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**McCAIN, SCHEDULE, OPEN PRIMARIES
PROPEL GOP TURNOUT SHARPLY HIGHER
DEMOCRATIC TURNOUT LOW**

WASHINGTON, March 9 – Sen. John McCain, serving as catalytic agent for supporters outside his party and opponents within, aided and abetted by early open primaries and a primary schedule which focused on the Republican contest, helped propel a surge in GOP turnout in the primaries through Super Tuesday. Several GOP records were set.

Democratic turnout was the second lowest in 40 years, with only the uncontested renomination of President Clinton in 1996 drawing fewer voters to the polls.

Neither the high Republican turnout nor the low Democratic turnout offer any guidance on the level of voter participation in November's general election.

These were among the principal findings of a study of mostly complete but unofficial results of the primaries held through Super Tuesday, released today by the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate (CSAE), a non-partisan research organization.

Among the other findings:

–McCain was the sole reason for any surge in turnout. Democratic turnout was low. And in primaries and caucuses, principally Iowa and Delaware, in which McCain was not a contestant, turnout was lower.

–Republican turnout hit new record highs for GOP Presidential primaries in 13 of the 18 completed contests. GOP turnout set new records

in nine states against the turnout in any primary during the last 40 years. Turnout in the 18 GOP primaries rose 4.3 percentage points to a level of 13.6 of the eligible electorate, the highest turnout in the Republican Party since another lightning rod, the late Sen Barry Goldwater, drew a turnout of 14.8 percent in 1964. The 2000 primaries were only the second time (the other, 1996, when President Clinton was uncontested) in which GOP turnout exceeded the Democrats.

-Because of the surge in Republican voting, overall turnout, the combined turnout of both Republicans and Democrats in states having primaries in both parties, also increased 5.5 percentage points to 23.7 percent of the electorate, the highest since 1988 when 23.9 voted. This turnout, however, was more than 25 percent lower than the 33.5 which voted in 1964 and the 32.4 which voted in 1972.

-Democratic turnout was 10.1 percent in the states which held primaries through Super Tuesday, slightly higher than the 8.18 percent which voted in 1996, but fully 50 percent lower than Democratic turnout in 1968 and 1972, and fully 25 percent lower than 1988. (More figures below)

"The story of this primary season was McCain - McCain mobilizing alienated independents and disaffected Democrats into Republican primaries; McCain spawning an organizational counterrevolution from Christian conservatives and regular Republicans who had vested their future in Gov. George Bush; McCain, and the primary schedule (in which the Democrats chose to preserve a five-week window after New Hampshire for candidate fund-raising, but leaving all the action to the GOP), stealing any semblance of interest and contest from the Democratic race," said Curtis Gans, CSAE's director.

"McCain's appeal rested on four likely sources," Gans said. "His hero's biography and straight talk made him appealing to both the press and those who were fed up with packaged candidates. His crusade to "clean up Washington" drew the alienated from their bunkers and offered them hope. There were some in the Republican Party who were tired of an agenda that began with abortion, prayer, flag burning and tax cuts. And his appeal to "something greater than self-interest" initially sparked some youth interest, although by Super Tuesday more of the young seemed to be voting for Bush. But his straight talk, both in the Senate and the campaign, also made him enemies, which were mobilized behind Bush - who became a better candidate because of the McCain challenge."

The McCain-fueled turnout increase was aided by the large number of open (any registered citizen could vote in any primary) and semi-open (open to independents) primaries. GOP turnout was up substantially in open and semi-open primaries, compared to the last competitive Presidential primary in each state, while it was down in the closed primaries. On the other hand, Democratic turnout declined the least in closed primaries from the last competitive race and most in semi-open primaries, indicating that in the open and semi-open primaries, all the movement of independents and Democrats was toward McCain. (See charts pages 11-12 of Notes and Summary Section of this report.)

“There will, however, always be a tension between engaging more people and broadening a party’s voting base which open primaries tend to do, especially when there is candidacy such as McCain’s, and maintaining a degree of party integrity and discipline,” Gans said. “There is some validity to the idea that the opposition party has no business voting in your primary unless they intend to vote that way in the general election. Which is to say that we would be better off if all states, not simply 26 and the District of Columbia, had partisan registration and the primaries which are now open to all would be either semi-open or closed.”

Nothing in the primary results speaks to November general election turnout. Because those increases which occurred were largely limited to the Republican primaries and created by the McCain candidacy, a landscape without a McCain candidacy does not augur for increased fall voter participation. Even with a McCain candidacy, a turnout increase would not be certain. The highest turnout in primaries – including all primaries, not just those held up to Super Tuesday – was in 1972 when more than 29 percent voted. It also preceded the second largest general election turnout decline in the last 40 years (the largest was in 1996). Primary turnout does not presage general election turnout. Turnout in the primaries, which are for the active and interested of both parties, is usually less than half of general election turnout.

“There was too much and too ill-founded euphoria about the McCain-driven turnout increases,” Gans said. “In any given election, turnout may go up, but the factors which have propelled turnout than 25 percent lower over the last three decades are real and have not been addressed.”

Gans listed a number of factors which could propel turnout in either direction:

Downward:

–There has been a progressive and continuing erosion in the interest and desire to engage among the young, which has crept up along the age ladder so that only those 65 and over have maintained a high level of voter participation.

–In the last two elections (1996 and 1998), the South, which had since the Voting Rights Act and the advent of two-party competition been increasing its rate of turnout, started to join the national decline in participation removing the one regional source of mitigating turnout decline.

–Nothing has been done to begin to address any of the problems that have led to the decline, including but not limited to: parental non-participation and civic illiteracy; a lack of civic education, current events, and political training in the schools; a values environment that speaks to self-seeking, hostility to government and libertarian choice; media technology that increasingly atomizes and fragments American society; weaker and misaligned political parties which no longer separate the wheat from the chaff of interest nor have grassroots sinew; cynicism in the media; the execrable conduct of our campaigns; and no common and shared sense of national mission and purpose.

Upward:

-That in this campaign, there will be no incumbent, a likely close race, two highly qualified candidates and several central issues to debate and discuss.

-That turnout fell so far in the last election that some correction might be in order.

-That there will likely be many high profile races in populous states, like the one shaping up in New York, which may attract voter interest and propel turnout upward from below.

“Anyone who would forecast turnout before we know whether we will have two candidates or three, whether the economy will continue to hold up, whether there will be any external or internal crisis or what the tenor of the campaign will be should be committed to an institution,” Gans said.

TURNOUT STATISTICS ANALYZED:

Overall turnout, in those states which had primaries in both parties, increased in all but one state, Delaware. Five states (New Hampshire, 42.9 percent; Washington, 29.3; Vermont, 28.6 ; Ohio, 27.9; and Maine, 16.3) set records for Presidential primary turnout. Of those, only New Hampshire and Vermont, exceeded the turnout for the primary which drew the largest percentage of voters in the last four decades.

Republican turnout increased in all but three states – New York, Arizona and Delaware. New GOP Presidential primary turnout records were set in New Hampshire, 26 percent of eligibles; South Carolina, 19.3; Washington, 18.8; Michigan, 18.7; Vermont 17.8; Ohio, 16.3; Virginia, 12.6; Missouri, 11.6; Georgia, 10.9; Massachusetts, 10.4; maine, 9.8; Maryland, 9.5; and Rhode Island, 4.6. Of these, the turnout in New Hampshire, South Carolina, Michigan, Virginia, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, and Ohio exceeded the participation in any GOP primary held during the last 40 years.(It should be noted that part of South Carolina’s increase was due to changing from a closed primary to an open one and from holding the election only in party-selected venues to opening all the regular state general election polling places.)

The largest GOP turnout increases since 1996 occurred in Michigan, up 11.3 percentage points; followed by Washington, 10.6; South Carolina, 9.3 and California, 7.5.

Compared to the last competitive primary season, 1996, Democratic turnout was down in all states except Washington, up 15.35 percentage points (in part because there was no contest in 1996 when the primaries rolled into the state); followed by California (in a similar 1996 situation), 1.7 and Connecticut, 0.03. The largest declines occurred in Massachusetts, down 5.5 percentage points; followed by Georgia, 4.4; New Hampshire 2.8; and Maryland, 2.5. Only

Democratic contests – Washington and Maine – exceeded the previous primary record, but both of the previous primaries were uncontested.

“It appears, that despite the high GOP turnout, both parties have their work cut out for them,” Gans said. “The low Democratic turnout indicates that considerable mobilization is necessary between now and the general election. And the GOP cannot count on the independent supporters of McCain to remain in the party fold. Because many were propelled into the primaries out of their frustration with politics and Washington, it is likely many will stay home and some will opt for an independent candidate, should a credible one be offered. The trouble is that because of the front-loaded and truncated primary season, we will have a dead space, possibly dominated by party issue-ads to turn many voters off.”

FOUR COMMENTS ON THE PRIMARY SEASON:

1. While the nation and the two parties emerged from the primary season with two worthy and credible candidates, it was despite rather than because of the process. For it is a process that limits candidacy to the famous, the rich and connected; because of front-loading and limitations on contributions, it creates a long season of ersatz politics and media domination; it does not give the public time for scrutiny of the candidates and evaluation and re-evaluation under pressure; it does not permit much flexibility for strategy and none for late-entering candidates; it renders the national conventions as nothing more than stages for acceptance speeches; after New Hampshire, particularly in the Democratic Party, and in the grouping of primaries, it emphasizes all the worst aspects of campaigning – the tarmac and attack ad campaign; and it leaves a long dead space for soft-money attack ads. Leadership in both parties are now working towards a better process, and their efforts should be encouraged.

2. Sen Bill Bradley deserved better from the media than he received. While it was his own errors that led to the demise of his campaign, a four percentage point loss in New Hampshire should not have meant that he was either ignored or dismissed.

3. One of the best things about the campaign past was the number and quality of the debates, which are still the best antidote to spin and attack ads. The worst thing was that the major networks did not cover one in prime-time. The average viewing audience for the debates was 1.5 million households. The average viewing audience for network prime-time on one network is 9 million households. For all four it is 42 million. Politics should not be only for the already interested. The networks, diminished as their viewership may be, have some obligation to help create a knowledgeable and engaged citizenry. (It should be noted that the two debates that were held on network television but not on prime-time – on Nightline and Meet The Press – had audiences in excess of 4 million, more than three times the average viewership of the cable channels the majority of debates were carried on.)

4. Sen. McCain may have been done a profound disservice on February 29 by the policy of the networks, including some cable networks, of declaring winners, on the basis of exit polls

and sample precinct analyses as quickly as possible. The story line of the networks was that Bush had won the two primaries of the night. As of this writing, with 66,000 absentee ballots still to be tabulated, McCain trails Bush by 3,000 votes. By their inaccurate characterization of a result which is still too close to call, they robbed McCain of any momentum he might have generated after Michigan and Arizona. This is not a brief for McCain. It is rather a statement that the policy of quick projections is both bad journalism and bad for society and should either be re-examined by the broadcasters or, if they won't do it, by Congress.

NOTES AND SUMMARY CHARTS

1. Turnout, the percentage of citizens who cast ballots, is measured as a percentage of those who are eligible to vote **NOT** as a percentage of those who are registered. Many election officials like to use registration as the standard for measuring turnout, partly because it produces higher percentages, but it is an inadequate and inconsistent standard. In the first place, using registration as a standard eliminates the non-voters who are not registered. Perhaps more importantly, this standard is subject to the vagaries of changes in election law and administration. When the nation enacts a change in registration, such as the motor voter law, registration may increase substantially and thus, when voting occurs, the rate of participation by this standard may plummet in excess of the real level of voting. When a state decides to be more zealous in the cleaning of its lists of those who die or move, registration rates may plummet and the percentage of those casting votes may artificially increase. Only by using voting age population as a denominator can one get a relatively accurate and consistent gauge of voting in the United States.

2. This said, there are also flaws in the Voting Age Population standard. The figures for Voting Age Population in common use and used in this report for all years prior to 2000 are the Census Bureau's estimate of age eligible population in November, usually published in January of each election year. This is a flawed figure insofar as it includes aliens, convicted felons and people deemed incompetent in mental institutions who cannot vote and does not include citizens residing abroad who can. According to Census, there were, in 1998, approximately 14.5 million aliens, about 4 millions felons and ex-felons, a majority of whom cannot vote and about 600,000 people in mental institutions deemed incompetent. There were also about a half a million aliens who were naturalized between the time of the estimates and the election and about 3 million Americans living outside the United States. Even with these flaws, this remains the only widely used consistent standard for gauging turnout and has been used by the Committee. A better standard, although not in common use, has been developed by Dr. Walter Dean Burnham of the University of Texas, which by using the decennial Census and interpolating for the years in between, eliminates aliens – the largest cause of distortion in the Census' Voting Age Population figures – in both national and individual states. At some point in the future, the Committee hopes to be able to present both the VAP standard and Burnham's in its report. Nationally Burnham's denominators would produce a turnout between 2-3 percentage points higher than using the VAP standard, but the distortion is greater in states such as California and Texas with high alien populations.

3. Because the Census Bureau this year has failed to produce the Voting Age Population estimates and will not be able to do so until later this month, due to reasons which may be best explained by the bureau, the Committee is using for this report Census projections made two years ago, which are less reliable but within the ballpark of what their final projections will be. The Committee is grateful to Jennifer Day of the Census' population division for these figures.

4. Voting figures in this report are final for states before Super Tuesday, except Washington, provided by the highest election office in each state. Figures for Super Tuesday are mostly complete, but unofficial, save California which has large numbers of absentee ballots still to be counted. In Washington and California, the Committee has attempted to pro-rate the outstanding ballots, few in Washington, many in California. Washington's adjustment is based on the actual estimated absentee ballots the state says are still to be counted; California's are on the basis of 1.2 million to be counted or similar to the 1998 general election which had a similar turnout level. A later report will include final and official results, as well as updated Voting Age population estimate denominators.

5. Because voter turnout in primaries is, unlike general election turnout, difficult to analyze because of the need to find comparable figures for previous years, the Committee has attempted to provide several screens – including overall figures for each state and in this summary chart, comparisons between the early primaries and: 1. previous Presidential primary records, previous records during the last 40 years in each state set in any statewide primary, not necessarily limited to Presidential races; and comparisons with the most recent competitive Presidential primary.

6. In this report, the tables headed total turnout are for the states in which primaries were held in both parties.

7. In this report there is both a list and turnout analysis of which states have open primaries (in which both independents and partisans can vote in either party's primary), semi-open (in which only independents can vote in either primary) and closed (in which only identified partisans – usually through registration, but in New York through previous voting history – can vote in their party's primary). This analysis has been provided both for all states and for states with competitive races in any particular year.

8. This analysis has been made possible by a custom computer program created by Gary Corbin and Laura Lee Guimond, revised to make it Y2K compliant by Alan Dechert.

9. Much of the primary data compilation and spread sheet work for this particular report was compiled by Sean Greene, committee research associate.

10. Analysis has been provided by Curtis Gans, CSAE's director, who is responsible for all errors which may flow from that analysis.

SUMMARY CHARTS
(Bold Denotes New Record For Any Type Of Primary)

1. Total Turnout Versus Previous Presidential Primary Records: Percentage of eligible vote casting ballots in states with primaries in both parties this year compared to year of previously highest Presidential primary turnout (new records in bold):

<u>State</u>	<u>2000 Turnout Record</u>	<u>Difference</u>	
NH	42.9	40.5 (1992)	2.4
DE	7.1	8.0 (1996)	-0.9
SC		(NA)	
AZ		(NA)	
MI		(NA)	
VA		(NA)	
WA	29.3(est.)	16.1 (1996)	13.2
CA	32.4 (est.)	43.2 (1964)	-10.8
CT	14.0	17.0 (1980)	- 3.0
GA	15.7	22.1 (1984)	- 6.4
ME	16.3	10.0 (1996)*	6.3
MD	22.2	29.1 (1964)	- 6.9
MA	22.1	30.6 (1980)	- 8.5
MO	18.1	24.2 (1988)	- 6.1
NY	11.9	N/A**	
OH	27.9	27.8 (1976)	0.1
RI	10.7	10.8 (1976)	- 0.1
VT	28.6	28.5 (1980)	0.1

* Only other Presidential primary. ** Never had two-party primary

2. Republican Turnout Versus Previous Records: Percentage of eligible vote cast in Republican Presidential primaries in 2000 versus previous Presidential primary records:

<u>State</u>	<u>2000 Turnout Record</u>	<u>Difference</u>
NH ..	.26.0	24.3(1968) 1.7
DE	5.2	6.0 (1996)* - 0.8
SC	19.3	10.0 (1996) 9.3
AZ	8.7	11.4 (1996)* - 2.7
MI	18.7	17.1 (1976) 1.6
VA	12.6	5.1 (1988)* 7.5
WA	18.8(est.)	8.1 (1996) 10.7
CA	18.1(est.)	20.2 (1964) - 2.1
CT	7.2	7.9 (1980) - 0.7
GA	10.9	10.4 (1996) 0.5
ME	9.8	7.2 (1996)* - 2.6
MD	9.5	6.7 (1996) 2.8
MA	10.4	9.4 (1980) 1.0
MO	11.6	10.4 (1988)* 1.0
NY	5.2	8.0(1996) - 2.8
OH	16.3	12.5 (1976) 3.8
RI	4.7	2.1 (1988) 2.6
VT	17.8	17.7 (1980) 0.1

* Only primary previously held.

3. Democratic Presidential Primary Turnout Versus Democratic Presidential Primary Records: Democratic 2000 Presidential primary turnout versus previous high Democratic Presidential primary turnout:

<u>State</u>	<u>2000 Turnout Record</u>	<u>Difference</u>
NH	16.9	19.7 (1992) - 2.8
DE	1.9	**
SC		N/A
AZ		N/A
MI		N/A
VA		N/A
WA	10.6(est.)	8.0 (1996) 2.6
CA	14.3(est.)	25.4 (1972) -11.1
CT	6.9	9.7 (1988) - 2.8
GA	4.8	21.0 (1984) -16.2
ME	6.5	2.9 (1996)* 3.6
MD	12.8	24.3 (1964) -11.5
MA	11.7	21.2 (1980) - 9.5
MO	6.5	13.8 (1988)* - 7.3
NY	6.8	11.6 (1988) - 4.8
OH	11.6	18.4 (1984) - 6.8
RI	6.0	8.8 (1976) - 2.8
VT	10.8	18.9 (1984) - 8.1

* Only other primary ** Never held statewide primary.

4. Total Primary Turnout in 2000 Compared With Previous State Records: Eligible voter turnout in 2000 Presidential primaries, compared with previous record turnouts, including statewide primaries other than those for President:

<u>State</u>	<u>2000 Turnout Record</u>	<u>Difference</u>	
NH	42.9	40.5 (1992)*	2.4
DE	7.1	13.4 (1992)	- 6.3
SC		N/A	
AZ		N/A	
MI		N/A	
VA		N/A	
WA	29.3(est.)	47.1 (1964)	-17.8
CA	32.4(est.)	43.8 (1964)	-11.4
CT	14.0	17.0 (1980)*	- 3.0
GA	15.7	30.3 (1970)	-14.6
ME	16.3	26.9 (1986)	-10.3
MD	22.2	29.1 (1964)*	- 6.9
MA	22.1	32.3 (1990)	-10.2
MO	18.1	34.9 (1976)	-16.8
NY	11.9	14.3 (1982)	- 2.3
OH	27.9	29.1 (1970)	- 1.2
RI	10.7	23.0 (1990)	- 0.1
VT	28.6	28.5 (1980)	0.1

*Presidential primaries.

5. Republican 2000 Presidential Turnout Compared With Highest Previous Statewide Primary Turnout: Percent of eligibles casting ballots in 2000 primaries versus the highest statewide primary turnout:

<u>State</u>	<u>2000 Turnout Record</u>	<u>Difference</u>	
NH	26.0	25.3 (1962)	1.7
DE	5.2	11.6 (1972)	- 6.4
SC	19.3	10.0 (1996)*	9.3
AZ	8.7	12.2 (1976)	- 3.5
MI	18.7	17.1 (1976)*	1.6
VA	12.6	9.6 (1996)	3.0
WA(est.)	18.8	30.8 (1964)	-12.0
CA	18.1(est.)	20.2 (1964)	- 2.1
CT	7.2	7.9 (1980)	- 0.7
GA	10.9	10.4 (1996)*	0.5
ME	9.8	16.7 (1972)	- 6.9
MD	9.5	6.7 (1996)*	2.8
MA	10.4	9.6 (1990)	0.8
MO	11.6	10.6 (1992)	1.0
NY	5.2	8.0 (1980)	- 2.8
OH	16.3	14.6 (1970)	1.7
RI	4.7	11.3 (1978)	- 6.6
VT	17.8	23.0 (1968)	- 4.2

*Presidential primary.

6. Democratic 2000 Presidential Primary Turnout Compared To Previous Statewide Primary Record Turnouts: Percentage of eligibles voting in the 2000 Democratic Presidential primary compared to the highest statewide primary turnout:

<u>State</u>	<u>2000 Turnout Record</u>	<u>Difference</u>
NH	16.9	19.7 (1992)* - 2.8
DE	1.9	8.1 (1988) - 5.2
SC		N/A
AZ		N/A
MI		N/A
VA		N/A
WA	10.6(est.)	30.1(1964) -19.5
CA	14.3(est.)	25.4 (1972)* -11.1
CT	6.9	9.7 (1988) - 2.8
GA	4.8	33.5 (1962) -28.7
ME	6.5	13.6 (1986) - 7.1
MD	12.8	24.3 (1964)* -11.5
MA	11.7	27.1 (1982) -15.4
MO	6.5	26.0 (1976) -19.5
NY	6.8	11.6 (1988)* - 4.8
OH	11.6	18.4 (1984)* - 6.8
RI	6.0	25.1 (1960) -19.1
VT	10.8	18.9 (1984) - 8.1

* Presidential primary.

7. Republican Turnout In 2000 Presidential Primaries Versus Most Recent Competitive Presidential Primary: Percent of eligibles voting in 2000 Presidential primaries versus the most recent competitive Presidential primary in states with primaries in both parties:

<u>State</u>	<u>2000 Turnout</u>	<u>Previous</u>	<u>Difference</u>
NH	26.0	23.9 (1996)	2.1
DE	5.2	6.0 (1996)	- 0.8
SC	19.3	10.0 (1996)	9.3
AZ	8.7	11.4 (1996)	- 2.7
MI	18.7	6.5 (1992)	12.2
VA	12.6	*	
WA	18.8(est.)	*	
CA	18.1(est.)	15.7 (1976)	2.4
CT	7.2	5.3 (1996)	1.9
GA	10.9	10.4 (1996)	0.5
ME	9.8	7.2 (1996)	- 2.6
MD	9.5	6.7 (1996)	- 2.8
MA	10.4	6.2 (1996)	- 4.2
MO	11.6	*	
NY	5.2	8.0 (1996)	- 2.8
OH	16.3	12.5 (1976)	3.8
RI	4.7	1.9 (1996)	2.8
VT	17.8	13.2 (1996)	4.6

*Has not had a competitive Presidential primary.

8. Democratic 2000 Presidential Turnout Compared To Most Recent Competitive Presidential Primary: Percentage of eligibles casting ballots in 2000 Presidential primaries compared to most recent competitive Presidential contest:

<u>State</u>	<u>2000 Turnout</u>	<u>Previous</u>	<u>Difference</u>
NH	16.9	19.7 (1992)	- 2.8
DE	1.9	*	
SC	N/A	NA	
AZ	N/A	NA	
MI	N/A	NA	
VA	N/A	NA	
WA	10.6(est.)	*	
CA	14.3(est.)	15.5 (1984)	- 1.2
CT	6.9	6.8 (1992)	0.1
GA	4.8	9.2 (1992)	- 4.4
ME	6.5	*	
MD	12.8	15.3 (1992)	- 2.4
MA	11.7	17.2 (1992)	- 5.5
MO	6.5	*	
NY	6.8	7.4 (1992)	- 0.6
OH	11.6	18.4 (1984)	- 6.8
RI	6.0	6.5 (1992)	- 0.5
VT	10.8	4.3 (1992)	6.5