



LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF ILLINOIS

LP ILLINOIS CALLS ON PETITION CHALLENGERS TO WITHDRAW OBJECTIONS

On June 21, 2010, the Libertarian Party of Illinois ("LP Illinois") presented over 48,000 petition signatures to the Illinois State Board of Elections ("ISBE") in support of our state-wide candidate slate. This is nearly twice the minimum number of signatures required by state law for third-party and independent candidates for state-wide office.

Our intent in this fall's election is to offer the voters of Illinois the true alternative to the Democrats and Republicans and the history of corruption and fiscal mismanagement in state politics.

LP Illinois has taken the petition process very seriously. In addition to veteran LP Illinois members who have petitioned for decades and know the correct way to complete and present ballot petitions, we have offered training and documentation for new volunteer petitioners and paid contractors. We are well aware of the specific legal requirements for presenting petitions to ensure ballot access for our candidates, and we have strived to meet those requirements.

According to ISBE records, the following individuals have filed objections to our petition signatures for our state-wide slate: Sharon Ann Meroni, Andrew Heffernan and Steve Nekic. Although we recognize their legal right to do so, we call on Ms. Meroni and Messrs. Heffernan and Nekic to withdraw their challenges for the following reasons:

- The petition challenge process is both time consuming and expensive. Not only would representatives from both LP Illinois and Messrs. Heffernan and Nekic need to attend a multi-day line by line process in Springfield, ISBE employees would also have to monitor the proceedings, which is a waste of tax payer dollars in a state with a \$13 billion budget deficit.
- Objecting to candidates' petitions (with the intent of eliminating them from the ballot) hurts democracy by limiting voter choices. Citizens deserve more alternatives and voices with respect to their political candidates and increased competition for their votes. Why narrow the playing field at a time when we need to hear more points of view on issues?
- Ballot access laws in Illinois are already grossly unfair and this just adds fuel to the fire. Third-party and independent candidates need to obtain considerably more signatures than established parties. The cost and effort to get on the ballot are steep hills to climb and it prevents well meaning and talented individuals from entering the arena of public service. In addition, time and money spent fighting challenges takes time away from actual campaigning to get a candidates' message out to the voters.

A hearing for all petition objections was held on July 6, 2010 at ISBE. The line by line petition challenge process for LP Illinois is scheduled to begin in Springfield on July 26, 2010. We plan to vigorously defend these frivolous challenges and assure our candidates their lawful places on the ballot. There is still time for Ms. Meroni and Messrs. Heffernan and Nekic to withdraw their objections to LP Illinois' ballot signatures, and we strongly suggest they do just that. It would save everyone a lot of time and money. The **voters** should make the decision as to who their elected officials should be based on the ideas and visions of the candidates. The citizens of Illinois deserve a fair ballot access system.

The Libertarian Party of Illinois is a political home for those who value honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility and compassion.

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