



LINCOLN CHAFFEE SIGNS CANDIDATE PLEDGE OF SUPPORT FOR ISSUES EFFECTING INDEPENDENT VOTERS

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Lincoln Chafee, an independent candidate for governor of Rhode Island, has signed a candidate's pledge of support (attached) for issues of concern to independent voters. The pledge was signed at the request of IndependentVoting.org, a national association of independent voters with organizations in 40 states.

The pledge states in part, "I will use my campaign to promote democracy reforms that give independents the same rights as party members and break the parties' tyranny over our democracy. I hereby pledge to include in my campaign for public office a platform that includes the support for the following:"

- Open primaries and nonpartisan elections, which allow unaffiliated voters to participate at every phase of the election process.
- An inclusive independent movement that welcomes voters of every race and ethnicity, from every community and from all walks of life.
- Administration of elections that is nonpartisan, rather than bipartisan, giving independents representation in the agencies that carry out this important function.
- A nonpartisan redistricting process that insures competitive elections and fair treatment of independent voters and candidates.

In Rhode Island, a plurality of voters—48.4%—are unaffiliated or independent while 42% identify as independents nationally. However, noted Jackie Salit, president of IndependentVoting.org, "Independents are treated as second class citizens in an electoral system which privileges the parties at the expense of the people. We are pleased that Senator Chafee signed the independent's pledge. It's a statement of support for voters over parties, for citizens over partisanship."

The IndependentVoting.org candidate's pledge is circulating nationally and is posted on the organization's website.

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