

Ted Cruz Continues to Win Over Iowa—From Texas

Republican presidential candidate U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) is spending the week between Christmas and New Year's Day in his home state, but that doesn't mean he's taking a break from campaigning.

Texas is a Super Tuesday state, meaning voters there will go to the polls just four weeks after the primary/caucus voting process begins in Iowa. He's picked up a lot of ground in the Hawkeye State in recent weeks, and that momentum continued while he remained at home after Christmas.

Monday morning, Shane Vander Hart, editor and founder of Caffeinated Thoughts, an Iowa-based Christian conservative blog site, announced he was personally endorsing Cruz. He had previously endorsed Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal just days before he dropped out of the GOP race.

Vander Hart wrote he was supporting Cruz because he has followed through on campaign promises, fought for reform in Washington and limited government, and because he has gone against party leadership. He added Christian conservatives will need "a fighter" in the White House:

"Cruz has successfully thread(ed) the needle between liberty and security. He has fought for personal liberty in light of government overreach in the name of security. At the same time, he also demonstrates a commitment to national security and to strengthen America's position in the world.

"He has been a champion for religious liberty, for life, and for marriage, both in his previous role as the Solicitor General of Texas and while in the U.S. Senate. He has been firmly against the Common Core State Standards and has opposed the awful reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary

Education Act.”

Cedar Rapids’ *The Gazette*, one of Iowa’s largest daily newspapers, looked at the sudden rise of Cruz’ campaign in the state, and found it to be one of the best—if not the best—organized in the 2016 race. Reporter Erin Murphy wrote that the senator has “appealed to the state’s abundance of evangelical Republicans and attempted to tap into the anti-establishment sentiment that pervades Republican voters this year.”

Iowa’s “abundance of evangelical Republicans”—which constitute about half of the traditional Iowa Republican Caucus voters—may soon have more reasons to join the Cruz Crew. Monday, while in his home state, Cruz spoke to a group of national faith leaders in an effort to win their support for the GOP presidential nomination.

He will continue to speak with individual leaders throughout the week.

“At the beginning of the year, we set out to coalesce conservatives around the country to join Ted in reigniting the promise of America,” Cruz’ national communications director, Rick Tyler, wrote to supporters. “We continue to do just that, and we look forward to building the momentum even more next week as the campaign heads to Iowa on a six-day, 36-stop ‘Cruzín’ to Caucus’ Iowa bus tour.”