

**OUR
MINNESOTA
FUTURE**

Caucus and Convention Guide

For more information, visit www.OurMinnesotaFuture.org

*Special thanks to the Minnesota Nurses Association for putting together
much of the material that can be found in this guide!*

What is Our Minnesota Future?

Our Minnesota Future is an alignment of 22 powerful organizations – labor, faith, community groups across our state – coming together to shape a new landscape. We believe that the forces of gender oppression, white supremacy, corporate power – forces that tell us that we should fear or even hate each other, must be dismantled.

The Our Minnesota Future groups are:

<i>CTUL</i>	<i>Land Stewardship Project</i>	<i>SEIU Local 284</i>
<i>Clean Up the River</i>	<i>Main Street Alliance</i>	<i>SEIU Healthcare Minnesota</i>
<i>Environment</i>	<i>Mesa Latina</i>	<i>SEIU Minnesota State Council</i>
<i>CWA</i>	<i>Minnesota 350</i>	<i>Sierra Club North Star</i>
<i>CAIR</i>	<i>Minnesota Nurses</i>	<i>Chapter</i>
<i>Education Minnesota</i>	<i>Association</i>	<i>Saint Paul Federation of</i>
<i>Inquilidxs Unidxs por Justicia</i>	<i>Navigate MN</i>	<i>Teachers</i>
<i>ISAIAH</i>	<i>Outfront Minnesota</i>	<i>TakeAction Minnesota</i>
<i>JCA</i>	<i>SEIU Local 26</i>	

What we are building

We are building the power to govern. This means we want people in power be connected and accountable to us, we want to hold elected and appointed office, and we want to build new ways for everyday people to make decisions. We will work to build strong organizations like unions and people's organizations, we will stand up to corporate forces in our economy, and we will work to build and protect family farms, small businesses, and cooperatives. We will imagine a different future, a new economy, a deeper democracy.

Our Governing Priorities

We want a state that's beautiful, resilient, inclusive, & liberated. We want:

- **An economy that serves people**, that values the needs of workers and their families over the needs of corporations, and empowers all workers to unite through a union or worker organization.
- **A guaranteed healthcare system that creates health** and that allows us all the freedom to pursue meaningful work and build our communities. We fight for a system that ensures access to care no matter where you live, your age, who you are, your pre-existing conditions, or what your documentation status is, and that values caregivers, workers, patients, and clients, not corporate profits.
- **A public education system that is fully funded and that achieves educational equity**; we must fight for kids, making sure all students are part of our collective future. From early childhood to graduate school, we must value the inherently political act of teaching and preparing our children to run our democracy.

- **An ethic of stewardship and a response to climate change** – we must care for our state, sustaining our land, soil, air, water, climate, & biodiversity, leaving things better than we found them. We must create a just transition to a clean energy economy where people and the planet are put before profit.
- **Full gender justice** including equal pay and opportunity, and an end to sexual violence and discrimination.
- **A state that supports families**, who live together by birth or affinity, that fully recognizes the relational work, both paid & unpaid, that caregivers do, a state that supports the balance of work and family.
- **To recognize that we are all part of a global community.** We believe in a new model of just relationships between human beings that have moved across borders. We believe in equal access to resources and legal status for those who have immigrated to Minnesota, a world where we all live without fear of deportation, separation, and violence. If corporations can cross borders, why can't we?
- **To recognize and respect the sovereignty of First Nations.** We must acknowledge our legacy of genocide and broken promises; we must repair past harms and respect the resilience of tribes in Minnesota.
- **Affordable, dignified places to live, work, retire, travel, and play for everyone in our state.** We believe that renters should be able to direct the resources and policy that affect them, to give them a say over their own futures. We want to make sure every community, rural, urban, small or large, has the authority to shape itself. And the resources to do it: infrastructure, transit, technology, time, and land.
- **A criminal justice system that shifts from relentless punishment to restoration and redemption.** Our justice system needs to belong to all of us, and we strive to break down barriers for those coming out of prison, eliminate the school-to-prison pipeline, and dismantle the mass incarceration.
- **A system of finance, both public and private, that prioritizes needs,** where everyone can access wealth. To save, to prepare, to invest. For our communities and our families. We want to own our future.

Why Causes and Conventions?

From the beginning, OMF organizing has focused on 3 core things we must do:

1. **Engage people** around our vision and values
2. **Shape the issue and political environment** -- lift up our vision and values and move candidates to talk about and commit to work on the issues we care about
3. **Shape the campaigns of candidates,** and build relationship and accountability with candidates

The 2018 caucuses and conventions are opportunities to do all three of these things. They are an opportunity for us to engage and develop our leaders to take political action. And, the values and vision

we walk into precinct caucuses and conventions will shape the broader environment and the campaigns of the people running for Governor.

How the heck do caucuses and conventions work?

There are a total of three steps, over a five month period of time, in order to be elected to the State Convention:

Step 1: Precinct Caucus – February 6, 2018

Step 2: Organizing Unit Convention (either Senate District or County Unit depending on where you live) – to be held between February 24 – June 1, 2018

Step 3: DFL State Convention: June 1-3, 2018 in Rochester or Republican State Convention, Jun 1-3, 2018 in Duluth

To participate in a DFL Precinct Caucus you must:

- Live in the precinct in which you are caucusing
- Be at least 16 years old to introduce and vote on resolutions
- If you want to vote for candidates or become a delegate to conventions, you need to be eligible to vote by the time the next general election is held in November
- Believe in the principles of the Party
- Not be an active member of another political party; you cannot attend the precinct caucuses of more than one political party during the same election cycle

To participate in a Republican Precinct Caucus you must:

- Be eligible to vote in the fall election – November 8, 2016. Find out if you're registered, or register, [HERE!](#)
- Live in the precinct.
- Be in agreement with the principles of the Republican Party and plan to vote for a Republican for president.

We hope this guide will help you understand some of the language and steps to get you ready to participate in this process!

STEP ONE: Precinct Caucus – February 6, 2018

The basics of your Precinct Caucus

The precinct caucus is the first level of the party structure, and the main function is to meet your neighbors and candidates, present and vote on party resolutions, and elect delegates and alternates to the Organizing Unit Convention.

Your caucus will be held in your neighborhood, usually at a local school, community center, church, park or other public meeting space. To find your party's caucus location for your precinct you can visit your party's website, or talk to an organizer you work with. When you arrive at your caucus, you will sign in. As soon as you arrive, start to introduce yourself to your neighbors and build relationships based on issues you care about. At 7:00 pm, the caucus convener (a neighbor who has volunteered for this role) will call the meeting to order. The group will elect a caucus chair, and then move through the agenda, which will include a straw poll for you to choose the candidates you prefer for party endorsement, election of delegates and alternates to attend the Organizing Unit Conventions (more on that below!), and discussion and voting on resolutions to be added to the party platform.

What you should do at your precinct caucus

1. Talk to people! Make connections! Build lists of people who share our values

A key opportunity at precinct caucuses is a chance to collect names for your organization of people who would be interested in staying in touch with your work. Introduce yourself, explain the work you're doing, and pass around a petition in your caucus. Then turn that petition into the organizer you work with!

2. Get elected as a delegate to your senate district or county unit convention!

We want you to go beyond the caucus and run to be a delegate to your Organizing Unit Convention. To do this, you will raise your hand to be considered. Moving beyond the precinct caucus level to the Senate District or County Unit level is a key way to keep our vision and values moving throughout the party process and into candidate campaigns. Odds are, as soon as you move on to the next level, you'll start getting calls from candidate campaigns. This is an awesome opportunity to have real conversations with candidates about the issues you care about!

** Usually, it isn't a very competitive process at the precinct caucus level. Usually, you just have to raise your hand. However, in precincts with high turnout, you may have to get elected from your precinct using a process called "sub-caucusing." To read more about that, check out page 7 of this guide!*

3. Bring Resolutions!

Introducing a resolution is a key way to shape the politics of this race, build connection with neighbors, and make your voice heard about the issues you care most about. Resolutions submitted at the precinct caucus level have the potential to be moved through the process, all the way up to the State Convention for deliberation for acceptance to the official party platform. Candidates will also be paying attention to what issues are brought forward as resolutions – this is part of shaping their campaigns.

Our Minnesota Future has a set of resolutions we're asking people to bring, and your organization may also have additional resolutions they want you to bring. Soon you'll be able to find these resolutions on www.OurMinnesotaFuture.org.

4. And don't forget your swag!

Be sure to wear a t-shirt, button, or sticker from your organization AND from Our Minnesota Future. That's part of how we're going to make a splash at these events!

5. Let us know how it goes!

Afterwards, visit www.OurMinnesotaFuture.org to let us know how it went, if you passed resolutions, if you're going on the next level, and more!

Step 2: Senate District or County Unit Convention (to be held sometime between February 24 – June 1, 2018)

The Organizing Unit Convention is the second level of the party structure. Depending on where you live in the state, the setup for these conventions can be quite different. Your Organizing Unit could be your Senate District, House District, County, or Precinct, and all set their own dates and locations for their convention. This information will be provided to you at the precinct caucuses.

Organizing Units may be based on county, senate district, or house district boundaries. In larger counties, such as Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, St. Louis, Scott, Stearns, Washington, and Wright, most Organizing Units are full Senate Districts. In these areas, the Organizing Unit and Senate District Conventions are combined into one convention that endorses legislative candidates and handles other party business. In areas where Organizing Units aren't full Senate Districts, separate conventions are held to endorse candidates. Check out your party's website to get more information about the makeup and process.

The basics of a senate district or county unit convention

- Endorse candidates for State House and State Senate (if applicable)
- To conduct local party unit business, such as elections for unit leadership
- To present and consider platform resolutions
- Elect Delegates and Alternates to Congressional and State Conventions

There will be fewer people attending your Organizing Unit Convention, but the agenda will be longer. It's not uncommon for these to be full-day events! Bring food! And knitting! Or a book! And a phone charger! Elections for Congressional and State Convention delegates and alternates tend to be one of the last agenda items.

What you should do at your senate district or county unit convention

1. Talk to people! Make connections! Build lists of people who share our values

Same deal as precinct caucus – this is an incredible opportunity to meet people in your area, talk to them about your organization and Our Minnesota Future, and invite them into the work with you. There is a TON of time sitting and waiting – you should connect with people during this time! Again, take this time to introduce yourself, explain the work you're doing, and pass around a petition in your caucus. Then turn that petition into the organizer you work with!

2. Connect with candidates!

Candidates and elected officials seeking endorsement for various positions will be in attendance, and will be given a moment to address the entire convention. This is a great chance to get to know the people running to represent you. It's also a chance to grab them and talk to all candidates about OMF issues and tell them what you care about.

3. Support (or oppose) resolutions!

Resolutions will be presented to the convention from all the precinct caucuses in that organizing unit; the convention will hear from supporters or opponents on all presented resolutions. Consider speaking in favor of a resolution you care about! Resolutions will be voted out of this convention to move forward to the State Convention.

4. Run to be a state delegate!

The process for electing delegates and alternates to the next level is the same as they were getting you elected out of the precinct caucus, but it's likely going to be much more competitive. Not all but many of these conventions use a process called "walking sub-caucuses. Here's how it works:

Sub-caucusing (also known as the walking sub-caucus)

It is likely that you will participate in what's called "sub-caucusing" or "walking sub-caucuses" at your Senate District or County Unit Convention. (Also,, IF there is high turnout at your precinct caucus you may also participate in this process at that step of the process.) Sub-caucusing is a way to choose delegates if there are more people interested in moving on to the next level than there are allotted spots. Here's how it works (and don't worry, the chair will explain this process and walk you through every step of the way):

1. The Chair opens nominations for sub-caucuses. The rule is, each sub-caucus must begin with either a candidate's name or the word 'uncommitted', and may include a particular issue. This could be

something like, “Uncommitted (for a candidate), Defeat right to work (issue)” After a set period of time, the Chair closes sub-caucus nominations.

2. Once nominations are closed, you have a certain period of time to either convince folks to join your sub-caucus, or find a sub-caucus you want to join based on either candidate, issue, or both. This is the opportunity to talk about why you care about the issue you chose. The stronger your points and persuasion, the more people will join your sub-caucus.
3. After time is up, the floor becomes ‘frozen’ and each participant must stay in the sub-caucus they have joined. At this time, each sub-caucus counts how many members it contains. While you wait, keep talking to your sub-caucus to get to know them.
4. The Chair will then determine the ‘viability number’ in order for a sub-caucus to be awarded their number of delegates they can elect to the Organizing Unit Conventions. This is determined by dividing the total number of participants in the room by the number of delegates to be elected. **Example** – if there are 62 people total in the room to elect 4 delegates total, each sub-caucus would need at least 16 people to be viable. If there are sub-caucuses that are not viable, they dissolve and you begin the process at #2 above.
5. Once your sub-caucus has their delegate allotment number, each sub-caucus decides by a majority vote on how to do your elections in your individual sub-caucus (voice vote or secret ballot). The Chair will inform you of the rules to keep in mind when electing your delegates and alternates – such as gender equality. You make your pitch to your sub-caucus as to why you want to run to be a delegate and your group votes, with hopefully you being elected as a delegate or alternate to your Organizing Unit Convention!

Here are some other tips to get elected:

- Bring people with you! Best way to guarantee a spot is to ask your neighbors and others in your area to come and vote for you. It’s an opportunity to organize your own supporters!
- Connect with those who you know in attendance and ask them to vote for you for delegate!
- Take a leadership role. Call a sub-caucus yourself, work to persuade others to join, help your team hold itself together.
- Introduce yourself to the people in your sub-caucus individually first, tell them why you are running to be a delegate for, and walk around the room to meet others who haven’t found a sub-caucus to join yet. Ask them what their values and interests are, and connect those to your issue and/or candidate.
- When you give your speech about wanting to be a delegate, tell a real story. Talk honestly and personally about why you care about this!

If you become a delegate to the next level, please let your organizer know!

Step 3: State Conventions, June 1-3, 2018

The State Conventions are the top governing body of the parties. At the convention, delegates continue organizing the party and working on the platform, in addition to endorsing candidates for United State Senate, and all Minnesota Constitutional offices.

The basics of the state convention

At the state conventions, endorsements for all statewide offices are made by the party. If you're elected to the state convention, be sure to let your organization know ASAP – we'll be having more trainings, conversations, and ways to connect with Our Minnesota Future before the state convention!

Process on Getting Elected as a Delegate or Alternate to Minnesota's State Party Conventions

Shape our state's politics by getting involved in the caucus and convention process! The caucus and convention process is an opportunity to meet neighbors, to shape the politics and issues that candidates are talking about and may determine party endorsements for candidates for Governor and more. You can run to be a state delegate by participating in the following steps:



STEP
#1

Attend your Precinct Caucus on
Tuesday, February 6, 2018

At your precinct caucus, run to be delegate for the next "level" -- your Senate District or Country Unit convention



STEP
#2

Attend your Senate District or County Unit convention
(to be held between February 24 – June 1)

Depending on where you live, it will be one of the following convening conventions: Senate District, House District, or County Unit.

At this meeting, run to be a delegate or an alternate to the State Convention.



STEP #3

Attend the State Convention:
DFL Party Convention = June 1 – 3 in Rochester
Republican Party Convention = June 1- 3 in Duluth

Remember, if you have questions, concerns, or run into problems, talk to your organizer! This process can sometimes feel overwhelming, but you don't have to do it alone!