



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Kay Stimson, NASS

Director of Communications

202.624.3528

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 22, 2008

Secretaries of State Take Leading Role in Harvard Symposium on Presidential Primaries

Chief State Election Officials from 12 States Invited to Attend Bipartisan Forum at Harvard Institute of Politics

Washington, DC—A dozen members of the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) will join leading political, legal and academic professionals on April 29 at the Institute of Politics at Harvard Kennedy School in Cambridge, Massachusetts for a bipartisan symposium on the 2008 presidential primary process.

“We are pleased to have so many secretaries of state taking part in this unprecedented event aimed at bringing together Democrats and Republicans to discuss our presidential nominating system,” said NASS President Todd Rokita, Indiana Secretary of State. “Following the frenzied 2008 primary and caucus schedule that began just a few days into the new year, election officials have a strong interest in curbing the impacts of frontloading and restoring order to the process.”

In addition to secretaries of state, the first-of-its-kind, day-long event will bring together federal and state elected officials, political strategists, Democratic and Republican party leaders, congressional staff, members of the media, election law experts and governmental scholars to consider improvements to the presidential nominating contests for 2012 and beyond.

The agenda for the Harvard “Presidential Primary Symposium,” developed in consultation with the National Association of Secretaries of State, will include sessions moderated by some of today’s top political journalists. Topics include the 2008 presidential primary schedule, plans and alternatives for changing the nominating process, constitutional limitations and other challenges to implementation, and future primaries and caucuses.

The Harvard Institute of Politics plans to publish a transcript of the conversations from the symposium and will release a white paper outlining possible recommendations on improving the presidential primary process.

NASS is a leading voice for transforming the presidential nominating process. Members adopted the NASS Rotating Regional Primaries Plan in 1999 and continue to push for its adoption by the national parties. The association’s February 2008 report, entitled, “The Case for Regional Primaries in 2012 and Beyond: Report of the NASS Subcommittee on Presidential Primaries,” provides information on the plan, as well statistics on the 2008 nominating cycles and a chart of the frontloading phenomenon from 2000 to 2008.

The NASS Subcommittee on Presidential Primaries is co-chaired by Kentucky Secretary of State Trey Grayson and Iowa Secretary of State Michael Mauro. In addition to Grayson and Mauro, NASS members invited to participate in the Harvard symposium include: NASS President Todd Rokita, Indiana Secretary of State, Pennsylvania Secretary of the Commonwealth Pedro Cortes, Kansas Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh, Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth William Galvin, New Hampshire Secretary of State William Gardner, Minnesota Secretary of State Mark Ritchie, Washington Secretary of State Sam Reed, Rhode Island Secretary of State A. Ralph Mollis, Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner, California Secretary of State Debra Bowen and Utah Lieutenant Governor Gary Herbert.

For more information, visit www.nass.org.

###

Founded in 1904, the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) is the oldest professional, non-partisan organization of public officials in the United States. Members include the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. For more information, visit www.nass.org.