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## Bernie Sanders Announces Exit from Democratic Party

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Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders has announced that he will return to his position as an Independent.

Vanquished Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders announced Tuesday that he plans to withdraw his membership from the Democratic Party, returning to his U.S. Senate seat as an Independent, according to a report by the Wall Street Journal.

"I was elected as an Independent; I'll stay two years more as an Independent," Mr. Sanders told Bloomberg Politics during a breakfast in Philadelphia.

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Following the event, a campaign aide with the Vermont senator confirmed the announcement stating, "He ran for president as a Democrat but was elected to a six-year term in the Senate as an independent."

A poll, conducted June 7-10 – right after Democratic Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton obtained the delegate majority to become the Democratic nominee – showed 44 percent would like him to make an independent run for the White House. Some 47 percent said he should not.

Sanders, a self-described "democratic socialist," managed to turn his long-shot run into a mass movement with hard-line proposals to combat wealth inequality, increase access to health care and education, and defend the environment.

Meanwhile, polling surveys indicate a tightening race between Clinton and Republican candidate Donald Trump, suggesting that Clinton will need Sanders supporters in order to win the presidential election in November.

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During the Democratic primaries Sanders managed to capture 1,894 of 4,763 delegates after garnering 13 million votes in the electoral contest.

Sanders won the states of Colorado, Indiana, Michigan, and New Hampshire leading up to the convention, and nearly won Iowa, which experts point out are all states that could be closely contested by Trump in the general election. Clinton likely will need some portion of Sanders' support to stay competitive in those states.

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