
Record Primary Turnout in Wisconsin Could Lift Sanders

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Officials predict one of the highest turnouts in decades, which could cause momentum shifting losses for front-runners Clinton and Trump.

Wisconsin voters will make their voices heard Tuesday as they head to the polls in both Democratic and Republican primaries with polls pointing to victories for both parties' second place candidates.

In the Democratic race, an Emerson College Polling Society survey released Monday shows Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders with an eight point lead, up 51 percent to Clinton's 43 percent. This is a remarkable turnaround after being down to Clinton in the state by 53 points back in October. Sanders also enters Tuesday's race with the wind to his back after big victories in Washington, Alaska, Hawaii, Utah and Idaho at the end of last month.

There are 96 delegates at stake for the Democratic candidates before they look ahead to New York, where Clinton served as a U.S. senator and currently leads, where 291 delegates are up for grabs April 19. The two candidates will meet in a debate five days earlier in Brooklyn.

In the Republican race, polls shows Texas Senator Ted Cruz leading with 39 percent, followed by front-runner Donald Trump's nearly 35 percent and John Kasich's 19 percent. While Trump has a commanding lead in delegates at this point, with 735 to Cruz's 461 and Kasich's 143, a Wisconsin loss for Trump will dampen his chances to reach the 1,237 delegate threshold to secure the nomination and will improve the chances for a contested Republican convention.

A supporter listens to U.S. Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump while he speaks during a town hall event at the La Crosse Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin April 4, 2016.

Analysts believe a contested convention could result in a victory for Cruz, maybe Kasich, or even an outsider candidate as there is a backlash by the Republican Party establishment against Trump and his brash style and his

at times incoherent policy positions.

Latest polls also predict one of the highest primary turnouts in decades in Wisconsin, in what is considered a bellwether state that will have impact on both party's nominations. The next Democratic primary before New York is in Wyoming on April 9, when 18 delegates will be on the line. Then both parties will prepare for multiple contests on April 26, when voters in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Delaware will head to the polls.
