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Dem Party bars WisPolitics.com from conducting presidential straw poll

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The state Dem Party is barring WisPolitics.com from conducting its convention straw poll this year, citing DNC rules.

WisPolitics.com conducted a straw poll at last year's convention with 789 delegates, alternates and registered guests indicating their preference for guv.

But national party rules prohibit them in the presidential race, a state party spokeswoman said. The party had informed WisPolitics.com ahead of the convention that national party rules prohibit straw polls. But the political news service decided to try approaching delegates to ask their preference rather than conducting a poll at a convention table as it traditionally does.

A state Dem party official approached a WisPolitics.com reporter who was collecting responses and asked him to stop, citing the DNC rule.

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Earlier in the week, however, some Bernie Sanders supporters advocated for a straw poll. Jim Carpenter, who identified himself as a Sanders supporter, said "blocking straw poll votes is anti-democratic and feeds into the perception, accurate or not, that the DNC is beholden to establishment politics controlled by big money interests."

The WisPolitics.com reporter had been taking responses for about 20 minutes, and 31 people — all delegates, alternates or guests — indicated a preference, while one wrote in "undecided." Participants included a contingent of those congregating at a table for U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

Warren received 16 votes, while Sanders received eight.

Others who received votes included:

–Former Vice President Joe Biden: 3 votes
–South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg: 2 votes
–U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard: 1 vote
–U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris: 1 vote

WisPolitics.com has regularly conducted straw polls at both the Republican and Democractic conventions, though the Dem Party prohibited WisPolitics.com from conducting a straw poll in 2016. A 2015 WisPolitics.com state Dem convention straw poll showed Hillary Clinton narrowly defeating Sanders, who nearly a year later won the Wisconsin primary. The 2015 poll made national news as an early indicator of Sanders' strength as a challenger.