



INDEPENDENT VOTER REFORM AGENDA DRAWS SUPPORT FROM CHAFEE, KEMP AND COHEN;

ALL MAKING BIDS FOR GOVERNOR AS INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES

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Independents candidates running for Governor in Rhode Island, Illinois and Idaho, have all signed a candidate pledge to IndependentVoting.org supporting political reforms that give independent voters full access to elections and to the political process. The reforms include open primaries, nonpartisan administration of elections and nonpartisan redistricting reform.

Lincoln Chafee (RI), Scott Lee Cohen (IL) and Jana Kemp (ID) are among the candidates who signed the pledge identifying a set of structural political reforms which shake up the party system. The candidate pledge was developed by IndependentVoting.org -- a national association of independents with organization in 40 states.

“Several years ago I made the difficult decision to step away from party politics and declare my independence,” stated Lincoln Chafee. “As an independent, I am removed from the typical partisan bickering and able to focus on the issues that matter to the people of Rhode Island and the people of this country. It is important to have independent voices to provide honest, strong leadership, and I’m proud to be one of those voices.”

Jana Kemp, a former Idaho state legislator, stated “The parties are not working for us, and are not making the best possible decisions.” Kemp is a supporter of Idaho’s open primary system which the Idaho GOP is currently challenging in federal court. IndependentVoting.org has intervened in that lawsuit on behalf of independent voters.

Scott Lee Cohen remarked, “Illinois voters deserve a voice. No longer does the voice come from the Republicans and the Democrats. Every election, independents play a more pivotal role in deciding election outcomes. 2010 is the year that independents are finally heard and I am proud to be a part of that movement. It’s time to move away from parties and towards ideas that work.”

The candidates also pledged to support an inclusive independent movement that welcomes voters of every race and ethnicity, from every community and from all walks of life. 42% of Americans consider themselves independents.

“Many people in politics don’t get that independent voters became independents because they want the system to change,” said Jackie Salit, president of IndependentVoting.org. “Chafee, Kemp and Cohen get it. And that’s important. It’s not just about their campaigns. It’s about using their positions to empower independent voters.”