



OPENPRIMARIES

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LEADERS SHINE A LIGHT ON THE LOCKOUT OF INDEPENDENTS FROM UPCOMING NEW YORK PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

New York, NY – Independent voters and advocates of open primaries, will gather on the steps of City Hall on Thursday, April 14th at 12:00 pm to address the glaring shortcomings in New York's election system that will exclude 3.2 million voters in the state – close to one million in NYC – from casting ballots in the presidential primary election on April 19th in what is considered one of the most liberal states in the country.

The press conference is sponsored by IndependentVoting.org, the New York City Independence Clubs and Open Primaries.

They will be joined by Assemblyman Fred Thiele [I-1], an advocate for opening up New York's primary election process. Assemblyman Thiele is the author of a bill to open the presidential primary to independents and a bill for Top Two nonpartisan elections in New York State.

“Who stands to be excluded in Tuesday's elections are significant numbers of young people and people of color. In New York City 37% of all voters under the age of 30 are independent -- that includes 22% of African-American voters, 32% of Latino voters and 40% of Asian voters.” said Cathy Stewart, citywide coordinator for New York City Independence Clubs.

Fresh off victory in the Wisconsin primary, Senators Sanders won 72% of the independent vote. Independents made up 27% of the turnout in Wisconsin.

“This is a fundamental issue of democracy and voting rights,” said Jackie Salit, President of IndependentVoting.org and who managed Mike Bloomberg's three mayoral runs on the

Independence Party line. “Independents should not be required to join a political party in order to vote.”

“New York is a powerhouse state,” said John Opdycke, President of Open Primaries.org. “But the political rules keep the voters powerless. Independent voters are shut out and everyone else was forced to pick which primary they wanted to vote in six months ago! There is a national movement growing to reform the primary system so that it works for the voters, not the parties and nowhere is open primaries more necessary than in New York.”

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