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The Hub

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NO MORE FERGUSONS MEANS NO MORE PARTISAN MANIPULATION.

Lenora Fulani, the country's leading Black independent, penned a thought-provoking op ed in which she addresses the Democratic Party's efforts to turn recent tragedies into voter mobilization for the mid-term elections and support for the party and its candidates. "[No More Fergusons Means No More Partisan Manipulation](#)," has been published by several Black newspapers including *The Amsterdam News*. In it, Dr. Fulani extends this invitation: "*I want the Black Community to join me in helping to build the nonpartisan reform movement. We need a nonpartisan political system that encourages, rather than represses, new coalitions and voter mobility. This is how new and effective approaches to poverty, to police/community relations and to developing our youth can become public policy....Join me in building a national Black reformer's network.*" [Read Dr. Fulani's opinion piece here.](#)



OREGON UPDATE

[Independent Voters of Oregon \(IVO\) spokespersons Charles Young and Bentley Gilbert](#) reached out to their local newspaper about Oregon's top two nonpartisan primary Measure 90 to put the issue on the paper's radar screen. They were subsequently interviewed and featured in this article which ran on the front page of the *News & Review's* Sunday edition in support of the measure. [Read the article here.](#)



Bentley Gilbert

And check out the [Yes on 90 Facebook page](#) for the first in a series of posts to dispel myths about Measure 90 and top two non partisan primaries.

IndependentVoting.org's Director of Communications Sarah Lyons, an Oregon native who returned to the state to work on the [Yes on 90 campaign](#), gave an on-the-ground report on IndependentVoting.org's recent national conference call. [Listen to the entire call here.](#) On the

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call, she invited supporters from across the country to reach out to everyone they know in Oregon
to urge them to support Measure 90 and to email her at slyons@cuip.org about their efforts.

NEW HAMPSHIRE AND MASSACHUSETTS INDEPENDENTS MAKE THEIR MARK ON PRIMARY DAY

New Hampshire and Massachusetts were sites of the most recent **Voting Rights are Primary** pickets and wrapped up the campaign in grassroots style. Tiani X. Coleman, Co-Chair of New Hampshire Independent Voters was joined by activist Phil Rose and several friends at Derryfield Park in Manchester. Her opinion piece "[What About Moving to NonPartisan Primaries](#)" was published in the *Foster Daily Democrat* and the *Keene Sentinel Source* and was featured in the newsletter of the *Live Free or Die Alliance*. "We're starting to get lots of support for moving to nonpartisan primaries. It's time that partisan primary elections become a relic of the past. Primary elections should be a true preliminary round of the general election - equally open to all voters and candidates - not a public approval process for a private club's endorsement."



In Massachusetts, Evelyn Dougherty was joined by Massachusetts Coalition of Independent Voters activists Sarah Bayer, Ellen Ronayne, Lowell Ward, Diane Whitehouse and Edward Williams, making up two teams that picketed and surveyed voters at the Roxbury Crossing Station in Roxbury and Boston Common in downtown Boston. Said Dougherty, "We got 50 surveys and 25 new contacts. Mostly people were very surprised that 53% of voters are independent in Massachusetts. 83% were open to nonpartisan open primaries. We met a lot of college students from Roxbury Community College. It was a great day overall under beautiful blue sunny skies talking with both voters and non-voters."

Congratulations to all who participated in the **Voting Rights Are Primary** campaign. Your courage and leadership speaks loudly to independents all across the country!



THE SOLUTION TO FIXING DYSFUNCTION IN CONGRESS

Maryland Congressman introduces top two bill

Good news for the fight for top two. In an op ed in the *Washington Post* by Rep. John Delaney (D) of Maryland, titled "[The Solution to Fixing Dysfunction in Congress](#)," Delaney announced that he has introduced a new federal bill into Congress calling for top two nonpartisan primaries. Rep. Jared Polis from Colorado became the bill's first co-sponsor. The [Open Our Democracy Act](#) if passed, would mandate nonpartisan open primaries for House elections, begin the process of national redistricting reform and make Election Day the equivalent of a federal holiday. Said Delaney in the article, "After two decades spent gaining a data-driven perspective in the private sector, I believe that problems on this scale are usually caused by structural failures. Our electoral process has



created perverse incentives that have warped our democracy and empowered special interests and a vocal minority. Congressional dysfunction is the logical result of closed primaries, too many gerrymandered one-party seats and low-turnout elections." [Read the entire piece here.](#)

In this week's issue of *The Hub*, I will launch a new feature where I will be profiling different independents around the country. I think you'll enjoy getting to know them.

- Gwen Mandell, editor

A PROFILE IN INDEPENDENCE

Phil Leech, Michigan

Phil Leech is a resident of Spring Lake, Michigan, 30 miles west of Grand Rapids where he lives with his wife Betty. When I first met Phil on the phone, after signing up on the [IndependentVoting.org](#) website, he agreed to write a [letter to the editor](#) as part of the **Voting Rights Are Primary** campaign which was published in two newspapers talking about the "serious flaws which precludes many Michigan citizens from truly making their choices heard."



Says Phil: "*I became an independent because I have a life long interest in politics and the political process. In recent years, like millions of Americans, I have become increasingly disillusioned with the hyper-partisanship on both sides of the aisle. I have been actively involved with No Labels...I decided to found Michigan Independent Voters because I believe we can take this fight one step further on a state and local level by challenging the structure of a process which locks a large segment of voters out. A nonpartisan commission for the establishment of congressional and legislative boundaries and open primaries are two issues that I personally believe strongly in.*"

Phil invites all Michigan independents to contact him at phil@michiganindependentsvoters.org.

INDEPENDENTVOTING.ORG CONFERENCE CALL

Listen to Jackie Salit's Report

Here's a glimpse of what Jackie Salit had to say on her national conference call, "**Eligible to Play? Independents Push the Boundaries of Political Play**" this week:

"I think that the results [of the new NBC/Wall Street poll] indicate that...a majority of Americans believe that casting a vote in the Congressional elections will have little or no impact on what goes on in Congress and in the corridors of power....Independents are hard at work building those new mechanisms of political action. That's what nonpartisan political reform is! It's creating new tools for the people of this country to use to self-govern, because the old tools aren't working..."



[Listen to the entire call here.](#)

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