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STATEMENT BY INDEPENDENT VOTERS FOR ARIZONA AND INDEPENDENTVOTING.ORG

BY TIM CASTRO AND JACQUELINE SALIT

What occurred yesterday in the Arizona presidential preference election was another black eye on the state of politics in Arizona. The exclusion of Arizona's 1.2 million independent voters is a systemic form of voter suppression and undemocratic in the extreme. We note Governor Ducey's remarks calling for an opening of the presidential primaries to independents, however, it appears to be politically convenient that he waited until after the election.

For months, thousands of independent voters - led by Independent Voters for Arizona - have been pressuring party leaders and elected officials to open the presidential primaries. Over 30,800 Arizona independents signed protest letters to the chairs of the Democratic and Republican parties asking them to open their primaries to independents which were delivered to them on February 22nd. They refused to do so. This voter suppression was ignored by the Governor and the party chairs until it contributed to a crisis at the polls yesterday. Independents want more than after-the-fact symbolic support, Governor Ducey. We want a system that is fair and inclusive of all.

We will continue to fight on behalf of independents to open up the primary process. No Arizonan should have to join a party in order to have the right to vote and no taxpayer should have to fund an election that they are not allowed to vote in.

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