

Ted Cruz beats Donald Trump in Republican Iowa caucuses

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DES MOINES, Iowa: Ted Cruz comes out on top in the leadoff Republican presidential caucuses in Iowa, pushing aside Donald Trump and emerging from the pack of candidates.

On Monday night, Cruz won with strong support from Iowa's influential evangelical community and conservative voters. Cruz is flying from Cedar Rapids to Des Moines to join those celebrating his win.

Cruz's victory in the first contest of the 2016 race comes just four years after he rode a tea party wave to win election to the Senate.

Cruz earned the support of around 28 percent of caucusgoers. Trump got about 24 percent of the vote whereas Marco Rubio got about 23 percent of the vote. Ben Carson and other candidates were far behind the top three.

Cruz said that his victory in Iowa's Republican presidential caucuses is a victory for the grassroots and his triumph is part of a larger movement of conservatives against what he calls the 'Washington cartel'.

The first-term Texas senator said, "From day one, we built our campaign as a movement for Americans to organize and rally to band together against the disaster of the Washington cartel."

Meanwhile, Donald Trump said he's honored by what he's calling his second-place finish in Iowa's Republican presidential caucuses.

Trump was speaking at an event with supporters after Cruz was declared the winner of the Monday night contest.

Trump said that when he started the campaign, he was advised not to compete in Iowa because he couldn't finish in the top 10. Trump said he felt he had to do it and wanted to give it a shot.

Trump, congratulating Cruz and the other candidates, said that he thinks he'll win the New Hampshire primary next week and that he will go on to be the GOP nominee and win the White House.

The race now moves to New Hampshire, where Trump has strong support among voters frustrated and angry with Washington.

Meanwhile, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee said on Twitter he's ending his second run for president. Huckabee only received about 2 percent of votes with 85 percent of precincts reporting.

- With AP Inputs