

# IN MY OPINION

Caroline Porter

## Iowa and New Hampshire: who cares but the media?

It's really too bad the 24/7 news media have decided to make caucuses and primary elections in Iowa and New Hampshire the bellweather states for the nominations of presidential candidates. What a disservice to the rest of America. Think about it. Hardly anyone resides in either state—Iowa is rated 30th in population and New Hampshire rated 41st. Neither state represents a cross-section of the country, with practically no minorities or urban population, and Iowa is hardly progressive in electing women to public office. New Hampshire and Iowa are 96 and 95 percent white, respectively.

The Iowa caucuses fly in the face of democracy at every turn. They are often held in someone's house, which is a tad personal for many. If you are brave enough to go, your vote is by the raise of a hand or literally standing up for your candidate — no privacy there. Strong and single-minded voters and campaign workers dominate the process and intimidate the other voters. One caucus of 25 people has as much clout as a caucus of 2,500 people in Des Moines. So much for the one man, one vote guideline upheld by the Supreme Court.

My husband's two brothers lived in



Iowa almost their entire adult lives and didn't attend more than one caucus. The brother from Wayland attended one and thought it was such a joke he never went again. Apparently Iowa had been using the caucus system for years but no one paid any attention until Jimmy Carter took them by storm in 1976.

It's a circus put on by the media and should be devoid of much meaning. At least this year voters in Illinois will still have a choice because of our early primary on February 5. That day Illinois will be joined by primaries in many other states, including New York and California. Now *that* will be an important election day and a "super Tuesday!"

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