

# [***2024 Iowa GOP Caucuses Less Than An Hour Away; Minutes Away From The Start Of The Iowa Caucuses, And Tonight We're Going To Bring You Something That You're Not Going To Get Anywhere Else, Fox News We'll Have An Innovative New Way To Get Immediate Reaction From First-Time Caucus Goers On Whom They're Voting For And Why***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B41-7YF1-F072-X17S-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Guests:** Byron Donalds, Chip Roy, Vivek Ramaswamy, Mike Huckabee, Dan Lienenmann, Cindy Leonhart

**Body**

BRET BAIER, FOX NEWS HOST: Live, set your DVR, 6 PM in the East, 3 Pm on the West Coast. Thanks for inviting us into your home tonight and every night. That's it for this Special Report. Fair, balanced, and still, unafraid. Live from Des Moines. We'll be here all night. The Ingraham Angle is now.

LAURA INGRAHAM, FOX NEWS HOST: Good evening, everyone. I'm Laura Ingraham. This is The Ingraham Angle live from Des Moines, Iowa. We're exactly one hour away from the first major test of the 2024 GOP primary season, the Iowa caucuses.

Now more than 1600 caucuses across 99 counties, if you can believe it or not. Now, I've been coming to Iowa for years covering these caucuses. And this year isn't just the coldest, but also has the most riding on it. I'm going to explain what's really at stake in moments. But first, we have reporters at the headquarters of all the major candidates, first to Trump's right here in Des Moines, where Fox News Senior National Correspondent Rich Edson is standing by. Rich.

RICH EDSON, FOX NEWS SENIOR NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: You know, Laura, it's cold, it's icy, some of the roads are impassable. They've talked about the weather all week long here. We talked to a campaign aide about how that plays into the campaign, how it plays into their effort here and they say, look, all the campaigns are dealing with this. And then one campaign aide said, look, we've got the most dedicated campaign base in the history of American ***politics***. We're not worried about our folks showing up.

Speaking of showing up, former president is going to be going to a caucus site tonight. We're not sure on the specifics of which one, but then he's going to come here to his campaign watch headquarters here in Des Moines. 1600 plus sites. campaign says they've got a presence at each of those sites across the state of Iowa. The former president has been campaigning around the state, took a couple of events off over the weekend. It's something that his rivals have hit him on. But the campaign says that the former president is committed here and that he's focused, and he's ready to do -- he's ready to rock. Back to you, Laura.

INGRAHAM: Rich, thank you. Now let's go to the DeSantis campaign headquarters where Fox News National Correspondent, Bill Melugin is standing by. Bill, a little colder here than at the border where we usually see you.

BILL MELUGIN, FOX NEWS NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Yes, it is, Laura. We caught up with Governor DeSantis earlier today and he said, he's feeling good. He's not feeling nervous about tonight. He says he's going to surprise people tonight. He feels the media and the polls are getting this race wrong. He's confident in his ground game. He thinks it's going to turn people out. He thinks he has the infrastructure to be able to turn people out in huge numbers in these sub-zero temperatures.

Keep in mind the work that he has done here in the state of Iowa over these last six months or so. He visited all of Iowa's 99 counties. He got the endorsement of Iowa's popular Republican Governor Kim Reynolds. His Super PAC says they've knocked on nearly a million doors in his state and his campaign says, they've got about 1700 precinct captains who are going to go out there tonight and help turn people out to make sure they caucus in this cold weather.

He feels when the dust settles, it's eventually going to be a two-man race between him and Donald Trump. He says Nikki Haley just isn't conservative enough to win a GOP primary. As for Trump, he says Trump's too focused on himself with his personal vendettas and his concerns about loyalty with people he knows, and that he didn't deliver on past promises when he was president in 2016 through 2020.

And he says, look, if you pick me as the GOP candidate, I can be in office for eight years, Donald Trump can only be in office for four years. So he's confident that he is going to deliver and beat expectations tonight. He said that as soon as caucus night is over tonight, he's actually going to get on an airplane, fly straight to South Carolina, where he's got two campaign events tomorrow. Then after those campaign events in South Carolina, he's going to be flying up to New Hampshire all in one day. So he's got a lot of campaigning coming up, regardless of what happens here in Iowa tonight.

He says he's in this for the long haul and he's expecting to pull off a surprise tonight. We'll send it back to you.

INGRAHAM: All right, Bill. Thanks. Next up is Fox News 2024 ***Politics*** Reporter Aishah Hasnie who is live from Nikki Haley's headquarters. Aishah, what's the mood there tonight?

AISHAH HASNIE, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Hey, Laura, good evening to you. Everyone is very excited about tonight; I can tell you that Nikki Haley has her sights set on former President Trump. In fact, the campaign has pivoted quite hard to message that this is now just a two-person race, even before caucus results are in tonight. But she certainly has the momentum, Laura. She's had the most TV ads support in this state. She might even get a helping hand from independents and Democrats tonight because they can switch their party affiliation at the caucus site and then maybe help her rival former President Trump.

In fact, New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu, who's endorsed Nikki Haley was sort of urging Democrats to do that on Fox News today. We'll see if it gives her the edge. Laura.

INGRAHAM: Aishah, thanks so much. And last, we're going to go to Vivek Ramaswamy headquarters, where Fox Business Correspondent Grady Trimble is standing by. Grady, what are you sensing there?

GRADY TRIMBLE, FOX BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT: Hey, Laura. Well, there's no doubt Vivek Ramaswamy is considered a long shot in this race, but he has really campaigned hard here in Iowa. Bill Melugin mentioned that Ron DeSantis visited all 99 counties in the Hawkeye state. Ramaswamy did that two times over. He spent the entire week in the run up to tonight saying that he expects to surpass expectations that the polling is off.

Throughout his campaign, Ramaswamy has praised former President Trump and positioned himself as the candidate who can keep carrying the America First torch. But former President Trump turned his attacks on Ramaswamy just a couple of days ago, saying a vote for him is a waste, may be a sign the former president is concerned that Ramaswamy could eat into his support. Ramaswamy though did not fire back at the former president. Laura.

INGRAHAM: Grady, thank you so much. Joining me now here on set, Florida Congressman Byron Donalds, who has endorsed President Trump and Texas Congressman Chip Roy, who's endorsed Governor Ron DeSantis and is live from his headquarters tonight. Congressman Donalds even out there today talking with the folks, the sense is that Nikki Haley has the money. She has the coverage in the media, friends that I'm staying with in Des Moines get a text message from her, it seems like every five minutes, a little quieter from the other candidates. Is that going to make a difference for her?

REP. BYRON DONALDS (R-FL): No, it's not because Nikki Haley hasn't done much else in the state of Iowa. Look, the reason why everybody is hearing from her now is because a lot of money left the campaign of Governor DeSantis to go to the campaign of Governor Haley. But they're both going to lose, because Donald Trump's going to take this state tonight, I anticipate it's going to be double-digits, probably over 15 points. Could be more, but it's going to be dependent on voters getting out and making their voice heard in these caucus events.

And I've got to tell you, the enthusiasm amongst Trump voters is the biggest I've seen throughout this --

INGRAHAM: The Trump voters is going to come out in the cold weather, I mean it's warmer than it was yesterday, when I got here. It was like 18 below zero. So it's warmed up to about negative one, I think now. It feels bomb (ph). Right, it feels like we're back in Florida.

DONALDS: It feels great. Almost Florida weather, almost. But the voters I talked to today in Fort Dodge said, listen, this is normal for us. We expect it to be cold this time of year, not going to stop them from getting out to vote for Donald Trump.

INGRAHAM: Congressman Roy, you've seen Nikki Haley blanket the media, she's made numerous appearances, not just on this network, but all across local media and she really believes that that last minute boost of money she's gotten both here in Iowa, and also then in New Hampshire moving on to South Carolina, that's going to cement her as number two, Congressman Roy and you say?

REP. CHIP ROY (R-TX): Yes, well, she better hope that all that spending against Governor DeSantis actually works for her. $48 million between Trump and Governor Haley against Governor DeSantis. I think that speaks volumes. But look at the end of the day, the people of Iowa, they don't like it when someone goes to New Hampshire and says that New Hampshire needs to correct Iowans.

The truth is on the ground, the enthusiasm is for Governor DeSantis. I've crisscrossed this state for the better part of the last two weeks, on and off. On Saturday, I went from Council Bluffs all the way near Nebraska, all the way across to Davenport, near Illinois. I've been with the governor. We've been in all sorts of venues across the state. People of Iowa expect you to earn their vote. Governor DeSantis has been doing that. He didn't skip debates like former President Trump.

He didn't dismiss Iowans like Governor Haley. He's been doing the hard work and going to 99 counties, 250 events, doing the hard work just that represents his life story as a blue-collar kid who worked his way up, worked hard. His parents are in the same house he grew up in. This is a guy who wants to earn their support, he's going to earn it, because this is a time for choosing. And we should choose a guy who's done it for the people and didn't just airmail and shut the economy down, the $8 trillion of debt and give the power and the keys of this economy to Anthony Fauci leaving us with loved ones unable to see their loved ones in hospital, kids not able to go to school, shut down economy, mandatory vaccine mandates.

Governor DeSantis was a shining light, a beacon of hope for the people of this country and the people of Iowa are seeing that bright and clear.

INGRAHAM: I think both candidates, both DeSantis and Trump, and in recent last -- really the last week, both have seemed extremely chill and like confident. I mean, both of them seem just completely in their element. I don't know if it's we're finally getting into the real games. But there was a moment that the Daily Caller caught and this was audio, where Nikki Haley was asked point blank whether she believes a man can become a woman.

But she did not directly answer instead offered that, quote, people can live any way they want, once they're over the age of 18. Congressman Donalds, Haley has been floated as a potential VP pick, perhaps to satisfy the business community that's worried about Donald Trump. Does this kill her chances for that.

DONALDS: I think so, and look, there's a lot of answers that Nikki Haley has not been clear on, she kind of muddles through them. And then when she gets dang, she comes back. By the way, a man is a man is a man. I know that people in the LGBT community isn't going to be happy with what I said, but those are the realities. Those are the facts. You born with XY chromosomes; you keep them to the day that you die.

That being said, the problem for Nikki Haley is that she's trying to please everybody all the time, that's not going to work especially in the Veep stakes. Let's be clear with respect to both governors --

INGRAHAM: There's going to be pressure on Trump to name her vice president if she comes in a strong number two, do you think that's the case? As there was with Reagan when he took Bush.

DONALDS: Has Donald Trump ever felt pressure from the media, conglomerate, and from the big donors? No. He's going to do what he thinks is in the best interest of the country, trust him to do that. And so to his voters, which is why they're overwhelmingly supporting him and his primary process.

INGRAHAM: Congressman Roy, on CNN today, evangelical leader Bob Vander Plaats, who's endorsed DeSantis commented on his chances. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BOB VANDER PLAATS, CEO, THE FAMILY LEADER: I think it's going to be a turnout game. He's built an amazing organization. Ted Cruz was the best organization I've ever seen in 2016. And I'd say DeSantis's organization is lightyears ahead of where Cruz's organization is. So if he gets the turnout, I think he could do really -- he'll beat expectations, but potentially he could win.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

INGRAHAM: Now, Congressman Roy is DeSantis's win, is it realistic, given the polls showing this overwhelming support for Trump? I know he's done an amazing job here in the state. There's no doubt about it. And he's done what Huckabee did and Cruz and this Santorum who were successful here as well, that that is still a big, big deficit to try to bridge this late in the game.

ROY: Well, Bob Vander Plaats knows the state of Iowa better than I do and better than most people do. And I think he sees the same enthusiasm that I see on the ground. And Governor DeSantis, as I said before has worked hard to earn the votes of the people of Iowa, we feel really good about the organization on the ground, it's going to be a turnout game and the frozen tundra that we're dealing with right now. And with just today, we're going up to Sioux City and you're looking out.

I mean, the roads are still icy and it's still difficult to get around and it's cold. So getting that turnout is going to be really important. But importantly, people are just ready to be able to move forward. They want to look forward instead of backwards. They want somebody who can serve for eight years, not four, they want somebody who's not having to focus on their issues, his issues in the case of President Trump and his legal issues and on him --

INGRAHAM: All right, congressman, hold on. We've got to give Byron Donalds in on that --

ROY: -- and get the job done.

INGRAHAM: All right. You should be a carnival barker at another life because you can get that stuff. I love that, Congressman Roy, you're like, OK, come on, they want to change. They want someone new. They don't want the baggage. They don't want the legal problems.

DONALDS: What the American people want is somebody that can get the job done. Donald Trump has done that. Gas prices, border security, foreign policy, growing economy, wages actually rising ahead of inflation. He has done it all. Go back to the Obama economy that he inherited. The Democrats love talking about inheritance. The Obama economy was stagflation 1.0, really 2.0. We're now in stagflation 3.0 under Joe Biden. Donald Trump knows how to do all of this. Anything get it done, again --

INGRAHAM: Would he pick DeSantis as vice president. I mean, they have the names going back and forth, but would DeSantis be on the list, you think.

ROY: Yes.

DONALDS: That's up to President Trump. Nobody else.

INGRAHAM: All right, congressman, both of you, great to have you on. Thank you.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Is Ramaswamy playing spoiler here?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I don't think he's right to worry, because Ramaswamy is a fetish candidate. He's not going to go beyond these first three contests. He represents no threat to the nomination for Trump.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: When you talk about a surprise, what are the chances Vivek Ramaswamy delivers one?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I'm not a believer in the Vivek Ramaswami theory here. I think if you like Vivek Ramaswamy and you're going to his events, you're voting for Trump. They have the same message. So that's where I think we're doing.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

INGRAHAM: All right, the media may be counting him out, but Vivek Ramaswamy says he's going to shock the world tonight. He joins me now. Vivek, now we're less than an hour out. I love the caucus. I've come to -- I've been coming to caucuses before you were born. So much fun. But what's your closing message to the voters here who understand who Trump -- President Trump is, they know what he did? They have a pretty good sense of DeSantis. You're the young upstart, why should they turn out for you?

VIVEK RAMASWAMY (R) 2024 GOP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Look, I think that is going to take somebody with fresh legs coming in from the outside.

INGRAHAM: What does that mean --

RAMASWAMY: To reach -- and like meet somebody who isn't colluded --

INGRAHAM: Yes, I mean I've heard that --

RAMASWAMY: -- by broken ***politics*** --

INGRAHAM: -- fresh legs?

RAMASWAMY: Yes.

INGRAHAM: Are you running, physically running this race or what?

RAMASWAMY: Well, you know what, we've actually run across Iowa --

INGRAHAM: I have to tease you --

RAMASWAMY: That's allowed, Laura and you said you've been around the caucus, I think you probably know this. I've done over 390 events across the state. That's more than any other candidate in history and more than the rest of this field combined. And Iowans do reward hard work. But my message is this, if you want somebody who's actually going to shut down the deep state, not just talk about it, but actually get that job done in a way that it hasn't gotten done. Nobody's going to do that like me, because it takes somebody who is a businessman. I'm not a politician. I'm a businessman, but who also understands the law and the constitution of this country.

And so they're not going to dupe me when I fire 75 percent of those federal bureaucrats. They're not going to dupe me when I go in and shut down --

INGRAHAM: How many is that? 75 percent. I mean --

RAMASWAMY: Several --

INGRAHAM: This is music to the ears of many of us who've sadly worked in Washington --

RAMASWAMY: Yes.

INGRAHAM: -- and for a long time --

RAMASWAMY: And that's what we need.

INGRAHAM: But that's millions of people you'll throw it on the unemployment rolls from the federal government.

RAMASWAMY: That's correct and the reason is the job of the federal government is not to provide employment opportunity, Laura, but now's a good time to do it. Because there are more open jobs in the private sector right now, then there are people looking for work so we can stimulate the economy while we're at it.

And you know, what, if you cut 75 percent of those bureaucrats, there go the regulations along with it as well. You know as well as I do that most of those regulations are unconstitutional. But we need a president who actually understands the constitution.

INGRAHAM: So you think President Trump --

RAMASWAMY: To be able to --

INGRAHAM: -- doesn't understand the constitution.

RAMASWAMY: I think my understanding of the constitution is deeper than anybody else in this race. And I also think that I'm a businessman who comes from the outside --

INGRAHAM: He's a businessman.

RAMASWAMY: -- but those two things is -- you need both of them. And that's what I think happened last time around. They said you couldn't fire those employees. You know, this, Laura, they said, because you had civil service protections, read the law, those civil service protections --

INGRAHAM: Well, he's chief executive, they can fire anyone who he wants.

RAMASWAMY: Well, it didn't happen.

INGRAHAM: Yes.

RAMASWAMY: But it's happening on my watch. And so I respect Trump, I want to be clear about that. I think he was excellent for this country. He rolled that log over and we saw what crawled out. I'm bringing the pesticide and that's what it's going to take to get this job done --

INGRAHAM: Is it going to be environmentally friendly, the pesticide.

RAMASWAMY: You know what, I'm not going to be regulated by the EPA on that one.

INGRAHAM: All right, Vivek. President Trump took the shot at you over the weekend. It's covered a lot saying that --

RAMASWAMY: Yes. Says a lot.

INGRAHAM: -- a vote for Vivek is a vote for the other side. Don't get duped for this. Vote for Trump. Don't waste your vote. Vivek is not MAGA. Vivek is not MAGA. What does that mean to you?

RAMASWAMY: That wasn't particularly coherent to me. I think he did walk it back today. So I think the handlers whoever was yesterday was probably the B team. We had probably the A team around him today.

INGRAHAM: But you guys have always been --

RAMASWAMY: We're friendly.

INGRAHAM: -- friendly, right?

RAMASWAMY: We're absolutely friendly.

INGRAHAM: That was just --

RAMASWAMY: I respect the heck out of President Trump. The reality is, this is competitive sports. And anybody who actually -- I give them credit for this one, Laura, because they're ahead of the mainstream media on this. Anybody who doesn't have their head stuck in the sand knows that we're actually making a late surge here. And so in some ways, I give credit to his team for spotting what many in the mainstream media have missed.

And the mainstream media has done us a great favor. Because setting the expectations modestly, we get to crush those expectations. And history shows that the person who wins the election isn't actually the person who wins the Iowa caucus oftentimes, it's the person who shatters expectations tonight. So I think that's the question to ask, which candidate is the one that beats the expectations that have been set by the polling narrative and I have full confidence, that's going to be me with flying colors.

INGRAHAM: Why did you do, you did a little Twitter video that I caught, where you said, I'm going to talk about the elephant in the room? And it was your faith? Why did you feel like you needed to do that?

RAMASWAMY: Oh, I've been asked about that immensely over the course of this time in Iowa, and I've answered honestly --

INGRAHAM: Do you think Iowans don't like you, because of your faith --

RAMASWAMY: I think Iowans like me, because I'm honest actually.

INGRAHAM: Yes.

RAMASWAMY: That's what I actually believe. And so --

INGRAHAM: OK, I'm just curious.

RAMASWAMY: I think what I've found is actually we do big events. We've had hundreds of people in the room, people raise their hand, ask questions. Then at the end in the photo lines, I get a lot of questions about faith. And so I've spoken openly about how I'm Hindu, I believe in one true God who puts us here for a purpose. But I was raised in the same value set, even the Judeo-Christian values that this nation was founded on. And I think a lot of evangelical Christians across the state understand the difference between a president and a pastor and it's going to take a president who protects religious liberty for those pastors to be able to do that job --

INGRAHAM: I thought it was cool that you did that late in the game, I hadn't seen you really talk about that before and I really enjoyed it. So, it's great to see you.

RAMASWAMY: Thank you, Laura. It's good to see you.

INGRAHAM: All right. We're now getting exclusive live stats ahead of the caucuses. We're going to bring them to you as they come in. But up next, one of the past winners of the Iowa caucuses, one of my dear friends, I adore him, Governor Mike Huckabee. So stay there.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

INGRAHAM: As Iowa Republicans are just minutes away from caucusing, the latest ABC News poll is horrific news for Joe Biden. His overall approval rating is a staggeringly low 33 percent. And then the economy, it's even worse, 31 percent. Now, if Biden had an action figure, it would be called gee, I don't want Joe. And if his recent campaign appearances were intended to reassure voters, they were epic failures.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN (D), PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: If you look at the consumer confidence measures, they're way up, look at across the board. Everybody is doing better and they believe it, they know it. And they're just beginning to sink in.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

INGRAHAM: Really. And now more than two years later, despite everything the media has done to try to prop him up. It's not just Joe Biden's physical decline that's evident. There's chaos breaking out all over. The invasion at the southern border has already fundamentally changed America. And of course, that's what Biden's people want it. Inflation that's dipped slightly, but Americans buying power has taken a major hit.

Groceries that cost you $100 In December of 2019, cost you $125 by the end of 2023. Thanks to Axios for that. Now over the course of the year that adds up to real money to real people. And none of that can be messaged away by Karine Jean-Pierre, by the way, But nice try.

Meanwhile, our effort to help protect Ukraine's borders, that hasn't panned out. Oops, oh, what's $100 billion among friends and for a few hours on Saturday night, we wondered whether the White House grounds, their borders were even safe. A pro-Palestine mob was trying to scale they were rattling, trying to climb over the security fence screaming F Biden.

It turns out Hamas has some friends on the Left and since they're Leftist, they're not going to be put in solitary confinement. And they're not going to be charged even with simple trespassing. But I know what you're thinking, at least the Democrats have a great bench. Biden's going to step aside, Laura, and he is going to get someone else to step in. Like who? Gavin Newsom. Oh, that's hilarious.

Trump would love or DeSantis or anyone would love to run against that track record in California. Why are so many successful people leaving your state, Gav? OK, but what about JB Pritzker, a big man for a big job. We just saw him at Starbucks down the street about an hour ago. Americans are going to vote for the billionaire who proudly declared Illinois a sanctuary state and then beg to Texas to stop sending migrants.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We have migrants that arrived from Texas virtually every day, hundreds and we don't have places to put them. We've asked him to stop sending people because of the weather.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

INGRAHAM: The weather. By contrast, the Republican Party, by almost every measure is far stronger than it was after the 2022 midterms. Now we all know the south is where it's at. We love Iowa, but the south is where it's at for economic and population growth.

People genuinely seem to feel safer, and just generally more content there. Also, GOP support is growing in states where Trump lost last time. And the more Democrats try them to put them in jail, charge him, indict him, the more they hound him, the stronger he seems to get.

Turns out political prosecutions don't sit well with most fair-minded folks. And Iowans, they're fair-minded. So the big question tonight, first, will Trump's margin of victory be historically high? Big? Will he get close to 50 percent? And if so, an argument can be made that that race -- this race is over.

Second, will Nikki Haley's money translate into turnout? And the question that someone posed to me today, which I didn't have a good answer for? Is she really articulating a vision for the country that's all that different substantively from let's say, Mitt Romney, in 2012.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

NIKKI HALEY (R) 2024 GOP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Let's keep in mind these people that are wanting to come here, they want to come for a better life too. They have kids too. They have a heart too.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

INGRAHAM: Oh, I forgot that one. And she thought getting favorable treatment from never Trumpers like Bill Kristol and The New York Times, if that helps her primary chances. Well, she's really out of touch.

Third question, will DeSantis defy the polls and leapfrog over Haley despite the big money deficit? Now he has the governor's endorsement here, she's pretty popular. But will that matter? And then if he finishes and let's say, low single-digits, will he end up dropping out and endorsing Trump.

Now for his part, Trump just snagged endorsements from Marco Rubio and Doug Burgum. Not bad. They see the writing on the wall, I think. And unless something wacky happens here in cold, cold Iowa, the writing on the wall seems to be T-R-U-M-P.

Joining me now is Mike Huckabee, former Arkansas Governor, presidential candidate and winner of the 2008 Iowa caucuses, I cannot believe it was that long ago, but I was here when you won, Governor Huckabee. But look, you didn't win the nomination. And so people will say, look, you win the caucuses, but it doesn't turn out to be a predictor of ultimate success. And to that, you say?

MIKE HUCKABEE (R) FORMER ARKANSAS GOVERNOR: Well, it probably doesn't, but I'll tell you what it will do it, it will tell you who is not going to get to be president. Because if a person who has high expectations of winning Iowa, and they don't come out of here doing very well, it's very difficult for them to overcome that. So the real question is what happens to Ron DeSantis, who has lost about half of the support that he started with? Does Nikki Haley really have the juice to go above him and come in second place?

I mean, that's the story. And if Ron DeSantis has a horrible night after having basically taken all the money that he did have and spread it on the table in Iowa, and he still doesn't really get the job done. Then he will go forward and he'll continue to compete in the several other states coming up. But he'll do it without donors and he'll do it without the media attention that he has enjoyed up until now

INGRAHAM: If you had -- if you could give him advice, let's say that is, we don't know what's going to happen, but let's say that did happen. Would you urge him to drop out of the race and endorse the person he thinks would be the most successful president?

HUCKABEE: I would never tell another candidate to get out, because I've told people that the only thing harder than deciding to get into a race is to get out of it. It's much harder because you've invested your life for a year and a half, two years. You've spent every last ounce of energy you have. You've had people that have believed in you, given money to you, and it's really hard to step aside. So, I understand that.

But I would urge him to endorse Trump. He wouldn't have been governor of Florida had Donald Trump not endorsed him because he was in third place in that governor's race. Donald Trump endorsed him. He went from a distant third, leapfrog to first and became the governor. And I think that there is a little bit of sense of maybe some loyalty that would be appropriate and just acknowledging that Donald Trump was not only a great president, but Donald Trump launched the careers of a lot of people, including Ron DeSantis.

INGRAHAM: Governor, as always, great to see you. Thank you so much. And up next, Raymond Arroyo, he went to one of the must stops for any presidential candidate. He's here with what he found and he's on set.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

INGRAHAM: We're less than 30 minutes away from the start of the Iowa caucuses. And tonight, we're going to bring you something that you're not going to get anywhere else. If you turn anywhere else, they're going to be busy waiting for the exit polling and they're not really going to have any idea how things are shaping up, but that's not the case at Fox News. We have an innovative new way to get immediate reaction from first-time caucus goers on whom they're voting for and why.

Sandra Smith, co-anchor of America Reports, has been pouring over all this info and data coming in. And she joins me now. Sandra, great to talk to you. What can you tell us tonight?

SANDRA SMITH, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: Hi, Laura. Thank you so much for having us tonight. With our Fox News Voter Analysis Election Survey, we have been talking to 1,500 likely Iowa Republican caucus goers to get an idea of what they're thinking as they support their candidates. So, let's see what we are seeing so far.

First up, the U.S. role in world affairs. This has been a key issue heading into Iowa. We asked voters, should the U.S. take a more or less active role in solving the world's problems or is its current role about right? Half said that the U.S. should be taking a less active role.

But more specifically, we asked, what about aid to Israel? Really interesting story here. Two thirds said that they support providing aid to Israel. And when it comes to Ukraine, a slightly different story here, even fewer, 4 in 10 favor continuing aid to Ukraine.

Now, turning to Joe Biden and what we are hearing from voters on the ground in Iowa, about a third of Iowa Republicans say Joe Biden was legitimately elected president, but almost half, almost double that, I should say, double that amount say that he was not.

And next up we asked about the integrity of our elections. Another really hot topic heading into the caucuses. Just over half of Iowa Republicans say they have confidence in elections on the national level. And now to the state level, we're seeing something quite different when it comes to that when we ask voters. It's a slightly better note. Iowa Republicans are much more confident with the integrity of elections in their own state, 90 percent said yes.

And those are just some of the preliminary results that we have for you tonight. We'll have much more as the night goes on. Laura, back to you.

INGRAHAM: Sandra, the integrity of the Iowa system is fascinating. But of course, it's all handwritten ballots. I mean, it's votes on pieces of paper. So, people love paper ballots.

SMITH: And so that's a lot of confidence in it, yeah.

INGRAHAM: And that is fascinating. I'm so glad we did that. Incredible. Thank you so much. All right. Joining me now, Raymond Arroyo, Fox News contributor. Raymond, all right, you and I talked to some caucus goers, were the Iowans typically reticence?

RAYMOND ARROYO, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Well, they were a bit reticent. And we went to a little icy spot that is really become a staple in presidential ***politics*** we embedded here in Iowa. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ARROYO: We're here at the pizza ranch where -- guess who's the latest hired hand is? And I thought I'd talk to some of the caucus goers.

(MUSIC)

ARROYO: Are you voting in the caucus this year?

UNKNOWN: We are. We just was talking over dinner and we're going to vote.

ARROYO: Who you're voting for?

UNKNOWN: For Donald Trump.

ARROYO: Why?

UNKNOWN: Because I think he has his act together. I think he's a non- politician, so to say, in that he's got the love of the country and the people's best interest.

ARROYO: What's the biggest issue driving your vote?

UNKNOWN: The economy. Second, second, the border.

ARROYO: Who will you be voting for?

UNKNOWN: Donald Trump, for sure.

ARROYO: Why?

UNKNOWN: Have you seen the way the country's going?

ARROYO: I did notice.

UNKNOWN: Exactly. If you want food on your table, you want lower bills, you want lower everything, you don't vote for Joe Biden.

UNKNOWN: All I know is Trump did good for me, and right now we're struggling. So, I'm bringing back what did good for our family.

ARROYO: We see Nikki Haley and Ron DeSantis saying, if you vote for Donald Trump, it's going to be all about Donald Trump and his court cases. Does that dissuade you at all?

UNKNOWN: I think that's crazy. I think he has the country's best interest and the love of the people. And I'm sorry, Republicans in name only.

UNKNOWN: They are rhinos if you would put it that way. And I'm looking forward to four-plus more years of what we had in 2016 through '20.

UNKNOWN: Biggest thing is economy. I feel that me and my husband are both hard working people. We work full time. I'm a nurse. He's in heating and cooling. And we just can't get ahead right now. And I feel that Trump only did good things for our country and it's only plummeted since.

UNKNOWN: Probably between Haley and DeSantis.

ARROYO: What's the main issue driving your caucus vote?

UNKNOWN: Right now, I'm not exactly sure, probably just inflation and wages and things like that.

UNKNOWN: Hey, Ray, grab those chicken tenders and those potato wedges.

ARROYO: OK, I'll get them. Here they are.

UNKNOWN: Awesome.

UNKNOWN: I'm uncertain who I'm going to caucus for right now tonight.

ARROYO: Who are you weighing?

UNKNOWN: Well, I don't know, maybe DeSantis. He's been governor, I think he's been exposed to enough, and hopefully he's got a good sense of what's going on in the world.

ARROYO: You're going to caucus?

UNKNOWN: Yeah, I'm going to caucus.

ARROYO: Why are you supporting the president?

UNKNOWN: Just because.

ARROYO: Anything driving it? I mean, you want a change from Biden or --

UNKNOWN: It really pisses people off in Iowa is -- what you call all the people in cahoots, the swaths.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

ARROYO: Boy, I'll tell you, I got a taser. Remember music man, they used to talk about that chip on the shoulder sensibility. Iowans still has that. These are not people you con, easily. These are hard-working people. They will tell you exactly what they feel. It takes a lot for candidates to cut through. Most of them told me though, they are voting for the Trump record. What he gave them before, that they want back again. That seems to be driving a lot of this.

INGRAHAM: What was the pay for that slinging the chicken from the ice --

ARROYO: They have some amazing chicken. At the pizza ranch is the best fried chicken in --

INGRAHAM: We were there with Santorum, right? When was that?

ARROYO: Rick Santorum got on top of a salad bar with a bullhorn to make his final pitch just before he won -- yeah, this place is full --

INGRAHAM: Rick Santorum actually won --

ARROYO: Right

INGRAHAM: -- the caucuses and he didn't find out till Several weeks later.

ARROYO: But this is the place to go for all these presidential candidates. And Vivek Ramaswamy has visited more of these than any other candidate this season. This is where the people live.

INGRAHAM: Is that a score, the underscore music, was that from the old Hee- Haw? What was that?

ARROYO: Gun smoke. Don't tell anybody.

INGRAHAM: That was a real winner.

ARROYO: We'll see how the evening pans out.

INGRAHAM: All right. We'll see. We're going to try to go into one of the caucuses, perhaps. All right, we're just moments away from the start of the Republican Iowa caucuses. Pete Hegseth, Bill Hemmer, they're on the ground. I can't wait to hear what they say, next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

INGRAHAM: We're now just about 10 minutes away from the start of the Iowa caucuses. Temperatures are, of course, brutally cold, you've all heard that, but voters are not going to let it stop them. Joining me now from Iowa City is Pete Hegseth, co-host of Fox and Friends Weekend. All right, Pete, it's like the old Johnny Carson, how cold is it and how has the turnout been?

PETE HEGSETH, FOX & FRIENDS WEEKEND CO-HOST: It takes commitment to get here. Even the parking here at Herbert Hoover Elementary School is a distance, and it's slippery, and you got to walk slow. So, everyone showing up here is committed to being here. They've been in line for about 20, 25 minutes so far. The line's still going out the door. Got to prove you lived in this area. Show an ID. You can also register if you want.

When you get here, you get a ballot. You'll love this, Laura. This is the ballot, right here. Right here, the best money can buy, Iowa caucus, purple slip of paper is what they'll be filling out. This is not my ballot. I will be returning it to its rightful owner.

But just in a few moments here, this is the stage. No microphones, no fancy audio visual equipment, and you've got folks lined up. I've been talking to a number of people here. I've basically heard from a member of each and every campaign. This is a district, a more liberal part of the state that I think Nikki Haley and Ron DeSantis are hoping to do well in. But who knows? And this is just one elementary school and I discovered walking down the hall that there's another precinct in the cafeteria with another 110 people, about 50 of which will show up.

So, these are hyper micro. The people in this room know each other, they live in the same neighborhood, they maybe have looked at the signs in their yard and they know who people are going for. Really intimate, really interesting. They know who's speaking up there in just moments. And as excited as we are, we cover this nationwide. It's a pretty low-key event. People here know what they're doing. They know who they want to cast their ballot for.

And by the way, just a promotion, right over here you see Charlie Hurt. You see Tom Bevin from Real Clear ***Politics***. We're recovering it all on Fox Nation in 10 minutes. Watch the channel, don't miss the channel coverage, but flip on your phone on Fox Nation. We're going to be behind the scenes going moment by moment at this Iowa caucus location.

By the way, we just got noticed, they're starting about 10 or 15 minutes late here because of weather in Johnson County. County commissioners or county political leadership have the prerogative to make those changes if they want to. So, whether, having a factor, they want to make sure everybody can get here, Laura.

INGRAHAM: All right, Pete. Well, this is it. This is the big show now. All right, I want to go over now to the big board where America's Newsroom co- anchor Bill Hemmer standing by. Bill, I'm coming over there.

BILL HEMMER, AMERICA'S NEWSROOM CO-ANCHOR: What's happening? Come join the fun, will you?

INGRAHAM: If I don't fall on these heels.

HEMMER: Welcome to Iowa. Nice to see you.

INGRAHAM: All right, my friend. What can you tell us?

HEMMER: You want to drive this thing?

INGRAHAM: No, I don't want to touch this thing. I've screwed up.

HEMMER: What we got here are the results from eight years ago. We figure that was one of the better ways to show our viewers what might be happening in about 10, 15 minutes, as Pete was describing there. Cruz was the winner over Donald Trump by about three points. Rubio's surprise at 23. The polling on Saturday had him around fifteen, so he really overperformed.

But people just -- that was a great shot, by the way. So, he's out here in Johnson County. That's University of Iowa, that's where Pete was reporting from. Rubio did really well here, college-educated, right?

INGRAHAM: Oh, yeah.

HEMMER: Suburban, you know, kind of the Nikki Haley voter, but they're, sort of, going for. The other shot you had there was Sue County, I think. You've got the split screen there. That's way up here in the northwest, tends to be very --

INGRAHAM: Tom's country.

HEMMER: Yeah, it's evangelical. You know, Ted Cruz won that county four years ago -- I'm sorry, eight years ago, my apologies. And we'll see whether or not a Donald Trump can -- maybe cut in, but maybe source some advantage that DeSantis might have her, vice versa. So, we'll see it all fill in here in a couple --

INGRAHAM: Did you think in the shot that you saw that it looked crowded? I mean, I've been in here in past years it was a lot more crowded. I don't know if --

HEMMER: I'll tell you, in 2006, for Republicans for contested caucus. You know, 2020 wasn't much, right? But in 2016, you had 187,000. And you had a lot of 10 candidates here in Iowa from the Republican side. So, you had a really good turnout. That was the record. They're saying 150, give or take. We'll see.

If you want to try and figure out, maybe a bellwether, so you look at this map and you figure 99 counties on the grid, where do you put your eyes, where do you put your attention? We found this county right here, this Calhoun, OK? The reason we point to that is because, look where Cruz finished, 28 and a half, Trump at 24 and a half, right? You see that? OK, now you come out wide and they match pretty much 27 and a half to 24 and a half from eight years ago.

But listen, it's a difference. Can I show you something else? Do we have time for this?

INGRAHAM: I'm dying to see what these buttons do.

HEMMER: Well, I want to show you. Just give me a second here.

INGRAHAM: See, I stood next to it.

HEMMER: That's it, now you're good. So far, you're good, OK? So, let me go here, OK? The reason I'm pointing this out, it is really hard to find a state in America that went from Barack Obama to Donald Trump as much as Iowa went from Barack Obama to Donald Trump. This is 2020. If I could call up this one here. So, this is 2012. You see all these -- I'll try and do this for you here, Laura.

You see all these Mississippi River counties of which there are 10, OK? That's all blue. That's all Barack Obama. All right. Let me take this off. See if I can complete the play for you, and put it back on, OK. Since 2016, Trump comes in, he wins the state over Hillary by 10 points, and look what happened to those counties. Nine of the 10 had flipped from Obama to Trump.

And so, that's pretty remarkable when you see that kind of movement in any state, much less Iowa.

INGRAHAM: I'm going into near Roosevelt High School. It's 37, 39, 36 precincts. And I'm going to go in there and see what's going on.

HEMMER: OK.

INGRAHAM: Because that's -- there are three and maybe even four precincts in there, but they're pushing it off to like 7;15 tonight.

HEMMER: OK.

INGRAHAM: Or 8:15 Eastern.

HEMMER: 8:15 Eastern time, right. But you're going to see that sometime between 8 and 9 we'll see some colors --

INGRAHAM: But the Democrat caucuses were much more kind of raucous, like in the Republicans are very kind of more staid.

HEMMER: But Democrats aren't doing a caucus.

INGRAHAM: I know they're not, but it was fun.

HEMMER: It's a mail-in ballot and they're going to reveal it on Super Tuesday in early March. So, that's what we get. Nice to be with you.

INGRAHAM: OK. I want to touch -- OK. Thank you, Bill. Good to see you.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT, 2024 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Brave the weather and go out and save America because that's what you're doing. This is really about saving our country.

RON DESANTIS, 2024 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Make sure that you come and you turn out and you make your voice heard. Now is our time to seize the moment.

NIKKI HALEY, 2024 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: It all starts in Iowa. All eyes are on you. Nobody's going to be deterred from going to the caucuses.

VIVEK RAMASWAMY, 2024 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: We will ask you to make a final sprint that ends tonight in the caucus.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

INGRAHAM: GOP candidates were out in full force today making their final pitches to Iowa voters ahead of the caucuses. They start in less than five minutes. Did any of it work? Well, joining me now, Dan Lienenmann. He's an undecided voter from Waukee, Iowa. And Cindy Leonhart, a Ron DeSantis supporter from Decora, Iowa.

All right, Dan, this is pretty close, pretty tight, right?

DAN LIENENMANN, IOWA VOTER-UNDECIDED: Yes, it is.

INGRAHAM: I'm going to head over to one of those caucuses in a bit. But what are you thinking? What are the big issues for you?

LIENENMANN: The big issues for me are national defense, economy and the border. It really boils down to those --

INGRAHAM: And so, have you've narrowed it down? I mean --

LIENENMANN: I have. We -- first of all, we got a great field, I think. Much better than the other side. And so, I've narrowed it down to President Trump and the governor Haley.

INGRAHAM: I'll admit -- very interesting because a lot of people would say he's a populist conservative, America first, tough on China, tough on border. Tough. And Nikki Haley is more of an old-time Bush Republican. And they're very different visions really of foreign policy.

And in that poll that we showed at the voter analysis survey showed that Iowans like mirroring the country are quite recalcitrant about wanting to get more involved in foreign affairs, less -- I mean, more so Ukraine than in Israel, they want to support Israel.

Does that surprise you, given what's happened, I guess, over the last 25 years?

LIENENMANN: To some degree it does. Each of the candidates comes with their warts and issues that they have. And Governor Haley is no different than any of the other ones. And it's going to be a last-minute decision for me.

INGRAHAM: Cindy, now you're a teacher, I understand, and you're a DeSantis supporter, and tell us why?

CINDY LEONHART, IOWA VOTER-SUPPORT DESANTIS: Well, I really like DeSantis, although I do like all of the candidates, they all have their strong points. But I like Ron DeSantis because he served in our military. He's a veteran. I like him because our great Governor Kim Reynolds has endorsed him. And I think while I highly respect Governor Reynolds, I also endorse him because he's went through with his wife's cancer diagnosis a couple years ago.

I think his healthcare experience and his, you know, going through all the insurance process, I think it gives a good insight. I think there's lots of people that, normal people that have experienced all the trauma of a cancer diagnosis. So --

INGRAHAM: So, it's a personal. Cindy, I'm sorry to interrupt, but I find this a lot of the times that I've been coming here for so many years to cover the caucuses, really back to '96. Am I really dating myself? Yes, I am. But I've always had so much fun talking to just people like, you know, liberals, conservatives, people in the middle of the road.

But it's interesting how personality really does matter to Iowans. And some would say that would hurt President Trump because he's tough and rough and all that. But he's quite popular in the state, like when I was going around today, there was an enormous amount of support for Trump.

LEONHART: Yes.

INGRAHAM: But other candidates as well. But is that personality difference in your mind going to help Nikki Haley versus Ron DeSantis, who some had criticized, I think unfairly, for being cold or aloof.

LEONHART: Well, I was at a town meeting with Ron DeSantis and the two people that were with him, Chip Roy and Thomas Massei. I was just very impressed with all three, what they had to say. I just think he has some great traits. He's a family man. So, I really, I really do like him.

INGRAHAM: So, it's a personal resume again. All right. Dan, and given what Biden has allowed to happen to this country, just in the last, I mean, just in the last three years, it is devastating. Will Iowa choose the ultimate winner of the GOP primary race this year?

LIENENMANN: If you're looking at the polls, I would say probably so.

INGRAHAM: All right. OK, Dan, you made it. You had an answer. OK, I can't wait to hear what you ultimately do. Dan and Cindy, great to see both of you. That's it for us tonight. Stay with Fox all night long, live coverage of the Iowa caucuses, especially if you want to see me again on later tonight with Brett and Martha. Can't wait. And follow me on social media. Remember, it's America now and forever. Jesse is next.

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