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**Independent Kentucky Applauds Congressman John Yarmuth
For Co-Sponsoring the Open Our Democracy Act**

Louisville, KY – Independent Kentucky (IK) - a state based association of independents - applaud Congressman John Yarmuth for becoming a co-sponsor of H.R 2655, the Open Our Democracy Act. The bill -- a gridlock fighting package of reform -- is designed to empower voters with a three pronged approach: enacting Top Two nonpartisan primaries for all congressional elections, making Election Day a national holiday and creating a roadmap for redistricting reform to end the practice of partisan gerrymandering. Independent Kentucky has been courting Yarmuth's support since 2011 when the bill was first introduced.

"We told Congressman Yarmuth that Kentucky and other states in this nation are keeping willing voters out of the process, " said Michael Lewis and William Bowe of IK. "We let him know we want to fully participate in our democracy and pledged to bring him petitions and postcards from people across the Commonwealth who want the same." Independent Kentucky kept their word and have sent him letters and over 2,300 postcards of signatures in support of the voting reform bill.

Voting reform advocate Cassia Herron says, "Across the country, closed partisan primaries exclude millions of independent voters and contribute to the toxic partisanship in Washington, Frankfort and in every state capital across the country. It is anti-democratic to force voters to join a party in order to fully participate in our electoral process. It's past time for us to reform our primary system so that the voters, not the parties, have the power to elect the political leaders we seek to represent us."

Nearly 250,000 Kentucky voters are registered independent voters as well as over 40% of the country's electorate.

Congressman John Yarmuth is among 3 other legislators who have signed on to the Open Our Democracy Act. U.S. Congressman John Delaney [MD-6] reintroduced the bill in June 2015 and if passed, the bill would reform the electoral process in the following ways:

1. Enact **Top Two non-partisan primaries** for all congressional elections in the United States;
2. Make **Election Day a national holiday**; and
3. Require the Comptroller General (GAO) to study the feasibility and desirability of enacting **national standards and criteria for congressional redistricting**.

IK calls on other Congresspeople in Kentucky to follow Rep. Yarmuth's lead.

Independent Kentucky is a network of independentvoting.org and is diverse politically, racially, geographically and occupationally.

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