

# independentvoting.org The Hub

June 1, 2017

## Activists Report on National Conference Call

Independent Voting President Jackie Salit interviewed independent voter activists from Florida, New Hampshire, Indiana and Illinois on **her last national conference call** joined by 185 independents. Each interview teased out answers to the questions sent in this month.

Salit underscored four basic themes that most of the questions she received addressed:

- How can independents get recognition as independents?
- How do we make ourselves more visible as independents?
- How do we hold the parties accountable for their exclusionary and partisan practices?
- How do we think about our future, including a strategy for 2020?



"The answers live," she said "not in the abstract, but in the actual work our networks are engaged in."



Q. What can people learn from your experience? (Salit asked **Steve Hough**, lead spokesperson for Florida Fair and Open Primaries in reference to the campaign he has been leading in Florida to influence the State Constitutional Revision Committee to put a top two nonpartisan primary before the voters).

A. Growing up, I was always an introvert. When I first got involved, I said: "Can I do this? Can I go up to someone and ask them how do you feel about the primaries?" Once you start doing it, it almost becomes natural. You're talking about something that you are passionate about, you firmly believe in and it just gets easier each time you do it.

[Listen to the full interview with Steve here.](#)



**Juli Dominguez**, co-founder of Independent Voices of Indiana and a leader in the local campaign for Bernie Sanders, discussed the dialogue taking place among activists who supported Sanders about where to best focus their organizing efforts. Juli shared her experience of attending the national conference of independents and returning to Indiana to speak with Sanders supporters about it and the independent movement.

**Jarell Corley** spoke about why he has decided to form a group of independents in Chicago. "I decided it's not about the end goal, but the progression along the way. I want to have a meeting and let people know there are people here to connect with." Corley will be holding his first meeting in August.



[Listen to the interviews with Juli and Jarell here.](#)



**Tiani Coleman**, President of New Hampshire Independent Voters, reported on her attendance at a meeting of the Democratic Party Unity Reform Commission which was formed at the DP convention as a result of the contentious primary between Clinton and Sanders. Salit asked Coleman about the legal suit brought by a number of Sanders supporters in which the party has made it clear that while they might make some changes because they lost the election, they have the authority to keep their primaries closed.

[Click here for the interview with Tiani.](#)

[Listen to the complete conference call here.](#)

## Will of the Voters in Jeopardy in Colorado

After the Colorado state legislature got its partisan paws on the newly passed voter initiative for open primaries, independents sent a letter to the Governor asking him to veto their amended bill. The bill required public disclosure of which party's ballots unaffiliated voters choose in the now opened primaries. Propositions 107 and 108, which the voters passed in November, established an open presidential primary as a matter of law and guaranteed that no voter be required to join a political party as a condition of voting in any election.



In a letter to the Governor, **Gwen Ballard**, founder of Coalition of Independent Voters in Colorado (CIVIC), along with Independent Voting President Jackie Salit wrote:

*"If Senate Bill 17-305 is signed into law, unaffiliated voters will have to "pay a price" for entry: they will forfeit the privacy of their choice of ballot and subject themselves to having their voting data mined by the parties....The entire reason for Proposition 108 was to give unaffiliated voters the proper standing in primary elections, not to tee them up to be converted, absorbed or recruited, at taxpayer expense, by the Democratic or Republican parties."*

The Governor went ahead and signed the bill into law prompting independents to begin exploring their options. Reporter Luke Perkins of the *Durango Herald* interviewed Gwen Ballard about the story. He wrote:

*"One option is a referred petition that would take the implementation of SB 305 to a vote of the people, but that might be out of reach." Ballard continued, "We'd have to get something in excess of 90,000 signatures here in the next two months." Ballard added that if a petition did make the ballot, she believed Coloradans would reverse the actions of the Legislature.*

"We are very convinced if this were put to a vote of the people of Colorado, it would pass by a large margin," she said.

[Read the article in the Durango Herald.](#)

## Primaries, Partisanship, Participation!

Primaries, Partisanship, Participation, was the rallying cry of Independent Pennsylvanians on Primary Day, May 16.

In an email to their membership, leaders of the group asked for help fighting for a fair and open election system by writing a letter to local news editors in protest of Pennsylvania's undemocratic closed primary system.



L to R: Independent PA leaders, Barbara Patrizzi, Nishell Richardson, Jennifer Bullock, Jim Lundberg, Ted Robb

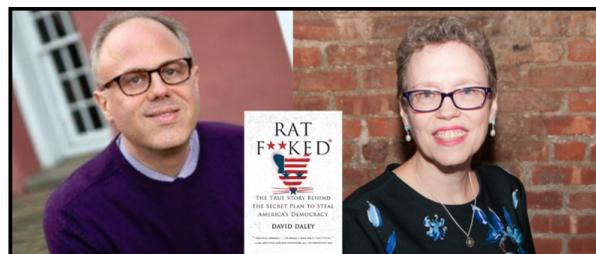
"Independents help pay for the Primaries, but we can't vote in what is essentially the first round of elections. Make your voice heard with your local media outlets." The group also asked supporters to take a picture holding a sign saying I CAN'T VOTE TODAY. ASK ME WHY? Post it on Facebook and other social media outlets to generate public awareness and conversation.

The former editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chris Satullo, added his own voice to the call for open primaries with [his column](#), "Let's Experiment with Open Primaries in Philadelphia." Independent [Hugh Campbell](#) backed him up in a letter to the editor ("[Antidote for Gridlock, Voter Apathy](#)") and raised an important cultural issue -- that closed primaries engender "learned helplessness" among voters.

In New Jersey, also a closed primary state, independents are organizing a Statewide Independent Exit Poll for Tuesday, June 6th. Currently, 48% of the voters are independent, making it the largest bloc of voters in the state. Like Pennsylvania, New Jersey is electing its governor this year. In addition, the entire New Jersey legislature is up for re-election.

The New Jersey poll is designed to learn more about how primary voters feel about opening up the political process, the choices they have on the ballot and how they feel about their tax dollars being used to pay for a primary that excludes 48% of New Jersey citizens. A training for everyone interested in participating on primary day will be held this Saturday, June 3. Contact [njindependentvoters@gmail.com](mailto:njindependentvoters@gmail.com) for more information.

## Politics for the People Looks at Gerrymandering



Join the Politics for the People Book Club conference call this Sunday, as we discuss:

**[RAT F\\*\\*KED: THE TRUE STORY BEHIND THE SECRET PLAN TO STEAL AMERICA'S DEMOCRACY](#)**

## WHAT P4P MEMBERS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR CURRENT SELECTION, RAT F\*\*KED:

*"An in-your-face hard reality about a major aspect of our political process. Drawing district lines seems to be just as important as voting itself... America has got to be more than its parties, and Americans have got to be more than party pawns."*

- Natesha Oliver (Missouri)

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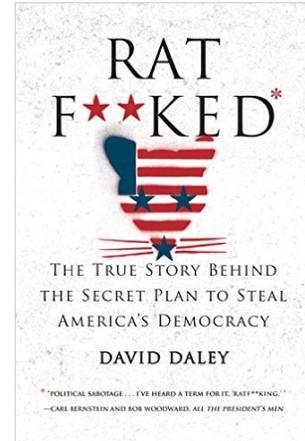
*"David Daley tells, in vivid and painful detail, how the Republican Party, planning for the reapportionment that would follow the 2010 census, hatched a plan that would give them a crucial edge in the state legislatures that would carry out the redistricting."*

- Lou Hinman (New York)

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*"This current selection could not be more timely as the Supreme Court is hearing the gerrymandering case coming out of Wisconsin... I hope you'll be joining the call with the author on June 4th, I know I will be. We are working as part of a redistricting reform coalition in Utah and plan to take the call as a group at the Salt Lake City Library."*

- Randy Miller, Utah



Check out the [blog](#) for a lively discussion of *RAT F\*\*KED* and join Cathy Stewart this Sunday, **June 4th at 7 pm EST** for a conference call with author David Daley about his explosive expose of the Republican campaign (REDMAP), begun in 2010 to take control of redistricting processes across the country. Daley pulls back the curtain on how partisanship is eroding our democracy.

## Conference Call with David Daley

### Author of RATF\*\*KED

**Sunday, June 4th at 7 pm EST**

**Call: 641-715-3605**

**Pass code: 767775#**

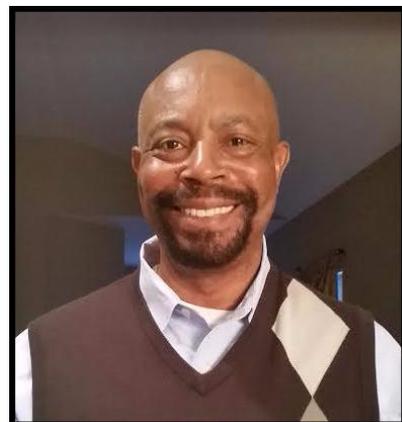
## Profiles in Independence

Eddie Broadnax, Savannah, GA

I was raised up in the south. Most black people in the south and other people I came in contact with were Democrats. The Democratic Party resonated with me more than the Republicans because of the Civil Rights Movement in the sixties. Dr. King's message meant something of value to me. It was beholding and humble; even to this day. Even though I was not there during the Civil Rights Movement, this is something that had a great positive impact on me, and influenced me to become a Democrat.

The Republicans and Democrats are all somewhat loyal to their party, no matter who the candidate is. I was one of those people, but during the last election I became more disenfranchised with that ideology. So after Bernie Sanders, I started to take a look at the independent progressive movement. The more I read about it, the more it became appealing to me. So I decide to join the movement.

I am proud to become part of this independent movement,



During this past presidential election I found myself getting more and more frustrated and disgusted with our political process. Too much bickering, too much politics, too much name calling, too much degradation, and too many lies. I became totally disenchanted with the Democratic Party during the previous election. While I respect Secretary Clinton and her life of politics and accomplishments, with all the negativism that came with her campaign, the Democratic Party should have gotten behind Bernie.

I worked very hard in 2008 and 2012 for President Obama's campaign, canvassing, telephone work etc. and was just elated and overcome with emotions and joy that a Black man now-a-days could become President.

I do believe that there is hope for our country and its political system. Donald Trump and the Republican party will continue its old way of doing business. We need change in 2020. If we engage more people with our progressive independent movement, I am sure we can get behind the best Independent candidates in 2018 and 2020 and win election(s). I am all in!

## In the News

- Thom Reilly, Director of Arizona State University's Morrison Institute for Public Policy, and Stephen Titla, Chairman of the Arizona Citizens Clean Elections Commission, authored "**Our Turn: Arizona's Independents Can Bridge Political Divide**," which reveals results of a study by the Institute finding that independents have broader social media networks and look to a more diverse array of sources for their news. (*Arizona Central*).
- The Supreme Court handed down a decision which upholds open primaries in two states. Read "**Justices Reject Challenge to Hawaii, Montana Open Primaries**." (*Associated Press*)
- New Hampshire Independent Voters President Tiani Coleman writes in her latest oped, "*I recently attended - on behalf of New Hampshire Independent Voters and Independent Voting - the DNC's first meeting of the Unity Reform Commission with our eye on 2020 and how the 'rules of the game' impact the 43 percent of Americans who are independent.*" Read "**My Turn: Voters Shouldn't Ignore What the Parties are Doing - We Need Reform**." (*Concord Monitor*)
- The Maine Supreme Court issued an advisory opinion declaring part of the recent passage of Ranked Choice Voting in Maine unconstitutional. Read "**Maine Lawmakers Are About To Give Their Voters The Shaft**" by Ned White. (*Independent Voter Network*)
- A study by Democracy North Carolina finds that **4 out of 5 of new voters aren't choosing a political party** (*WXII TV-Greensboro*)
- Chuck Coughlin, president and founder of Highground consulting firm in Arizona penned "**System is Flawed When Just 15% of Eligible Arizonans Vote in Primaries**." (*Arizona Republic*).

## Are you a member of IndependentVoting.org?

We are the grassroots-fueled movement that believes if we're going to get forward-looking policies and develop our country, then we have to change the way our political process functions. Your membership connects you to a national grassroots network working on these critical issues in every state of the country and strengthens our ability to force the process open.

Membership is a one-time \$10 fee (or you can become a sponsor for \$100 which includes membership and a \$90 donation).

[Click here to join today!](#)

And help expand additional outreach on social media by making a donation to our

advertising campaign. Every \$100 you give allows us to engage 4,500 people with our message on Facebook. **Please Donate here.** Thanks for your generous support!

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