

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You could see a scenario where, if Joe Biden got out, people would want to nominate him anyway, and he would not sign it. Then there wouldn't be a roll call. So that would be. That's legally.

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What would happen?

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What would happen in the interim is pretty, fascinating.

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The people. These 4,000 plus delegates, I think, would have a lot of phone calls.

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Okay, from candidates, I suspect.

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Somebody, the Dnc. The state parties would organize delegate meetings.

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That would be open to the public cause. All Dnc. Meetings are open to the public for the candidates to come and talk to.

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The delegates because they'd have to win over the delegates. I suspect that. If there was more than one contender A National News Network would probably hold a debate.

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You know. So I think you'd have what percent, what representative is called a mini primary, you know, scrunched into.

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3 weeks or something, it'd be incredibly tight. But I think you'd have some kind of campaign going on, and it would be public, because, in fact, the delegates are listening to the public, but it would be really focused on the delegates themselves.

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Then, when you got to the convention, the question would be, Do we have a consensus.

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Is there a 1st ballot nomination or not? Or would you maybe need a couple of ballots to get a nominee? But basically think of it as a redo of the primary system.

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In a very, very, very compressed.

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Period of time.

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I mean, that's that's very helpful. And again, I think people at ease a little bit, that there is a process in place here, and.

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And rules to follow.

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I wanna get to a few questions that have been submitted and also.

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Our Webinar host tells me that there's someone she wants to elevate to ask a question.



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Let me start with this, which was submitted to us. Last night, when someone registered.

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And it ties to the to the conversation we were just having.

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So should there be that kind of open convention.

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How is the.

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Vice presidential nominee. Do delegates choose.

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The Vice President together as a ticket? Or is it a separate vote? I think there's a lot of questions about how that would work.

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There is a separate vote for Vice President in both parties, so that so remember, unlike in the General election, they don't run as a ticket. They run separately.

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And you know, just to give you an example of how this happens, I'll go to the Republican party.

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In 2,008.

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John McCain, who is the Presidential.

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Candidate, or likely nominee really wanted to have Senator Joe Lieberman, who's.

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Red may rest in peace. He died not too long ago on the ticket, as his vice Presidential choice and lieberman was a Democrat, and I was a Conservative and a Centrist Democrat, but he was Democrat, and it would have been.

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Quite a ticket might have been a pretty good ticket, but the Republican.

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Delegates revolted.

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And they said, Sorry we're not voting for him. He's he's a Democrat. He's too much of a Democrat. He might be a a Conservative Democrat, but too much of a Democrat for us. And so Lieberman had I mean the McCain had to drop that idea.

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And he picked Sarah Palin instead.

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We've never had a situation like that. But I imagine what would happen is that.

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Whoever emerged as the frontrunner, and maybe there'd be 2 or 3 of them would all name their vice presidential candidates and then but then we'd have an open vote for Vice President.

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Could be could get quite confusing.

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Great.

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But this assumes all of this assumes that there's a contest.

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Right.

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And I, for one, am very skeptical that there'll be much of a contest.

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Yeah.

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When you say that you mean.

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Both for President and for Vice President.

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For present, yeah.

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But for President, for President.

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I mean, you're only gonna have. You're only gonna have a contest for vice President. If there's a.

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Contest for President.

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Right, makes sense.

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Okay, I'm gonna ask the moderator Melissa, to elevate an attendee named Jennifer Adams.

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Who, I believe, is an elected delegate from Florida, and has a question for Elaine.

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No good. Hello, Jennifer.

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Jennifer, we can see you elevated. So yep, and you're unmuted. And if you want to join on camera, that's great. But you're not required to.

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There you are!

00:37:59.000 --> 00:38:00.000

Hello!

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There we go. Okay.

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Thanks, so.

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Yeah, thanks very much for putting this on and putting out the information. I really appreciate it. So thanks, Chris, and thank you very much. Elaine.

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So I'm Jennifer Adams, and I am a delegate. I also am a Congressional candidate.

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And I am a self professed bylaws nerd. So that being said, I would love to know how to best navigate the.

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Dnc. Bylaws and proposed rule changes, and what that looks like. If there's any opportunity to prior to.

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And or at the Convention.

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Thank you very much.

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Good good question.

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At the Convention. All rules, changes, and bylaws. Changes go through the Rules committee of the Convention.

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And the Rules Committee is one of 3 standing committees platform and rules. So a proposed change to the bylaws. The call that delegate selection rules for next time. Whatever would have to go through the Rules Committee.

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And to get it to the floor of the convention. It would need 20 of the Rules committee members signing onto a minority report unless it was adopted as part of the majority report. Okay? So it could. If it's the majority report, it would probably go to the convention would probably pass. If it's part of a minority report, it would go to the convention floor, and then there would be a vote.

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On it, and then it could win on the convention floor. So is it goes through the Standing Committee. This, by the way, for for our broader audience. This is the case for platform planks, for credentials, challenges, etc. They go 1st through the committees, and they only get a vote on the floor. If they get a 25% vote out of the committee.

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And you can see, for logistical reasons, with 4,000 people in a hall. Why, this is

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Was invented.

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I have a quick follow up question. If that's okay.

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Yeah. Go ahead. Jennifer.

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Alright, thank you. So is there a opportunity for delegates to participate in that rulemaking process?

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The the way that you could participate is other than voting on the committee report. Is to find out the names of the members of the Rules Committee.

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And go to the Florida members and say, as a delegate and Congressional candidate, you have this issue. See if one of them will bring up that issue in the committee. See if it has. See if it has any support. You're gonna have to, you know. Shop it around, as you you know, you know

politics, you gotta you gotta see who who's for you, who's not and bring it up and see if you can get somebody to do that work for you in the Rules Committee.

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Thank you very much.

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Hmm.

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Jennifer. Thanks for the question, and thank you for your service as a delegate to the Dnc. We appreciate that.

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Elaine. We've got a question here from another delegate who.

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Has put this question in the chat for us.

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And and ask this.

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If there is an open convention.

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He or she asked, how am I supposed to ascertain.

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How my district would like me to proceed.

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I'm in a deep Republican district. So the local county party is weak.

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Boy, that's a tough one. I mean, you know, that's that really is a tough one. Cause you're gonna have to.

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Make some phone calls. I mean, I would start with the people who voted for you to become a delegate. See what they think. Yeah, see how they think you should proceed. You probably won't have polling. That's very good.

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You may have to rely on sort of national polling. Or what state what state is this.

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Perfect.

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They didn't say what state they just said. The deep district.

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Okay? Well, you know, probably look at what your state is doing, because you know the the issue is.

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Because of the electoral college winning your State.

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Okay? So probably look at, maybe some polling in your state, maybe talk to senior elected officials in your State. But that's that's tough. And this is, this is where you guys are.

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Representatives.

00:42:15.000 --> 00:42:37.000

In the way that your Congressman is right, I mean, you know, and and your Congressman. You send them to Washington, and they have to figure out. If I if I vote for a tax increase, how much of a tax increase is it gonna is it gonna piss off people, you know, am I gonna be in trouble? I mean, they just have to use their judgment. And I think on this one you just have to use use your judgment.

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Doing as much research as you can into your district and and your state. I mean, because you're in a deep red district.

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That may not met, what your district.

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Says may not matter as much as how your States going, because, after all, in the electoral college, we want to deliver states, not districts.

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That's great. We're we're starting to run low on time. And I wanna ask one more question from the audience here.

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It goes back to the discussion about.

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If the President were to withdraw who the nominee might be.

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I wanna again preface that by being clear that delegates our democracy is not persuading.

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President Biden to withdraw. That's the President's decision.

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And we are also not in any way trying to. If the President were to withdraw, to indicate that some other candidate.

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Is the right nominee. We certainly respect Vice President Harris, and acknowledge that.

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She's won the vote of more than 80 million Americans. So we want to acknowledge that. But be very clear that we are not trying to put forward any.

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But this questioner is reacting to a comment you made earlier. Elaine.

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Which? And so they ask, why does Elaine think that there may not be a contest for an alternate.

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Does she think that Kamala, Vice President Harris, will be the nominee if President Biden withdraws.

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I think there, I think this is purely.

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I think that for purely practical reasons.

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I think that if.

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Joe Biden had begun to show signs of of some.

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Aging, some serious aging problems.

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Back in May.

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We probably would have had a couple of different people getting into this race and seeing if they could win the nomination.

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The problem is, we are really up against the clock.

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This is a month.

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Okay.

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And Kamala Harris has 2 big advantages that nobody else has. One is she has been vetted.

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She was vetted to become Vice President.

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She's been in the White House for 4 years, and therefore everything there is to know about her is known.

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And we're not. We're not gonna likely have some surprise. None of the other candidates, great as they are, and some of them I like very much. I might even like them more than the Vice President.

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None of them have been vetted on a national stage.

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And I've been doing this for a long time, and I can remember back in 1984, how Geraldine Ferraro's husband, who was never thought to be a crook or a bad guy in the context of sort of the New York State community in which he lived when he was vetted nationally. Oh, my God! All hell broke loose.

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Okay. It was a big major story. It was a. It was a real black eye to the to the

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To the campaign. And it it was. It was really a problem. So there's a there's going from a state level to the national level. The whole vetting process is much, much bigger.

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The second reason is, she obviously knows the job.

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So you know I I all the people other people be mentioned, or smart people, and I'm sure they could get a briefing book and study hard. But you know, like, who's gonna know what kind of weapons we've been sending to to Ukraine.

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And what we what's what are the arguments about the.

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Weapons. Wh, what about Bunker's in Gaza? Okay, what about our NATO allies? And and they're the level of their funding? I mean, there's this whole area of foreign policy that unless you're a Senator on the on the Foreign Affairs Committee, you really don't know.

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Okay. You probably know what I call what I call the Tom Friedman level of of knowledge, which is, you know, you read the New York Times. You read a smart guy like Tom Friedman, and you know you and you can get something. You can learn something about the world by doing that. But it's not presidential level.

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And so those are the 2 things that she has going for her. And again, if there were 3 months or so.

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I think we'd have time for this at this point, with every day, with every minute.

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We're running out of time, and I think you see that in the fact that.

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None of the people who have been mentioned so often as potential.

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Replacements for Biden. None of them are mounting campaigns.

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They're not calling the delegates. They're not leaving their state. They're not flying around to different cities to meet delegates.

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I think I think more than anything the potential other candidates have decided it's too late to get in this race.

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That's really.

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And that so.

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Just practical, and I'm I'm not saying anything for or against Kamala Harris. I'm just saying there's a real practical issue here.

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Yeah, well, and that's really interesting. And you know, you said that.

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They're not calling the delegates. Well, we are.

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Good.

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And just my last. My last question is just, could you comment a little bit on.

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What you know of delegates, our democracy and the work that we are doing to contact and organize delegates. And you know why you decided to join today's webinar as part of supporting the democratic process.

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Well, when Liam and Chris reached out to me and talked about what you guys were doing, I wholeheartedly endorsed your effort to get to know the delegates. One of the most amazing things about the whole discussion that's happened since the debate.

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Is that nobody's talking about the delegates.

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They're the ones with votes.

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Obama has a vote.

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Clinton has a vote. I have a vote. But basically, we all just have one vote.

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Right. And you know clearly we're gonna listen to ex presidents and our senators, etc. But the fact of the matter is that that 4,000 plus people who are at this convention. Are the deciders, and we know very little about them.

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And if you guys can find out something about them, you'll be doing the party in the nation a big favor.

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Well, thank you, Elaine, and we really appreciate your support on this, your willingness to join today's webinar and inform people. And I also want to just thank everybody that has joined today to listen in, because you are also, as viewers of this discussion, important parts of the democratic process.

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We hope that you will decide to share information about delegates, our democracy with your friends, with others that you're involved with in political affairs, especially if they are delegates.

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And we wanna make clear that we are gonna put.

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Today's webinar, which has been recorded onto our website. As soon as it's available. We spoke into delegates in Alaska. It was 6 am. Their time. When this webinar started and.

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They didn't want to get up quite that early.

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But they're eager to hear a recording of this, so that will be made available.

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And we need your help. We want your help. If you're watching. Today's webinar, and you feel like you can be involved. We hope that Elena's inspired you.

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To do just that. You can learn more at delegates are democracy.com. There's a form there to sign up and get in contact with us.

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Let us know how you're thinking. Let us know if you are delegate yourself. If you have.

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Friends or colleagues who are delegates, and you can contact them for us to be part of our network of reaching delegates. We'd like to reach delegates in all 50 States, and have thousands of conversations with them, so that we can get a good understanding of who they are, what they're thinking, make sure they have good information and defend them. In this democratic process.

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So that the Democratic party nominates the strongest possible nominee coming out of the convention, and that we can beat Trump in November. That's why we're here. Thank you so much for being a part of today's process. Elaine. Thank you again for being generous with your time and your information, and we look forward to more conversations on these urgent issues. Thank you.

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Sounds good.