Press Release: CIVIL EMPLOYS DIFFERENT STRATEGY FOR NOMINATING PETITIONS!

The CIVIL Strategy; Use Write-In Option for General Election Ballot to Deliver Political Options for the Voter.

For Immediate Release

(Scottsdale, 5/6/2020) For over 100 years Democrats and Republicans have been writing election laws which erect high barriers to entry for new political parties, preventing competitive access to their duopoly. Over the last 120 years over 40 new parties have tried to accommodate the challenges of legal barriers created by nominating petitions and voting thresholds - and none have consistently succeeded in placing federal candidates.

The most recent competitors, the Libertarians and Greens, have a hard time staying on state ballots. In Arizona, it appears the Greens will fall off the ballot unless they acquire (again) another 30,000 plus petition signatures this election cycle.

“I believe in the two-party system,’ says Tom Lewellen, the CIVIL Congressional Candidate in District #6, ‘the problem isn’t the system. It’s our two, angry, power-hungry, political parties. They are fully focused on retaining their power, placing partisanship over the needs of our nation. This places our nation at risk. Partisan sniping and yelling even hampered the debate of the Coronavirus bill on the floor of the Senate. It’s embarrassing. The problem isn’t the two-party system, it’s our political parties.’

In Why America Is Stuck With Only Two Parties, Micah Sifry states: ‘Republican and Democrat-controlled legislatures swiftly learned that they could use this power (legal barriers to entry) to smother rising third parties like the Populist Party and gave themselves automatic lines on the ballot while instituting onerous petitioning requirements to hinder other upstarts.”

New parties hoping to enter the political marketplace must spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to get nominating petitions signed, and, once on the ballot, if they miss the required
vote tally threshold, they must start over with nominating petitions to get the party back on the ballot for the next election cycle.

‘This is purposely and prohibitively expensive and meant to kill competition from new parties,’ Lewellen adds.

Arizona requires 31,686 signatures (and another 1,783 for the candidate) for a new party and candidate to attain ballot status with potential cost above $200,000. To attain ballot status in all states would likely cost over $10 million.

What is the best option to assure the voter has more choices in the general election? CIVIL proposes using current election laws – a Write-In Candidacy. This will reduce campaign expenses allowing campaign contributions to focus on communications with the voter.

Arizona recently added another barrier to ballot access. The state added a new online petition function. This convenient function, however, is not available to new parties.

Our political parties have become like big business who spend billions on lobbying to get special dispensations to protect their businesses. Big party politics, though, don’t need lobbyists, they simply write the laws to protect their monopolies.

Beyond petition requirement, most states also employ a presidential or gubernatorial vote threshold for new parties to stay on the ballot. The threshold varies by state from 2% to 5% of the total vote tallies. Missing any barrier means the party must start the petitioning process over again for the next election cycle, at great expense.

The Serve America Movement (SAM) is a great example of a new party challenging the status quo. They gained ballot access in New York in 2018 and ran a candidate for governor. During the 2020 election cycle the state legislature is considering adding another barrier for new party entry: a party must also obtain at least 130,000 votes for governor or president in the general election to retain ballot access. The enormous expense of gaining and retaining ballot access protects powerful monopolies whose ideas are stuck in concrete laid in previous centuries.

In *Breaking the Two-Party Doom Loop*, Lee Drutman writes ‘Toxic politics destroys trust in institutions and in fellow citizens. Unremedied. It kills democracy.’ Drutman recommends more political parties as the solution for diminishing the anger between the two parties. CIVIL agrees. Without new political parties, the toxicity will only increase. The CIVIL approach is much the same. Without a political referee, the gigantic monopolies will continue to rail to a single end: political power, and more and more big money to fund their power. The voter needs more and better choices.

Regarding governing principles, CIVIL’s aim is neither Leftist or Conservative, but a political party covering the middle ground. Its aim is to provide simpler, more efficient, results-oriented government that runs smart with less expense and without anger and animus. CIVIL’s objective is to be the referee, bringing transformative ideas upon which both parties could agree.
‘The voters deserve better policy, more civil politics, smarter government, and far less barriers to new ideas to compete with the current, backwards-looking parties’ who are more concerned about their power and their money than the needs of the people,’ adds Tom Lewellen.

media@tom4congress.org

Text or Call: 602-550-3745

##