

Why Ted Cruz' Pathway to GOP Nomination Just Got a Little Brighter

No, you didn't miss a primary election Thursday night, but, yes, U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) picked up some more delegates Friday morning.

The Alaska Republican Party announced it has reallocated the delegates previously awarded to U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.). The Last Frontier State held its GOP caucus on Super Tuesday I and was a narrow victory for Cruz over front-runner Donald Trump.

Originally, Cruz received 12 delegates, Trump received 11, and Rubio took the remaining five. But, after the reallocation, Cruz and Trump will each receive 14 delegates. In terms of popular vote, however, Cruz still claims the win by a margin of 624 votes.

The change exposes the distinct state-by-state differences that exist in the delegate allocation process. Most states, but not all, lock-in the delegates for the first ballot, even after the candidates who have won them drop out or suspend their campaigns.

The following candidates who have dropped out still have delegates for the first ballot at the national convention, even though they do not qualify for the nomination under Rule 40(b), which requires delegate majorities from at least eight states or territories:

- Rubio – 167 delegates
- Dr. Ben Carson – 8 delegates
- Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush – 4 delegates
- U.S. Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) – 1 delegate

- Former Hewlett-Packard CEO Carly Fiorina – 1 delegate
- Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee – 1 delegate

There are currently 14 uncommitted delegates, as well. There remain 983 “available” delegates in the 22 states and territories that have yet to hold their nominating events. With the new delegate math, Cruz needs to win 812 to secure an outright nomination ahead of the national convention in July.

He has a chance to win up to 107 more on Tuesday. That’s when voters in American Samoa, Arizona, and Utah go to the polls in their respective caucuses and primaries. Neither Arizona nor Utah has been polled since the race narrowed to the three remaining candidates earlier this week.

The pace of delegate allocation is going to slow down considerably after next week. North Dakota is next on the calendar, holding its state convention April 1. In that contest, the 28 delegates are not “bound” or committed to any candidate.

The next bound delegate event after that will be the winner-take-all Wisconsin Primary on April 5 with 42 delegates at stake. The Colorado district and state conventions, with a total of 37 delegates at stake, will follow on April 8 and 9, respectively.