

The Numbers That Could Predict Tuesday's Crucial Primaries

With U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) just 170 delegates from mathematical elimination for the Republican presidential nomination and 107 delegates up for grabs, Tuesday's nominating contests in Arizona, Utah and American Samoa will be critical to his campaign.

As the only other candidate with a legitimate chance to win the GOP nomination, his campaign has turned up the heat on front-runner Donald Trump. But the focus on Tuesday won't just be on self-described "evangelical voters."

Two-thirds of all Utahns are Mormons, which are far more likely to vote solely on principles than on personality or issues than self-described evangelicals. On many of these principles, Trump fails the litmus test, which is perhaps why he's struggling in the Beehive State.

Utah's nominating event is a closed caucus in which all of the state's 40 delegates can be won by taking more than 50 percent of the vote. And in a brand-new poll released Monday, Cruz received 53-percent support among those surveyed.

Mormons make up more than one-fourth of the population of American Samoa, an unincorporated territory consisting of seven islands in the South Pacific Ocean. Christian Congregationalists make up another 50 percent of the population, which numbers around 55,000.

Samoans, however, are typically apolitical. Most of the legislators in the territorial legislature are neither Republican nor Democrat. The American Samoa delegate to Congress is a Republican.

Both Cruz and Trump have made overtures to likely Republican caucus attendees in the territorial capital of Pago Pago. No polls have been conducted to indicate how the voters may decide to allocate their nine delegates to the Republican National Convention.

Trump is likely to balance out a loss in Utah with a win in Arizona, where the latest polls show he is inching toward the 50 percent support level, as well. The Grand Canyon State's 58 delegates are awarded on a winner-take-all basis.

In Arizona, Mormons make up about 15 percent of the likely GOP voters. Self-described evangelicals make up about 40 percent of the Arizona Republican voters. Both groups will play a big role in the final vote tallies Tuesday night.