



May 14, 2015

PAUL JOHNSON: "THIS PARTISAN SYSTEM IS DESTINED TO FAIL"

The fight for nonpartisan primaries is off and running in Arizona. **Paul Johnson**, former Mayor of Phoenix, penned this opinion piece which appeared in the *Arizona Republic*.

Johnson chairs ONE, the Open NonPartisan Elections Committee which has launched a campaign to educate voters about the nonpartisan movement in Arizona. Johnson wrote: *"Throughout the country, the Nonpartisan Movement will continue to pursue nonpartisan primary reform. It's our only hope of keeping our republic."*

Johnson also appeared on the Mike Siegel radio show after returning from IndependentVoting.org's National Conference of Independents, where he was a panelist. [Listen here.](#)



Paul Johnson

Check out the [telephone town hall](#) hosted by [Open Primaries](#). 2,000 Arizona voters dialed in to listen to a panel discussion and ask questions of Johnson, Open Primaries President John Opdycke, and IndependentVoting.org's President, Jackie Salit.

New Mexico

The movement for political reform is growing in New Mexico! After attending IndependentVoting.org's national conference of independents, former legislator Bob Perls took the fight back to New Mexico. *"The experience was transformative because it reinforced that there is a national movement targeting the same critical*

electoral and structural political reforms I have been passionate about for decades."

Bob held an introductory meeting at his home in Corrales and *New Mexico Open Primaries* was born. Bob said, " *There was consensus that primaries need to open up to improve voter turnout, enfranchise decline-to-state (DTS) voters and change the way candidates and elected officials behave."*

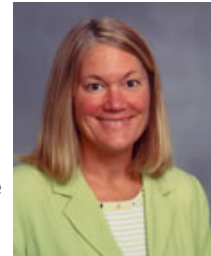
Bob will be hosting another meeting on June 7. If you're in New Mexico, contact Bob at perlsbob@gmail.com.



Bob Perls

PRO INDIE COALITION FIGHTS BACK IN SOUTH DAKOTA

The South Dakota state legislature passed a bill that will make it virtually impossible for an independent candidate to run for office. SB 69 prohibits Democrats and Republicans from signing a petition to put an independent candidate on the ballot. **Corey Heidelberger**, a leader of the effort and author of the blog *Dakota Free Press*, describes SB69 as an "incumbent protection plan" in his article, "[IndependentVoting.org, Third Party Coalition Join Fight Against SB 69.](#)"



Kim Wright

A diverse coalition, including IndependentVoting.org, the SD Voice of Independents, the AFL-CIO, TakeltBack.org and the SD Democratic Party have come together to repeal SB69.

Kim Wright, founder of **SD Voice of Independents**, called the legislative actions "a serious threat to our democracy." IndependentVoting.org has been calling independents across the state. 94% of those surveyed said Democrats and Republicans should have the right to sign an independent candidate's petition, and 80% want to sign the repeal petition.

COFOE (Committee on Fair and Open Elections), led by Richard Winger of Ballot Access News, is a coalition of third parties, IndependentVoting.org and FairVote. COFOE adopted a Resolution which states: " *SB 69... reduces voter choice in the general election and prevents a Democrat or Republican who is dissatisfied with their party's candidate from helping to mount a challenge.*"

A Profile in Independence:

David Piland, Clarkridge, Arkansas

David Piland of Clarkridge, Arkansas found IndependentVoting.org after viewing the National Conference of Independents on CSPAN. A third generation electronics contractor, David called to say, "I want to work on open primaries here in Arkansas." Here's a little bit from David:

"I grew up in a small midwest town in the Ozarks (in the aftermath of the Vietnam War) where a handful of people had quite a bit and everyone else really didn't seem to have enough to get by, and if they did it was barely. Despite it all everyone seemed to be content keeping things just the way it was. The area was dominated by Republican politics. I have never been on board with the Republican way of helping the wealthiest get richer while adding to the suffrage of the poor, which has produced a long history of sacrificing American and foreign lives to increase the wealth of military contractors. The Democrats seem to cater to the massive banks of Wall Street, with bailouts and protection from being broken up. They have been credited with failing to correct a system that creates perpetual welfare. The fact that around half or more of the people in the United States feel the same way that I do lead me to start the blog [AverageJoePolitics.com](#) and [IndependentArkansas.org](#). The amount of independent voters is growing due to the lack of elected officials that represent the wants and needs of the majority of the people that they represent. The politicians cater to the desires of their political party instead of their voters."



David Piland

Phil Leech

Phil Leech, founder of Michigan Independent Voters was a guest on the Steve Gruber Show, which is part of the Michigan Radio Network.

Said Phil, "It gave me a forum to discuss what we as independents stand for (redistricting reform, open primaries, making the political process less partisan). I talked about the Conference of Independents and the coverage by C-Span. Steve Gruber is a conservative talk show host and I appreciated and thanked him for the opportunity to appear on his show. I encourage all of my fellow independents to contact local media to spread the word about our growing and influential independent movement.

"IT'S TIME TO LET THE VOTERS ELECT THE LAWMAKERS, NOT THE LAWMAKERS ELECT THE VOTERS! Together we can."



Phil Leech

In the News

The Indianapolis Recorder's "Dumping Demos, GOP? Rise of the Independent Voter a Possible Political Game-changer," featured Dr. Omar Ali and Dr. Jessie Fields discussing the importance of the rise of independent voters. [Read the article here.](#)

"Imagine If All Florida Voters Were Allowed to Have a Choice in Elections," an opinion piece by Ray Hudkins, spokesperson for Florida Fair and Open Primaries, appeared in *ContextFlorida*. [Read here.](#)

"Independent Voices: It's Time for Election Reform Suited to Maine's Independent Tradition" appeared in the *Portland Press Herald*. [Read here.](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Tuesday, May 19, 8pm ET: IndependentVoting.org's national conference call, hosted by Jackie Salit. Learn more about the latest developments in our movement. [Click here to register](#) .



Wednesday, May 27, 7pm ET: Spokesperson Training Call with Director of Communications Sarah Lyons. Advance your skills as a spokesperson for the concerns of independents. Whether it's composing a letter to the editor, speaking to an organization, or appearing on radio or TV, join the conference call to get tips and support from Sarah. [Register here](#) .

Gwen Mandell
Director of National Outreach
IndependentVoting.org
800-288-3201

gmandell@independentvoting.org

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