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December 20, 2022



Seasons Greetings and warm wishes for an enjoyable holiday from *The Hub* and Independent Voting! As the year comes to a close, independents are positioned to make waves in 2023! In this last issue of the *Hub* for 2022, we share with you some exciting happenings, end-of-the-year updates, and season's greetings from some independent activists across the country!



Senator Krysten Sinema Goes Independent — What's That Mean for Independents?

Senator Krysten Sinema's declaration that she is leaving the Democratic Party to become an independent sent shockwaves through the political establishment, making front-page news, and was the lead story of every major news



show in the nation. Pundits were tripping over themselves to explain the move, most of the chatter focused on how it will impact politicians, elected officials, and party prospects. They questioned whether the move will topple the Democratic Party's fragile hold on the Senate, or whether Sinema will continue to vote with the Democratic Party caucus and they highlight Sinema's position as a "centrist" and wonder whether this will impact progressives or conservatives more. They claimed it is a political move, rather than a matter of principle (What could that possibly mean inside the beltway?). As Sinema has said, all that's a Washington thing.

Little attention has been paid to Sinema's statement about why she left the Democratic Party. Sinema told CNN's Jake Tapper in an interview aired on State of the Union, "I know this is really hard for lots of folks, especially in D.C., but what's important to me is to not be tethered by the partisanship that dominates politics today. And I think Americans are tired of it. I think Arizonans are tired of it."

Hardly anyone in Washington has taken notice that over one-third of the voters in Sinema's home state of Arizona, are registered independent, and that nationally, 40% of Americans have declared themselves independent. Independents were the determining factor in the outcome of the midterms last month. And, as Sinema said, more and more Americans are growing tired of the partisan politics and are looking for major reforms in the political system. Undoubtedly, Sinema's move had to be at least partly fueled by this political fact.

What will Senator Sinema's next move be? Will others follow her and become independent? How can independents and those fighting for democracy make

the most of Sinema's defection? All this remains to be seen.

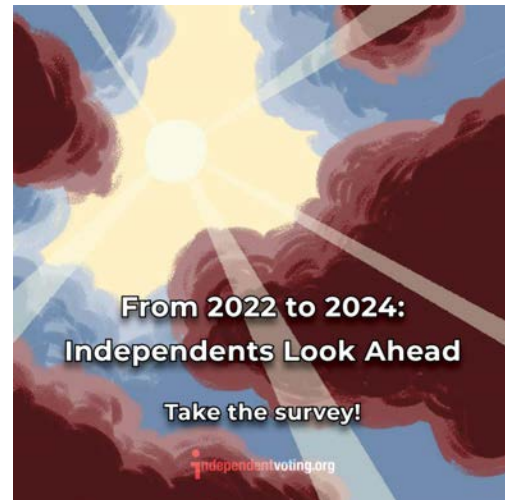
Jackie Salit, President of Independent Voting, said: "Every time you pick up a magazine or watch Netflix, the mantra is that we celebrate independent women. Meghan the Duchess is an independent woman. Kim Kardashian is an independent woman. Michelle Obama is an independent woman. But when Krysten Sinema goes independent, suddenly it's a catastrophe. Hmmm."

[Read Sinema's announcement here.](#)

Independent Voting Releases Results of Its Latest Survey

Independent Voting has released the results of our latest survey! The press release announcing the results begins:

The recent midterm elections revealed that independent voters (roughly 40% of the American electorate) were an undeniable factor in determining the outcome of the elections. Independents accounted for 30% of the electorate (40% in some states), providing a margin of victory in key races. They showed their potential power by standing up to threats to the democratic process and voting against divisiveness and manipulation. A pre-election survey of independent voters, conducted by IndependentVoting.org, takes a deeper dive into this growing community of voters and its potential for changing the culture. The survey shows that the election results tell only part of the story about who independents are.



Between April and November of this year, Independent Voting (IndependentVoting.org), the national organization of independent voters, conducted a nationwide survey called **From 2022 to 2024: Independents Look Ahead**, speaking to 2,585 independents. Conducted via email, text, social media and person-to-person solicitation and covering every state in the country, the survey consisted of two sections. The first provided an overall profile of how independents feel about their independence and the current state of affairs in the country. The second examined their views on the 2024

elections, on a potential independent presidential candidacy, and how they feel about the possible development of a new party.

[**Read the complete press release and the survey results here**](#)

Andrew Yang Interviews Jackie Salit on FORWARD Podcast

**Check out Andrew Yang's interview with Jackie Salit
on his FORWARD Podcast.**

As Andrew puts it,
Jackie Salit is "*in many ways the guide to all of the independent
political movements over the last 40-50 years...*"

The far-ranging interview covers:

The Lenora Fulani Presidential Campaigns
The Perot Campaigns and What Happened to the Reform Party
Mike Bloomberg and the Power of Fusion Voting
Independent Voters -- Who Are We?
Leveraging the Power of Independent Voters



Politics for the People Discusses the Book *The Independent Voter* with its Authors

The book *The Independent Voter* was the selection of the **Politics for the People Book Club** this month and the authors, Thom Reilly, Jackie Salit and Omar Ali joined Politics for the People host, Independent Voting's Vice President for National Development Cathy Stewart and book club members for a discussion about the book and about the status of independent voters.

Asked about skills and misunderstandings of the independent voter, Salit said, "Independents as a whole . . . are playing the role of being a gateway between the old world and the new . . . I think independents are leading the search for a new way of doing politics. Part of what we tried to do in the book is to offer the readers a picture of this phenomenon."

Reilly, Professor in the School of Public Affairs and Co-Director (along with Salit) of the new Center for an Independent and Sustainable Democracy at Arizona State University continued: "A key takeaway of the book is that maybe we don't know who the independent is . . . that there's been astonishingly little research that has been done in truly understanding the patterns of the independent voter, why they choose to not be part of a two-party system . . . A

large takeaway from the midterms is the reason pollsters and pundits and others got it wrong is that they don't understand the independent voter."



L to R (Top): Cathy Stewart, Thom Reilly (Bottom) Jackie Salit, Omar Ali

Stewart asked Ali, Dean of Lloyd International Honors College, University of North Carolina-Greensboro and a historian, about the history of independents in the country and independents' role as catalysts for what's to come. Ali: "I take enormous pride in being part of a rich history of people who dreamed in situations that were impossible. The people who are on this call and the decades of work that Jackie and Thom have been doing, are built on many generations of Americans trying to push the issue of democracy ... Democracy is not just a matter of bringing in more people. It's transformative ... The word catalyst comes to mind ... we are the driving force."

In speaking about the newly formed Center for an Independent and Sustainable Democracy, Reilly added: "We aim to be academically focused but also at the same time, plain-spoken and grounded in the reality of what's happening in the world ... we are rooted in practical experience and not just a stuffy center that looks at research and speaks to other academics."

Stewart opened up the discussion to club members who asked wide-ranging questions about issues affecting independents.

Watch the full discussion below and check out member posts on the [Politics for the People blog](#).



**On October 19th at the ASU Barrett and O'Connor
Washington Center, the ASU Center for An Independent
and Sustainable Democracy
hosted**

THE INDEPENDENT VOTER
Who are they? What do they want?
Can they move the country to nonpartisan politics?

You can watch the full event below. Featuring remarks from: Dean Cynthia Lietz; Dr. Michael Crow, President of ASU; Co-directors of the Center, Thom Reilly and Jackie Salit; Dr. Jessie Fields; Dr. Omar Ali; John Avlon, CNN senior political analyst and anchor; and Andrew Yang, Co-chair Forward Party and author.



[The Independent Voter](#)

Posted here with special permission from the ASU Center for an Independent and Sustainable Democracy. To learn more about the Center's work, **visit their website.**

VIDEO VIEWING GUIDE

- 0:00 Opening Remarks, Dean Cynthia Lietz, Arizona State University Watts College of Public Service & Community Solutions
- 3:40 Remarks by Dr. Michael Crow, President Arizona State University
- 7:37 Thom Reilly, Co-director Center for an Independent and Sustainable Democracy
- 13:23 Jackie Salit, President of Independent Voting, Co-director, Center for an Independent and Sustainable Democracy
- 22:58 Dr. Jessie Fields, M.D.
- 28:30 Dr. Omar Ali, Dean of Lloyd International Honors College, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
- 37:30 John Avlon, Anchor, CNN Senior Political Analyst
- 46:16 Andrew Yang, Co-Chair Forward Party
- 53:45 Panel discussion and Q and A moderated by Jackie Salit



SPOKESPERSON TRAINING

Taking applications
(Only a few spots left for the next training)

We're not hidden partisans
INDEPENDENTS ARE REAL!

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Every independent has a story to tell!

**Join our spokesperson training to increase your skills and
comfort in telling your story!**

Monday, January 30, 6:30pm

**If you'd like to apply for an upcoming training,
[fill out and submit this application today.](#)**

A Majority of Young People Consider themselves Independent, Survey Says

A survey of 1,000 young people, conducted from April to November by Students for Open Primaries, found that a majority of those surveyed feel there is no need to join a political party in order to participate in the process. Respondents were roughly split between Millennial voters (23-39 years old), and voting age or close to voting age Gen Z voters (16-22 years old).



Results revealed that a supermajority of young people (65%) consider themselves independent and unaffiliated with either major party. 69% of young people feel neither the Republican or Democratic Parties represent them. 80% of young voters believe elected leaders are more loyal to their party than their constituents. 80% of young people believe closed primaries are a problem impacting young voters. 85% of young voters think we need to reform the way we elect our leaders in America today and support a move to nonpartisan open primaries.

[Click here to view the full results](#)



End of the Year Reports and Holiday Greetings

Nevada Voters Pass Question 3

Congratulations to **Nevada First** and Nevada voters who took one giant step forward for nonpartisan primaries in Nevada.

Here's an end-of-the-year update from Sondra Cosgrove, Executive Director of Vote Nevada



Historically, Nevada has consistently protected voting rights and encouraged more voters to vote, so, unsurprisingly almost 53 percent of Nevadans just approved Ballot Question 3. Ballot Question 3 is Final Five Voting, so it creates nonpartisan open primaries with the top 5 candidates moving forward and then ranked choice voting in the general election. Currently, 37 percent of Nevada voters are not affiliated with either of the two major political parties and so in our closed primary system have no say in who ultimately runs for important offices. Because Nevada is also a top-two state with only one candidate from each major political party running in the general election, voters have very limited choices. These practices do not reflect our state's commitment to broadly enfranchising voters nor do they reflect the diversity of our voting population.

Every Nevada voter should have an equal say in our taxpayer-funded primaries and more choices in the general election. But to benefit from these very important election reforms, we must also adopt ranked choice voting. Putting up 5 candidates under Nevada's current constitutional rules means a candidate could win with only 21 percent of the vote. That is a fine recipe for electing extreme candidates, not candidates with consensus support. But any change to our constitution must pass twice. So, Ballot Question 3 will be on the ballot again in 2024 to constitutionally replace plurality voting with ranked-choice voting. We, therefore, wish all election reformers a restful and happy holiday season and then hope each one can lend us their support when we hit the ground running in the new year to again

appeal to Nevada voters to protect voting rights and encourage more voters to vote by passing Ballot Question 3.



Nebraska Independents Organize

Nonpartisan Nebraska executive director Nathan Leach had the opportunity to present the keynote address at the Norris Breakfast in McCook, Nebraska. The breakfast, organized by the Norris Institute, celebrates the life of former US Senator George W. Norris who was from McCook. Widely considered one of the greatest US Senators in American history, Norris served his last term of six in the Senate as an independent, sponsored the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Rural Electrification Act, reformed the rules of the U.S. House of Representatives to end the authoritarian-type rule of the Speaker, and was the chief supporter of Nebraska's one-house, nonpartisan unicameral amendment which passed in 1934. While in McCook, organizers registered people to vote, discussed nonpartisanship, the state's unicameral legislature, and voter rights in Nebraska.



Pictured from left to right are Heather Engdahl (Voting Rights Director at Civic Nebraska), Chloe Fowler (University of Nebraska, Omaha) student and Associate Director of Nonpartisan Nebraska), and Nathan Leach (Founder and Executive Director of Nonpartisan Nebraska)



Report from Jenn Bullock of Independent Pennsylvanians:

Happy Holiday Season from **Independent Pennsylvanians**! What a year fighting for full voting rights: We testified at both the state Senate and House of Representatives hearings on open primaries, held a primary day rally/protest, sponsored increasingly popular monthly zoom discussions with independents across the state, had several letters to the editor published, and still had time for some summertime fun together!



Independent Pennsylvanians, Open Primaries and **Ballot PA** (the coalition of statewide organizations supporting open primaries) at a Delaware County, Pennsylvania polling site on primary day, May 17. Standing with Rep. Chris Quinn, sponsor of Open Primaries House Bill 1369. (There were more of us outside the polls than people voting inside!)



Jennifer Bullock, Diana Dakey and Nancy Hanks representing Independent Pennsylvanians at the state government committee hearing on House Bill 1369 held on August 16.



Sue Davies and Javier Luque

**Report from New Jersey Independent Voters' director,
Sue Davies**

In New Jersey, we tabled at two events in Hasbrouck Heights, led by Javier Luque. We've also been interacting with democracy activists around the state. Most recently, we met with leaders from Red Bank who were successful in passing a local initiative for nonpartisan elections in their town. They won with 68% of the vote. We testified at the redistricting hearings and campaigned against A3820/S2869 which prohibits unaffiliated voters from being sent mail-in ballots for the primaries. The New Jersey League of Women Voters also opposed the bill.

New Jersey wishes everyone Happy Holidays. We see 2023 as the Year of the Independent, when our call for structural electoral reform will be heard louder and louder.



First Statewide Zoom meeting of Arizona Independent Voter's Network

Report from Richard Sinclair (Chief Networker) and Al Bell (Communicator) from Arizona Independent Voter's Network:

The Arizona Independent Voter's Network is positioned to move into the critical 2023, a critical year, with a fully operational website, an initiative to line up volunteers for filling essential positions, and an excellent relationship with key members of the Arizona news media. Current focus on the one-third of Arizona's registered voters who are unaffiliated with a party (1.4 million voters)

offers unprecedented opportunities for the voices of these increasingly pivotal voters to be heard. We are looking forward to the new year! Happy Holidays!



Report from Independent Voters of Maryland:

**It's unlikely Santa will
bring open primaries to
Maryland this year!**



So, toward the end of 2022, the campaign for open primaries in Maryland has been re-activated. The newly formed Independent Voters of Maryland has a growing number of independent-minded voters gaining interest in getting open primaries in the state. Most recently, the organization developed action plans to increase public awareness and support for open primaries. With the assistance of the Independent Voting and Open Primaries national organizations, we hope to make significant progress toward our goals in 2023.

Happy Holidays from Maryland to all our friends across our Nation.



Report from Tiani Coleman, Director of New Hampshire Independent Voters

In New Hampshire, New Hampshire Independent Voters and New Hampshire Ranked Choice Voting are gearing up for the 2023 New Hampshire legislative session. Not only will there be a couple of Ranked Choice Voting bills again, but there will also be a “nonpartisan primary with RCV” bill. Having sponsored a recent polarization seminar that looked at different models of reform, electoral reform activists and independent voters look forward to continued education and dialogue about the importance of reforms that reduce polarization, strengthen our democracy, and level the playing field for all voters and all candidates.





**Message from David Cherry,
Chicago Illinois,
Independent Voting Board
Member and president of the
Leader's Network**

Season's greetings to my independent friends and colleagues across the country. We should be proud of our continuing commitment to supporting democracy instead of partisanship. Congratulations on a successful 2022 and onward to 2023!

**Message from Steve Richardson,
Virginia Independent Voters:**

Hello, independents! To be honest, the last few years have brought mixed feelings as I celebrated proliferation of organizations exploring election reform but could not help worrying we might be headed for confusion and stagnation instead of coordinated action.



However, in the last few weeks I have witnessed a repudiation of MAGA candidates in the midterms, courtesy of independent voters; recognition of our fearless leader Jackie Salit by another fearless leader, Andrew Yang, in a YouTube interview with 129,000 subscribers; and abandonment of the Democratic Party by Arizona Senator Kyrsten Sinema to become an Independent.

Enjoy your family and friends this holiday season, and join me in ringing in the New Year with the hope that in 2023, we will get to welcome many more Americans to our movement and see our influence grow, as well.

Message from Jarell Corley, Chicago, Illinois (currently stationed in South Korea):

Hello fellow independents! We have a lot to be thankful for this past year with all the attention we've been getting from all the hard work everyone has been putting in. Take this time to recharge and relax. In 2023, we have to be our best!



Thanks for your hard work and remember that as we move into the New Year, the movement needs you! Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from South Korea!

Check out Jarell's YouTube channel, The Independent, [here](#)

Message from Julia Hemsworth, Brooklyn, New York, illustrator and independent activist

Through Independent Voting, I've seen victories both big and small that have led to real change in the lives of all types of voters. Here's to more of those victories in 2023!"



Message from Steve Hough, Chair, Florida Fair and Open Primaries

As 2022 comes to a close, I'm thankful for the gains made in the electoral reform movement and the new entities shining a spotlight on the need for such reforms. As a lifelong independent, I'm hopeful for the future, and I recently had a thought about being independent as we approach the upcoming holiday season. Having been raised in the Christian tradition, I

continue to be hopeful that subscribers to all religions will exercise independence by recognizing that God is love for all human beings.

**Message from Kayla Sullivan,
Pawley's Island, South
Carolina**

Happy Holidays from all of us at Independent Voting. I can't wait to see what we can accomplish together in 2023!



**Message from Dennis Lopez, attorney
in Florida**



As a lifelong and proud independent, my faith in the American voting public was in part restored this year, when, across America, we largely rejected extremist, fact-denying candidates lusting for power at the expense of truth.

Here's hoping that 2023 and beyond will usher in more and more "independent" thinking, regardless of one's political party affiliation.



Profiles in Independence

Brandon Aceto
Fort Worth, Texas

In January 2022, I quit my job in the private sector and started a Youtube channel called Relentless Independent, because I was tired of watching our political system fail without doing anything about it. The channel now has over 40,000 subscribers.

I created **Relentless Independent** to build an online community of independent voters, advocate for reform, and cover important political and financial news from the perspective of somebody who has always disagreed with most Democrat and Republican views.



[Check out Brandon's You Tube Message and subscribe to his channel](#)

I'm 27 years old, from New Haven Ct. I received a Masters Degree in National Security from the University of New Haven. I always wanted to do something impactful and quickly realized working in that field was not the best way to create impactful change. I've spent the last three years reading over 200 books about Politics, history, finance, marketing, psychology, and anything else I consider valuable information.

I have a deep burning desire to help reform the laws that prevent independent candidates and voters from having a fair chance in elections. Competition is the key element to improving anything in the world. Our political system has become pathetic because the people who make the laws have outlawed competition.

The good news is that there's plenty of precedent for the type of change we're fighting for, and most of the public is starving for political innovation. I see no issue more important than obtaining equal rights for Independent candidates and voters! The independent movement will take a massive step forward in 2023, we're going to generate national attention to the movement!

In the News

This editorial, "**Independents Are Key, but Who are They?**" includes analysis from the book "The Independent Voter." (*Roll Call*)

Read "**New Poll Shows Growing Clout of Independent Voters**," by former Houston City Councilman Bill King (*RealClearPolitics*)

New Mexico Open Elections founder Bob Perls on the midterms: "**What Do Independent Voters Think of This Election**" (*Las Cruces Suns News*)

Read "**In Pennsylvania, Independents Take Center Stage**" by David Thornburgh, chair of Ballot PA. (*RealClearPolitics*)

A PEW research poll reveals "**Over half of Americans believe that both Democrats and Republicans do such a poor job that a third major party is needed**" (*CNBC*)

Read "**Xpress Surveys WNCs independent voters.**" (*Mountain Express*)

Read this editorial by Open Primaries' John Opdycke and New Yorkers for Competitive Elections' Sal Albanese: "**NY Democrats' Future Depends on independent voters**" (*New York Daily News*)

The Rise of the Independent Voter is the topic of this *Axios* podcast (*Axios*)

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