

# Democrats abroad can phone-in caucus votes



[Timothy Meinch](mailto:tmeinch@dmreg.com), tmeinch@dmreg.com 6:27 p.m. CST December 8, 2015



Buy Photo

(Photo: The Register)

Caucusing as an absent Iowan will be easier than ever for Democrats this election cycle.

The Iowa Democratic Party on Tuesday announced the first ever Tele-Caucus initiative. It will allow deployed service members and other Iowans living abroad to participate in the first-in-the-nation event.

The effort piggybacks on a [satellite caucus initiative](#) the party announced this fall. Both programs aim to expand participation in the Feb. 1 Iowa caucus to those who are normally unable to attend.

“This is to try and be more inclusive as a party,” Iowa Democratic Party Chair Andy McGuire said. “We want as many people as possible to participate in this caucus.”

Party staff said they expect the Tele-Caucus to benefit many Iowans studying abroad as well as military personnel and their families overseas. Military personnel stationed out of state may also participate.

The Tele-Caucus will be facilitated through a telephone consulting firm, Stones' Phones.

Founder of the company, Marty Stone, said participants will essentially phone-in their caucus vote by selecting a candidate with the push of a number on the dial pad. It's compatible with any landline, cellphone, Skype or other program used for calling abroad.

Anyone planning to participate in the inaugural Tele-Caucus must register online, at [iowademocrats.org/telecaucus](http://iowademocrats.org/telecaucus), by Jan. 6. Those eligible should be registered to vote as a Democrat in Iowa and qualify for the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

McGuire said the Iowa Democratic Party plans to verify Tele-Caucus participants.

"We're going to run a check on them to make sure they're verified and make sure they're registered," she said.

As for proving folks are actually out of the country rather than opting to phone in a vote from their couch in Iowa?

**Follow Iowa Caucus news, photos, videos with Iowa Caucuses App: [iPhone](#) or [iPad](#) | [Android](#)**

That's more of an honor system, according to Josh Levitt, spokesman for the Iowa Democratic Party.

"Every individual who is participating in the Tele-Caucus will have to sign a loyalty pledge affirming that he/she is eligible to participate in the Tele-Caucus. This is similar to the loyalty pledge a person would have to sign when registering on caucus night," Levitt wrote in an email.