



# independentvoting.org

# The Hub

April 20, 2017

## Salit: Bernie Offers Perfect Advice to Democrats, But Will they Listen?

Independent Voting President Jackie Salit responded to Bernie Sanders' proclamation on MSNBC's *Morning Joe* that Democrats will not succeed without attracting many millions of independents, with a directive of her own, in an OpEd published in the *Independent Voter Network (IVN)*.

*"Bernie," she said, "Great to see you speaking out for a coalition of outsiders! Let's sit down together and talk about how to bring our movements together. The tide is turning toward political independence. We felt the Bern. Now, let's make the turn."*

In her article, Salit shares a conversation with Sanders activist and former Communications Director of the DNC, Charlotte Scot . Scot recently started Independents United for Progress in Connecticut.

Said Scot: *"The DNC does not want to change. It is already soliciting contributions from lobbyists, it may have asked all staff to resign but it also just hired many former members of Clinton's staff. They are putting on a public show..."*



Charlotte Scot at Crossroads for an Independent America.

[Read the OpEd here.](#)

## Independents Testify for Nonpartisan Primaries in Florida

Steve Hough, leader of Independent Voting's affiliate in Florida, Florida Fair and Open Primaries, has been skillfully spearheading a campaign to pressure the Florida Constitution Revision Commission to place an initiative for a top two nonpartisan open primary on the 2018 ballot. The Commission is mandated to hold hearings every 20 years, and hearings are in full swing this year.

Steve has been working in coalition with Independent Voting, Open Primaries, and Tim Canova's Progress for All, reaching out to independents and supporters of open primaries all across the state, inviting them to join the campaign and to testify before the commission. Recently, Open Primaries, Progress For All, and Florida Fair and Open Primaries released the **results of a statewide survey of Florida voters**, revealing that 70% of Florida voters favor



Steve Hough

a top-two open primary. Hearings have taken place in Orlando, Miami, Boca Raton, and Tallahassee with more scheduled next week in Gainesville and Jacksonville and in Bay, Lee and Hillsborough Counties in May.

**Listen to Steve on a radio interview with Rob Lorei on Tampa's WMNF (begin around 07:00) and read his oped, "Florida's Chance to Fix Its 'Rigged' Election System (FloridaPolitics.com)**

**Check out Open Primaries compilation video highlighting testimony in support of open primaries at the first three hearings.**



**Alex Boardman, Pompano Beach, testified with baby in hand:** *I'm advocating for Open Primaries in Florida. I think it's extremely important to be inclusive of all voters in Florida. I can't imagine us being able to call ourselves a democracy, while we exclude 3.1 million people like we did in the last election cycle.*

**Frank Day, Santa Rosa Beach, Independent Voting member brought four others with him to the event in Tallahassee:** *Government works best if we all get a chance to participate, and I think you'll agree with that. Over three million voters are not allowed to participate simply because they are not members of the majority parties, and that doesn't represent us as individuals or our state in general. Open Primaries is something that we all deserve. We'll all benefit equally from it. ...*

**Frank Rainer, Esq. Tallahassee** *I'm here representing Independent Voting.org and Florida Fair and Open Primaries. I've been a lifelong independent for 40 years. And I've watched the independent evolution occur. And I've watched independents go from low teens in representation to now 25%. And I hope you realize that this evolution is occurring and that independents are starting to flex their political muscle. When you understand evolution, you realize there's two possible strategies - cooperation and there's competition, and unfortunately independents have recognized that competition has become the model for our political system. We do not accept that. We want a cooperation model..."*

**Trey Fuller, Boca Raton, sent his written testimony to the Commission:** *"As an Independent, I see two ways to solve a problem. We do what we have done in the past, or we try something new. Honoring tradition is important to me. It is the collective wisdom of our ancestors and it exists for good reason, it works. However, our progress depends on trying out new ideas, in a continuing effort to make things better...As an independent, I view conservatives and liberals as two edges of the same sword. It is currently the only weapon we have to attack the numerous problems we face in our partisan political system. Consequently, independents are forced to fight with one hand tied behind our backs."*

**If you live in Florida and want to become involved in the campaign, contact Steve at [shough195@gmail.com](mailto:shough195@gmail.com).**

## Crossroads for An Independent America on Video

Video of Independent Voting's national conference, "Crossroads for an Independent America," is available in four separate segments, perfect for setting up a gathering in your home or community.

**Segment 1:** Welcoming remarks and Live Focus Group "Who are America's Independent Voters?" moderated by: Thom Reilly, Director, ASU Morrison Institute for Public Policy and Cathy Stewart, VP for National Development, Independent Voting. Also, commentary on the focus group offered by Doug Schoen, pollster, political strategist and advisor, author. (Running time 54 mins.)



**Segment 2:** President's Address by Jacqueline Salit, President of Independent Voting. Follow up dialogue moderated by Harry Kresky, Esq and Jackie Salit with: Tiani Coleman, Founder, New Hampshire Independent Voters; Michael Hardy, Executive Vice President and General Counsel to the National Action Network; Daniel Ortega, Jr., Board Member, Cesar Chavez Foundation; and Rick Robol, Chair of Independent Ohio. Audience Q & A closes out this segment. (Running time 1:37 mins.)



**Segment 3:** Keynote address by Lenora B. Fulani, 1988/1992 independent presidential candidate and co-founder, Independent Voting, on the topic of Power, Poverty and Democracy. (Running time: 20 mins.)



**Segment 4:** Conversations moderated by Jacqueline Salit on the topic of opening up the presidential debates, lessons learned from the Sanders campaign and the untold story of

South Dakota's attempt to pass top two open primaries. Participants include Chad Peace, President of IVC Media LLC; Charlotte Scot, Independents United for Progress; Malcolm Burn, political activist, award winning music producer; and John Opdycke, President of Open Primaries. Participants in the *Unsung Heroes: The Story of South Dakota's Amendment V* segment include: Nancy Hallenbeck, President of the League of Women Voters of Sioux Falls, SD; Adam Morfeld, State Senator (D-Lincoln), Executive Director and Founder of Nebraskans for Civic Reform; Jason Olson, Director of National Outreach, Open Primaries; Justin Otoski, US Army Veteran, Voter Outreach Coordinator, Yes on V Campaign; Chuck Parkinson, Former Reagan and Bush Appointee, Longtime Senior Staff; Tamara Pier, Former City Attorney of Rapid City, SD. (Running time: 1:22 mins.)



## Schwarzenegger Launches Matching Funds Campaign to End Partisan Gerrymandering

Gov. Schwarzenegger is expanding on his campaign to end partisan gerrymandering by promising to match any donations to the campaign's CrowdPac, a non-partisan crowd-funding website.

*"It's a three-pronged attack,"* said Schwarzenegger. *"We will fight gerrymandering with grassroots initiatives, we will fight it by lobbying in state capitols, and we will fight it in the courts. Together, we will win."*



Structural reforms that take power out of the hands of party interests and put it in the hands of voters is what Independent Voting is all about. We're proud to partner with the USC's Schwarzenegger Institute for State and Global Policy!

[Watch the video.](#)

## Morrison Institute: How Did Pollsters Get the November Election So Wrong?

KJZZ's Steve Goldstein spoke with Thom Reilly, Director of the Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University about this past November's surprising election results, as most pollsters were preparing us for a very different outcome. Reilly participated in a panel discussion sponsored by the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication on the same topic.

Reilly and Goldstein had an engaged conversation on independent voters. Reilly talks about independent voters halfway through the interview:

*"One other factor we need to look more into, the independent voter. They don't play by a partisan book. Many of them vote on issues and to simply dismiss them as leaners or embarrassed partisans, I think it does a disservice, and what some of the polling about independents [reveals] is that they don't want to be party affiliated, but they're concerned about issues of corruption; they're concerned about the establishment, and a lot of stuff that would happen in the last waning days of the presidential election really played into that, and resonated with a lot of independent voters."*





Goldstein then added that independents broke for Obama in 2008 and then Trump won independent voters in 2016, "so clearly they're impactful."

*Thom Reilly with Independent Voting's Vice President for National Development, Cathy Stewart, leading a focus group at the "Crossroads for an Independent America" conference*

Under Thom Reilly's direction, the Morrison Institute has conducted two landmark studies on independents voters. The first in 2015 was entitled, "Who is Arizona's Independent Voter?" and they just released a study called, "Voters, Media and Social Networks." Independent Voting has been working closely with the Morrison team and recently the Schwarzenegger Institute at USC has joined our partnership to expand the exposure and study of the role of independents. You can learn more about this effort by viewing Reilly's participation in the national conference of independents [here](#) (segment begins around 10:15).



Running Time: 6:06

## Profiles in Independence:

Jessica Reeder, Reno, Nevada

I was raised as a strictly party-line Democrat, in a very cloistered, small, liberal California town. From our cozy mountain village, we thought we had a clear view of the world; but in fact we were looking at it through a telescope. It's hard not to wind up with distorted perceptions.

It wasn't until I escaped to the Bay Area that I learned there were other ways of life, and other experiences that deserved to be honored. Probably the most important lesson I had to learn was that I had no idea what other people were thinking or experiencing, and that I should not pretend to have all the answers. It's such a simple truth, but I had never seen it-and would not have seen it, if I hadn't been educated by the city.



I registered Democrat initially, but listen, I'm a child of divorce. The two parties are another set of bickering parents. Eventually you see that they're constantly distracted and keyed up from fighting each other, and they're missing the point entirely. You end up not wanting to pick a side at all-you just want to stand for something real. Life is short; why are we fighting?

After Obama's contentious election, I quit my job and went backpacking around America, looking for more independent minds. I found some, and asked them all about how to live in this world. They all said pretty much the same thing: focus on living for your own values first. Put politics further down your list of priorities, and always do what you believe is right.

So I landed in Reno and registered No Party. In 2016, I was hiking with a friend from my hometown, and the Democratic primaries came up. I tried to explain that Bernie Sanders had some pretty important things to say.

My friend cut me off mid-sentence. "Listen, Bernie seems like a great guy," he said, "but we can't afford to lose."

Who is "we" in that sentence?

I decided that the only "we" is me and the things and people I can morally defend. I registered Democrat and caucused for Bernie, and when Hillary won, I drove home and re-registered No Party. I did vote for her in the general, but it was too late and "we" lost.

Utah Phillips once said "following the path of least resistance is what makes the river crooked." Independent thought and action are absolutely necessary. Doing what's right even if it's hard; examining every position and decision; holding every representative accountable. And most importantly, doing all this with kindness. We are not our bickering parents. Party-line oppositional thinking is irrelevant to good decision making-a hard truth to deal with, but maybe the most important one.

"We" all have to work harder to understand that we don't have any kind of a complete view of the world. We must all be independent agents, educating ourselves, listening to others outside our sphere, and taking risks for what's right-without the bipartisan safety net.

Read Jessica's op ed in the *Reno Gazette Journal*, "[Why Don't Nevada Democrats Want Independents Like Me to Vote in Primaries.](#)" Check out her [website](#).

## In the News

- Open Primaries' John Opdycke penned "[Open Primaries are the Answer to America's Election Woes - So What are We Waiting For?](#)" - an Op Ed published in *The Hill*.
- Read about a new top two nonpartisan primary bill introduced in North Carolina, "[Nonpartisan Election Bill Introduced in Another Battleground State.](#)" (*JVN*):
- Patricia Callahan quotes Mainer's for Open Elections leader and Independent Voting activist Joe Pickering and Open Primaries' John Opdycke in "[Sixty Two Percent of Mainers Think Elected Officials are More Concerned with Party than Voters.](#)" (*Bangor Daily News*)
- Comedian John Oliver did a segment on Gerrymandering on a recent "Last Week Tonight" show. [Check it out.](#)

## Sign up for the next National Conference Call

Join IndependentVoting.org President Jackie Salit on our next national conference call.

Sunday, May 21st  
5:00 pm ET  
(4:00 pm CT, 3:00 pm MT, 2:00 pm PT)

[Register for the call here](#)



Have a question that you'd like Jackie Salit to address? Send your question to [national@independentvoting.org](mailto:national@independentvoting.org) or submit when registering for the call.

## Politics For the People Celebrates National Poetry Month

Members of the [Politics for the People Book Club](#) have been sharing their favorite poems for National Poetry Month. Contributions have included original poems and poems written by others that inspired them.

Peter White, a long time activist in New Hampshire and a member of NH Independent Voters, contributed "[Why I Occupy](#)," which he wrote many years ago. Dr. Jessie Fields submitted a poem she wrote in 2013 ("[Love and Friendship](#)") dedicated to her friend Mary Fridley, who led a workshop on Love and Creativity; Jan Wootten, a longtime New York City independent offered "[Beijing](#)," a poem written in 2008 after the NY Philharmonic's historic concert at the newly opened Performing Arts Center in Beijing. She was on the musician's bus that travelled through



Tiananmen Square, past Mao's tomb, and that inspired her to write her poem. Harry Kresky, Independent Voting's general counsel, wrote his poem, "**Patriot**," in response to the going ons in Washington since Trump was elected.



Among the poems submitted thus far: "**Kindness**," by "Naomi Shihab Nye (submitted by Kerry Malloy); **Zoe Leonard's poem**, seen on the Highline in NYC (June Hirsh); and Langston Hughes' "**I, Too**" (Michele McCleary)

This week, Politics for the People will conclude our celebration of National Poetry Month as we kick off our next book club selection: *RATF\*\*KED: The True Story Behind The Secret Plan To Steal America's Democracy*. The book is an expose on the GOP's 2010 campaign (REDMAP) to take control of redistricting processes across the country. The club's next conference call, led by club founder Cathy Stewart, will be Sunday, June 4 at 7pm ET with the author, David Daley. For more information, go to the **Politics for the People** blog.

## Are you a member of IndependentVoting.org?

We are the grassroots-fueled movement that believes if we're going to get forward-looking policies and develop our country, then we have to change the way our political process functions. Your membership connects you to a national grassroots network working on these critical issues in every state of the country and strengthens our ability to force the process open.

Membership is a one-time \$10 fee (or you can become a sponsor for \$100 which includes membership and a \$90 donation).

**Click here to join today!**

And help expand additional outreach on social media by making a donation to our advertising campaign. Every \$100 you give allows us to engage 4,500 people with our message on Facebook. **Please Donate here.** Thanks for your generous support!

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