

AZ Veterans Support Election Freedom & Fairness

Closed primaries silence the voices of thousands of men and women who have sacrificed the most for our nation.



Former Lt. Col. John Webster



Former Lt. Col. TJ Lindberg



"At the heart of American democracy is the basic right to vote. This treasured privilege has been earned through struggle and is the very foundation of our freedom. It is the right on which all other rights hinge.

With a combined 40 years of military service, we stand alongside many other brave Americans devoted to upholding the principles of freedom and fairness.

Beyond a history of service and love of country, as many as 6 in 10 veterans proudly call ourselves independent voters.

In Arizona, systemic barriers entrenched within our electoral system are designed to disenfranchise voters like us and prevent candidates who genuinely reflect our interests from getting on the ballot. These obstacles disproportionately complicate veterans' ability to have a say in selecting the future commander-in-chief.

Requiring independent voters to re-register with a party simply so we can exercise our right to vote in elections we pay for contradicts the very act of disassociating from a party that no longer reflects our values.

Moreover, independent candidates are subjected

to significantly higher signature requirements — up to six times more signatures than Republican or Democratic candidates — unfairly hindering their ability to qualify for the ballot.

Even if a candidate overcomes these hurdles their name will not appear on primary ballots, like R and D candidates, but instead will only appear on the general election ballot.

Veterans have sacrificed a great deal for us. Is it fair to deny them the freedoms enjoyed by the parties they don't identify with and expect them to sacrifice more to participate in the primary elections their taxpayer dollars pay for?

Our system should facilitate and make the opportunity to vote or run for office open to everyone. Change requires courage. But we're all too familiar with the candidates that benefit from preserving status quo. The ones that prioritize party allegiance over what's best for their country.

It's time we put the nation's interests above party politics and reignite the spirit of cooperation and teamwork that has historically fueled our country's success. Our democracy thrives when every citizen's voice is heard. Let's treat all voters and candidates equally. Join the fight for fair elections in Arizona."

Make Elections Fair: Vote for Change

Letter to the Editor by Mike LeSeuer

- Higher Voter Turnout: General elections with a 70% turnout will decide the winners by majority vote, while primary elections with a 30% turnout will only narrow the field.
- Broader Representation: Elected officials will represent a wider range of views because candidates need to appeal to all voters.
- Equal Opportunity: More candidates will run when the rules are the same for everyone.
- Inclusive Voting: Independent voters can participate without choosing a party ballot or re-registering.
- Encourages Cooperation: Politicians can work together without fear of losing their seats in the next primary for compromising for the common good.
- Nonpartisan Solution: The MEF Act benefits voters without favoring any party.

Paid for by the Make Elections Fair PAC with only 8.6% from out-of-state contributors. Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.

MAIL PANEL
3" X 5.5"

INSIDE



The Value of Wisdom in Politics

An OpEd from Former Governor, Fife Symington III and Former Speaker of the House, Rusty Bowers. **Page A2**



Barriers for Voters & Candidates

How is our election system unfair for voters and candidates? **Page A4**



Arizona's primary system disenfranchises all political affiliations

Arizona should stop punishing voters for choosing to be independent. **Page A6**

The Value of Wisdom in Politics

By Arizona’s 19th Governor, Fife Symington III (Republican) and Arizona’s 54th Speaker of the House, Russell ‘Rusty’ Bowers (Republican)

“Wisdom is valued because it is so rare. Wisdom in the current conduct of elections is an even rarer commodity. We have a chance to fix all this.

This November, Arizona voters will be offered an opportunity to celebrate political wisdom by supporting Proposition 140, the Make Elections Fair Act. Prop 140 wisely cements equality in our electoral process. It ensures that every voter and every candidate is treated equally under the law, combating partisan extremes, and promoting fair competition.

The modern Arizona electorate is near evenly divided between Republicans, Democrats, and independent voters. But today, the third of Arizona voters who are independents can’t participate in primary elections equally with their two-party brethren even though their taxpayer dollars help fund them. And if an independent candidate wants to get on the ballot, they must collect six times as many signatures. Prop 140 wisely gives all voters and all candidates equal status when it comes to ballot and voting access because all candidates will be on the same ballot.

Even more dramatic is the fact that 80% of current Arizona legislative or congressional general election candidates have virtually no meaningful competition. These elections almost always are decided in the partisan primaries. Prop 140 sensibly guarantees that no candidate can win their seat outright in a primary election and that everyone will



face a competitive, free-market style general election.

The State Legislature along with the Governor - with the help of election officials - will then decide how the general election will be run, with one clear rule: partisan preference will have no weight in choosing who moves forward to compete in a general election.

Our second President, John Adams, was concerned about fair and equitable competition at our Nation’s founding. “There is nothing I dread so much, as a division of the Republic into two great Parties, each arranged under its leader and concerting measures in opposition to each other,” Adams stated. “This in my humble apprehension is to be dreaded as the greatest political evil, under our Constitution.”

Prophetically, those fears are presently manifest in entrenched political regionalism, divisive political factionalism, and foreign interference by way of global communication and suffocating disinformation.

Most lamentable, they are dictated and advanced by the duopoly of the Republican and Democratic parties. Combined, these pose an imminent threat to our capacity to unify as Americans.

With the illumination of this wisdom, self-examination and courage, there are decisions to be taken which can blunt this headlong sprint to authoritarianism or anarchy, both of which produce no viable offspring.

Good old-fashioned free-market competition will prudently save our democratic Republic if we simply end outright two-party control. Honor the individual over the party, honor the country over the party. Honor principle over the party.

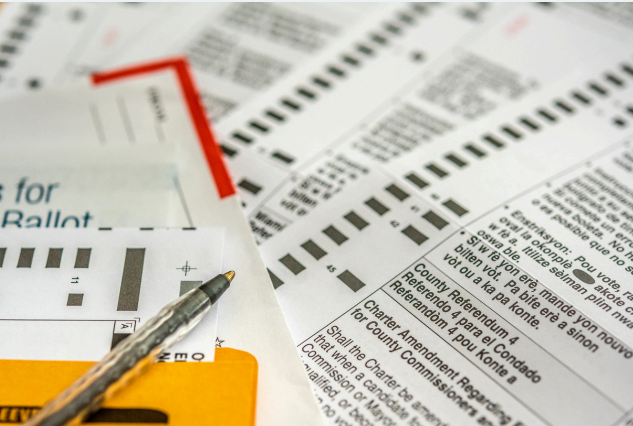
While some will appeal to hold onto a strict partisan tradition, to do so will deny one’s own future liberty. We must permit every voter to participate in each election of their choosing. We must make every election equal and fair.

Enacting Prop 140 will infuse this wisdom in the conduct of Arizona’s elections.

Please join us in this prescient effort to right our electoral ship as it sails to what Ronald Reagan referred to as ‘the shining city on the hill.’

Vote yes on Prop 140. Better choices, better candidates, better outcomes. Better for Arizona. Better for our Republic.”

FAIR ELECTIONS VOTER GUIDE



Proposition 133 enshrines the current dysfunctional primary system into law where a small, partisan minority select who will represent us all. It requires partisan primaries and excludes 1.4M independent voters from participating in elections their tax dollars help pay for. Prop 133 was referred to the ballot by partisan state lawmakers in direct opposition to Prop 140.

Proposition 140 establishes open primaries and requires that all voters and all candidates be treated the same under the law. Prop 140 permits all candidates regardless of party affiliation to compete under the same rules and be placed on one primary ballot and prohibits the use of taxpayer funds for partisan elections

UNFAIR VS. FAIR ELECTION BALLOT PROPOSITIONS

	PROP 133	PROP 140
Treats all voters and candidates fairly regardless of political affiliation.	✗	✓
Requires all candidates to compete under the same rules. Eliminates the requirement for independent candidates to gather 6x the signatures to qualify for the ballot.	✗	✓
Gives voters the freedom to vote in every election for the candidate they consider to be the best.	✗	✓
Requires taxpayer-funded elections give all Arizona voters the same opportunity to participate.	✗	✓
Ensures that the majority of voters support the eventual election winners.	✗	✓
Makes general election races more competitive by giving independent and moderate voters more of a voice.	✗	✓
Is supported by a bipartisan group of Arizonans.	✗	✓
Enshrines a system where a small minority of polarized, primary voters choose our elected officials that represent us all.	✓	✗
Utilizes taxpayer money to fund private elections where 1.4M independent voters aren't permitted to participate in the elections their tax dollars pay for.	✓	✗

Democrats call Prop. 140 a “rebirth of freedom”

Terry Goddard, Former Arizona Attorney General & Mayor of Phoenix, Phoenix (D)
Dennis DeConcini, United States Senator, Retired, Tucson (D)



“Today, over a third of Arizona voters choose not to affiliate with either political party. Yet, under Arizona law, unaffiliated candidates must collect six times as many signatures as party candidates to appear on a ballot.

“ONE-THIRD OF OUR POPULATION IS ESSENTIALLY SHOVED ASIDE, AND NOT GIVEN EQUAL RIGHTS IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS.”

Unaffiliated candidates are prohibited from appearing on taxpayer-funded primary ballots. Unaffiliated voters are forced to choose a Republican or Democratic ballot to cast a vote in a primary election.

“THAT’S NOT EQUAL. THAT’S NOT FREEDOM.”
TERRY GODDARD, FORMER ARIZONA ATTORNEY GENERAL & MAYOR OF PHOENIX, PHOENIX (D)

It has been my experience when it comes to politics, that most Arizonans cannot be easily labeled or defined. We are an independent bunch. We don’t like extremism, preferring to work things out for the common good.



DENNIS DECONCINI, FORMER UNITED STATES SENATOR, TUCSON (D)

We value common sense. We recognize that what is best for our state is usually the result of negotiation and compromise, where our leaders put Arizona and its citizens above party politics.

“THIS INCREASED COMPETITION WILL LEAD TO BETTER IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS, BENEFITING ARIZONA.”

We support open primaries because we think they will discourage extreme politics and encourage candidates to appeal to the broader electorate rather than the narrow partisan interests of a particular political party. We also believe open primaries will encourage more and better candidates to run.

PROP. 140 FAQ’S

WHAT IS AN OPEN PRIMARY?

In an open primary, all candidates will appear on the same ballot and compete under the same rules, and all registered voters will use that same ballot to cast their vote for their preferred candidate(s). In an open primary, the use of taxpayer funds to pay for private political party primaries would be prohibited.

WHAT CHANGES?

- **Every Voter, Every Election:** any registered voter can vote in any election for any candidate they want.
 - **Currently:** the partisan primary system, paid for by all taxpayers, excludes voters not affiliated with a political party from participating. A voter who does not belong to a party must select a party ballot to vote in a Primary election.
- **Stop Politics of Division – Build Consensus:** encourages candidates to be responsive to all constituents and combats the politics of division and incentivizes candidates to prioritize the issues we agree upon.
 - **Currently:** our system of voting for the lesser of two evils rewards elected politicians that do not focus on the issues we care about most.
- **Competition Produces Better Choices:** makes elected officials accountable to most voters and leads to better choices, better results, and a stronger Arizona.
 - **Currently:** 70% of Arizona voters DO NOT believe our elected officials are focused on the issues they care about most.
- **Your Voice and Your Vote Matter:** open elections will give voters equal opportunity to weigh in on who is elected. Your vote will always matter even if your first choice is eliminated.
 - **Currently:** our summer primary election system is by far the most visible way we have turned power over to our most partisan, polarized citizens.
- **Equal Treatment:** treats all candidates and voters equally by allowing them to compete under the same rules.
 - **Currently:** unaffiliated candidates must collect more than 6x the number of signatures and do not appear on the primary ballot.

WHY ARE SOME BACKERS OF ‘FREE ENTERPRISE’ SO AFRAID OF THE MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS IN ELECTIONS?

by Tahda A. Ahtone originally published 08/07/24 for the Arizona Agenda



Tahda A. Ahtone is the president of JackRabbit Development LLC in Tempe and a leader of the Business for Democracy-AZ

Free enterprise is essential for our capitalistic economy. It gives entrepreneurs the opportunity to start businesses, work hard, be successful and grow local economies.

Under this system all businesses, small and large, compete on a level playing field, and consumers have the freedom of choice.

Supporters of these free enterprise principles that welcome competition, and encourage choice, should support extending these practices beyond the business world and into our political system.

These concepts fuel economic vitality and would reinvigorate our democracy. Unfortunately, that is not the case in Arizona. All political candidates, regardless of party or no party, should be allowed to compete fairly for the support of the voters. All voters should have the freedom to select from all candidates who they deem best suited for the job.

Opposition driven by fear of real competition should not stand in the way of these electoral freedoms.

Independent voters face hurdles to cast a primary ballot. Unaffiliated candidates have no access to primary ballots and are required to gather up to six times the number of signatures compared to partisan counterparts just to be listed on the general election ballots.

In addition to freedom for office-seekers to compete and freedom for voters to choose from all candidates, voters have another reason to support open primaries.

All taxpayers are stuck bankrolling partisan primaries that exclude all independent candidates and dissuade most independent voters from casting a ballot.

Clearly, this is taxpayer-funded discrimination based solely on party affiliation.

A fairer system would eliminate these barriers and create open primaries where all candidates for a public office compete under the same rules and appear on the same ballot, and all voters regardless of party affiliation have equal access to participate in the elections that their tax dollars support.

More than 559,000 Arizonans signed petitions to put the open primaries measure on the November ballot, far surpassing the required 383,923 signatures. The public’s support for this initiative is clear.

But those aiming to preserve the current closed partisan primary system are working to keep electoral discrimination alive by denying the freedom to compete and choose.

Those who support democracy, freedom to compete and freedom of choice are holding their breath.

Unfair Barriers for Voters & Candidates

How is our election system unfair for voters and candidates?



WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

- Our elected officials from both parties are not delivering the results we want, need, and deserve because our primary election system is unfair and fundamentally broken.
- Despite being the largest registered group in the state, independent and unaffiliated voters are not treated fairly.
- Candidates who choose to be independent face significant barriers to participation including massive signature requirements.
- Most elected officials win outright in narrow primaries where very few voters participate, and independent candidates are excluded.
- These primaries reward negativity, foster division, and neglect the issues the voters care most about. Compromise is punished and our state is prevented from solving its biggest problems.

WHAT DOES PROP 140: THE MAKE ELECTIONS FAIR INITIATIVE DO?

- Treats all voters equally (including independents) by allowing them to vote in every primary election for any candidate they want.
- Treats all candidates fairly by creating a single open primary election where all candidates for a given office appear on the same ballot and have the same signature requirements.
- Restricts taxpayer money to only elections that are open to all voters and candidates, not private party elections.
- Provides guidance for the General Election – At least the two highest vote getters in the Primary Election, and no more than five, move on to the General Election. If there are more than two, rankings must be used to determine the ultimate winner.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- Every registered voter in every community should be able to vote in every election for any candidate they want. This will make our elected officials more accountable to all voters.
- Increased accountability will force our elected officials to focus on problem solving and addressing the most important issues facing Arizona.
- Competition reduces negativity, increases civility, and makes it much more difficult for candidates on the ideological extremes to win in a General Election.

Who really gets a seat at the table?



100% OF PRIMARY DECISIONS are made by...

< 20%
*OF VOTERS IN THE
REPUBLICAN PRIMARY*

< 15%
*OF VOTERS IN THE
DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY*

YES ON PROP. 140 FOR FAIR ELECTIONS.

COMMUNITY LEADERS SUPPORT PROP. 140



"I would like you to ask yourself one simple question, who do you believe serves your interests the best, the US Congress, or your city...I have had the privilege of serving as the Mayor of Mesa for the past 10 years, I was elected in an open primary system where voters can choose who to vote for whomever they wish...We want the State of Arizona and our US Congress to work as well as our city. To do that, we need your support of the Make it Fair Elections Act, Prop 140."

- John Giles, Mayor of Mesa



"Make Elections Fair is an important step to ensuring that the voices of Arizona voters are better represented in our elections. This initiative does not favor any political party. It favors voters... It helps move our politics away from polarization and division and towards solutions...If you are concerned about extreme partisanship and want to see election outcomes that are more representative of Arizona voters, vote for Make Elections Fair."

- Sybil Francis, Chair, President & CEO, Center for the Future of Arizona



"More than four in ten voters today don't want to be in a political party. Why? Because the legacy parties have become special interests — now the biggest special interests of all...Arizona deserves nonpartisan primaries, a ban on using taxpayer money to fund exclusionary closed primaries, and fair ballot-access requirements for all candidates for public office, regardless of party allegiance...It's time for a change. Proposition 140 will be that change."

- Jacqueline Salit, President, Independent Voting



"I am proud to be a Democrat that has stood for the principle of equality and freedom...Our election system must reflect our commitment to the principle of equality. An unaffiliated voter must go the extra step of requesting a partisan ballot of a party they are not even a member of...The Make Elections Fair Act, Prop 140 fixes this problem by eliminating restrictions on voter participation, and ensuring that all candidates compete under the same set of rules."

- Art Hamilton, Former Arizona State Representative



"We believe that free markets are good for business and that they are also good for politics. We also believe that competition produces better choices and that "All Voices and All Voters Matter." The Make Elections Fair Act treats all candidates and voters equally, eliminates partisan primaries, and rewards candidates who choose to work on issues that matter most--the economy, public safety, and education. We encourage you to join us in supporting the "Make Elections Fair Act."

- John Lewis President, PHX East Valley Partnership



"Our current closed partisan primary election disenfranchises both Independent candidates and voters. The Make Elections Fair initiative provides an opportunity to address one of the fundamental inequities that is at the core of our political dysfunction today – pure partisanship...[It] creates an environment where all voters and all candidates are encouraged to work for our best interests and on the issues that matter most, the economy, public safety, and education."

- Sintra Hoffman, President & CEO, Westmarc

THIS NOVEMBER, ARIZONA COULD CHANGE THE RULES OF ELECTORAL POLITICS

by Jeremy Gruber and John Opdycke, opinion contributors - 06/04/24 originally published on The Hill

Arizona is center stage for every issue that Democrats and Republicans are using to drive votes...Immigration, abortion and the rise of the Latino electorate. Climate change. Election denialism and election protectionism. Inflation and tax policy. It's all front and center in Arizona politics, one of the last remaining competitive states in the country.

But right below the surface, another seismic issue is making its way to the ballot this November: a referendum to change the rules of the political game itself. Conventional pundits may be ignoring democracy reform in favor of traditional policy debates, but voters aren't. More and more states are exploring reform, and **what's happening right now in Arizona could be a significant game-changer for the entire country.**

Last year, independents tied Republicans as the largest group of voters in the Grand Canyon State. It's right there in the voter registration data: 1.4 million Republicans, 1.4 million independents, 1.2 million Democrats. This rapid rise of independent voters echoes a national trend but is amplified in Arizona because of how evenly matched the two parties are with each other. Independents have become the kingmakers.

But the lived experience of independents in Arizona is that they are second-class citizens.

MORE THAN 80%
of AZ legislative
races are determined in
our Primaries where
LESS THAN 30%
OF VOTERS
PARTICIPATED.

In Arizona, like in many other states, election administration is partisan. Independents have no representation on boards of elections and can't serve as poll workers or election judges. The state has open primaries for down-ballot races but forces independents to "pick a party" in order to participate. That's at odds with what Thom Reily of ASU's Center for an Independent and Sustainable Democracy recently noted: "The defining feature of independents is that candidates and issues, not party loyalty, drive their choices."

Arizona has mail-in voting, but independents must jump through Kafkaesque hoops to receive a primary ballot.



Independent candidates must collect six times the number of signatures compared to party candidates — and even if they clear that hurdle, they don't appear on the primary ballot.

And Arizona completely bars independents from participating in the presidential preference elections that their tax dollars pay for!

A diverse group of Arizona citizens is working to level the playing field and, with largely local funding, has founded Make Elections Fair AZ to empower independents and revitalize the state's political culture...Part One would create a nonpartisan first round election so all voters and all candidates are on equal footing and voters can choose from among all the candidates. Part Two is an open presidential primary that would allow all citizens to cast a ballot. If the parties want to restrict participation, they can — but only if they pay for the private election themselves.

Why is restructuring primary elections so important? In Arizona, almost half of all general election races for state legislature in the last cycle ranged from outright uncontested to complete blowouts. Less than a quarter of all races were competitive in November. Nonpartisan primaries will create genuinely competitive general elections in every corner of the state.

At a time when the Democratic and Republican playbooks are built around "divide and conquer" and "do anything you have to get 50.1 percent," the Make Elections Fair team is putting basic American values that have wide cross-partisan appeal on the ballot. Treat all voters and candidates the same.

Let all voters vote for whomever they want in every taxpayer funded election. Competition, not coronation.

And this referendum, if it passes, won't cut the people's elected leaders out of the picture. The legislature will have to design a new system that treats all voters and all candidates fairly and equally, opens the presidential primaries, and combines a nonpartisan primary for state and federal races with a competitive general election in which the winner gets a clear majority.

The current rules in Arizona empower small groups of partisan insiders and muzzle independents at precisely the time when their voices are needed to counteract the 24/7 warfare between Team Blue and Team Red. **The Make Elections Fair team has created a vehicle to propel the values of fairness, competition and inclusion onto center stage, at precisely the moment when our country desperately needs them.**

Jeremy Gruber and John Opdycke are the SVP and president of Open Primaries, a national election reform organization.

Arizona

VOTER'S AGENDA

CENTER FOR THE FUTURE OF ARIZONA

96% OF VOTERS

agreed that regardless of party affiliation, all voters - Democrat, Republican, independent, non-affiliated, or others registered - should have equal access to voting.

THIS INCLUDES 94% OF REPUBLICANS, 96% OF INDEPENDENT/UNAFFILIATED VOTERS, AND 98% OF DEMOCRATS.

OVER 1.3M ARIZONA VOTERS ARE STUCK FOOTING THE BILL FOR AN ELECTION THEY CAN'T PARTICIPATE IN.

Paid for by the Make Elections Fair PAC with only 8.6% from out-of-state contributors. Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.

4% OF ARIZONA VOTERS ELECTED ABOUT 80% OF ITS U.S. HOUSE SEATS

by Unite America



Prop 140: A voter-led initiative headed to the November ballot aims to fix Arizona's Primary Problem, give voters better choices

A mere 4% of Arizona voters elected 78% of its U.S. House seats in last week's primaries, according to a new analysis from Unite America Institute. Arizona's "Primary Problem" is largely the result of uncompetitive general elections — just two out of nine districts in the state are considered competitive, according to The Cook Political Report.

To fix Arizona's Primary Problem, a bipartisan coalition led by Make Elections Fair Arizona [has put Prop 140 on] the November ballot that would abolish party primaries and replace them with a single all-candidate primary. In open all-candidate primaries, which four states currently use for state and federal offices, all candidates compete on one ballot and every eligible voter can participate.

Last month, Make Elections Fair Arizona turned in more than 580,000 voter signatures in support of the initiative — far more than the 383,923 valid signatures required.

"Arizona is Exhibit A for the Primary Problem this week, but Arizona voters are also showing us that party primaries are the most solvable problem in politics. We're inspired by the 580,000 Arizonans — and 1.5 million voters across six states nationwide — who have signed on in support of open primaries and fairer elections this year."



Nick Troiano, Unite America Executive Director



PROP 140: END THE PARTISAN GRIP ON ARIZONA'S ELECTIONS - A FAIR SYSTEM FOR ALL VOTERS

CLIVE "BOB" SOMMER
Co-Owner, Changing Hands Bookstores

"Arizona's current system favors partisanship since more than 80% of all legislative races are determined in primaries from which independents and unaffiliated voters are excluded.

If you are a member of either of the two big parties (like I am), you can take this opportunity to ensure that ALL voters and candidates will be treated fairly.

Because of gerrymandered legislative districts, most elections in Arizona are determined in the primary. You win in the primary and you're almost sure to win in the general. That would be fine if our primaries were fair, but are they?

IS IT FAIR that to run for statewide office, Independent and unaffiliated candidates must collect nearly 6 times the signatures compared to R or D candidates?

IS IT FAIR that even if an Independent candidate overcomes these hurdles, their name will not appear on primary ballots, like R and D candidates, but only on the general election ballot?

IS IT FAIR that 34% of registered voters not affiliated with the two big parties must request a partisan R or D ballot to vote in a Primary election?

This amendment will: Eliminate partisan primaries, replacing them with a system where individuals may vote for the candidate of their choice, regardless of the voter's or candidate's party affiliation. Create the same signature requirements for those wishing to run for a particular office, without regard to political party affiliation or lack thereof.

THE CURRENT SYSTEM IS UNFAIR. LET'S LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD. VOTE YES ON PROP 140."



ARIZONA'S PRIMARY SYSTEM CURRENTLY DISENFRANCHISES ALL POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS

Ted Maxwell, President & CEO, Southern Arizona Leadership Council, Tucson

On behalf of the Southern Arizona Leadership Council (SALC), a nonpartisan policy-focused organization of business and community leaders who work to enhance the economic climate and quality of life in our region and state, I urge you to vote YES on Proposition 140!

Arizona's primary system currently disenfranchises citizens of all political affiliations. With 80% of Arizona's legislative districts being "safe" for one party, the primary is the only election that matters. Due to the system, only about 10% of the 1,369,644 Independents or 'Party Not Declared' (PND) registered voters participate in the primary. In Arizona's 2022 general election, 19 of 90 legislative seats (21%) were uncontested and those candidates ran unopposed. They were effectively elected in the primary which is closed to voters from the minority party and presents significant hurdles for Independents/PNDs. This is undemocratic.

Prop 140 will give all Arizonans a fair chance to participate in our democratic process.



WHY HEROES SUPPORT PROPOSITION 140



"I have been, as many veterans are, a registered independent voter. In Arizona, independent voters and candidates are disadvantaged by our current election system. Please join me and the 1+ million Arizonan independents in supporting the Make Elections Fair Act. Together, we can make our State stronger by adopting the principle 'treating all voters (and candidates) the same' into our State Constitution and relegating partisan interests below those of our allegiance to our State."

VICE ADMIRAL PHILLIP G. SAWYER



"Veterans Forward empowers men and women who bravely served our country to continue defending the values that make our democracy strong, just as we did when we served in the military. For this reason, we believe the Prop. 140 initiative is a cause worth fighting for. Our political landscape has left veterans feeling disillusioned and excluded from the very democracy we fought to protect. About 59% of veterans have left the two major parties and are registered as independents. Independents who fought to protect our independence deserve an equal opportunity to have a voice in who represents them and a fair chance at running for office."

AARON MARQUEZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, VETSFORWARD



"Independent Arizonans, serving on Active Duty in the military, should not be forced to affiliate with a private political party in order to vote. On behalf of Arizona's Independent military Veterans, and Independent voters, please vote YES on Prop. 140 and Make Elections Fair for all voters in Arizona!"

ERIC BRONNER COO, FOUNDER, VETERANS FOR ALL VOTERS



LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

JOHN HUDAK

Publisher, Tucson Lifestyle

In my mind, one of the most important opportunities to improve our current faltering system is on the ballot this year. It's Proposition 140 aka "Make Elections Fair." It's casually referred to as the "open primaries" initiative. Personally, I believe that the "open primaries" initiative, while not perfect, is our best shot to improve our current unbalanced and unfair "closed" partisan primary system, and possibly improve voter turnout and the quality of our elected officials in the future.

First, let's look at the recent 2024 primaries here in Arizona as an example of how poorly the current system works. Overall, just 31% of all registered voters participated in primaries at all.

Of that, 33% of Republicans participated, 31% of Democrats, and just 7% of Independents! In short, the primary voters under the current partisan system do not represent anywhere near a majority of all voters, even within their own party. Add on top of this that 80% of our districts in Arizona are non-competitive due to gerrymandering. This means that whoever wins the "partisan" primary wins the general election, meaning that all the rest of us who did not participate in that party's primary have no vote whatsoever!!!

Frankly, I take this personally because I am an "unaffiliated" or independent voter. People like me represent the largest voter category nationally, and the fastest growing segment of the Arizona electorate. Current registration in Arizona as of July 2024 is 35% Republican, 34% Independent, and 29% Democrat with the remaining 2% split up amongst libertarians, greens, etc.

As we have seen in the current partisan primary system, the democratic base generally votes for someone to the far left, and the republican base usually votes for someone to the far right, and in the general election we are left to choose between two extreme candidates.

Whether Republican, Democrat, Unaffiliated, etc. a majority of voters identify closer to the center, not the extremes. Not sure about you, but I often find myself voting "against" an extreme candidate rather than voting "for" a candidate I support!

Proposition 140, the "Make Elections Fair" initiative, "opens" the primaries by having all candidates regardless of party run on the same ballot, and ALL voters regardless of party (or unaffiliated) can vote in the primary. The initiative then leaves it up to the Legislature to determine going forward whether the general election is a runoff between the top two vote getters or "up to" the top five.

Interestingly, two of our founding fathers who also happen to be our first two presidents were concerned about devolving into a two-party system. John Adams wrote: "There is nothing which I dread so much as a division of the republic into two great parties...This, in my humble apprehension, is to be dreaded as the greatest political evil under our Constitution." In George Washington's farewell address, he said: "However [political parties] may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government..." **Simply put, our current system isn't fair, and not the way it was intended.**

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION. COPYRIGHT 2024 TUCSON LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE.



BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR PROP. 140



SARAH SMALLHOUSE
(INDEPENDENT)



PATRICK DECONCINI
(DEMOCRAT)



BEAU LANE
(REPUBLICAN)



PAUL JOHNSON
(INDEPENDENT)



TERRY GODDARD
(DEMOCRAT)



KEVIN ROBINSON
(INDEPENDENT)



SCOTT SMITH
(REPUBLICAN)



SYBIL FRANCIS
(DEMOCRAT)



VICTOR FLORES
(DEMOCRAT)



JACKIE NORTON
(INDEPENDENT)



SUZANNE PFISTER
(DEMOCRAT)



BRYAN JEFFRIES
(REPUBLICAN)



RAY KIMBALL
(INDEPENDENT)



CÉSAR CHÁVEZ
(DEMOCRAT)

BUSINESSES STAND WITH PROP 140



Former U.S. Attorney for Arizona Endorses Proposition 140



José de Jesús Rivera

“My history as a civil-rights attorney working as an employee of the Department of Justice, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona, and finally as the U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona has made me acutely aware of the need to provide voting access to all U.S. citizens. Working for the U.S. Justice Department and for the Arizona U.S. Attorney's Office gave me immense pride in championing the fair and equal treatment of Arizonans.

This belief has carried out throughout my legal career. I was fortunate enough to be chosen as one of the attorneys for the first Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission. That made me even more aware of the need to ensure people could vote for people seeking elective office.

My experience solidifies my belief that our current partisan primary system does not promote fairness or equality for all voters.

An independent candidate is required to gather up to six times the amount of signatures as a partisan candidate and still won't appear on the primary ballot.

Forcing voters to jump through extra hoops because their values and beliefs don't align with a political party deters a substantial number of Arizonans from exercising their right to vote.

The Make Elections Fair Act eliminates partisan primary elections and prohibits public tax dollars from being used for private party elections. Creating an open primary effectively ends discrimination against any voter or candidate and requires all candidates compete under the same rules.

This measure will ensure that all voters are treated equally in the electoral process and provides every Arizonan the right to have a say in who represents them.

Join me in voting YES on Prop 140!"

Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona Back Prop 140



“The Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona represents over 8,000 Fire Fighters and Emergency Medical Professionals from across the State of Arizona. When you call for help in a medical emergency or fire, it is our members who show up to help you. We are proud of our members who put their lives on the line every day to serve you.

We are asking you to vote YES on Prop 140, the Make Elections Fair Act because the way our state makes public policy these days is in crisis. This is our 911 emergency call for to you to help.

Today, the deeply partisan nature of our Congress and our State Legislature makes the effort to adopt and support thoughtful public safety policy all but impossible. Good public safety policy is neither Republican nor Democrat. Nearly every city in Arizona elects its Mayor and Council using a non-partisan system, that permits every candi-

-date to participate and every voter to vote in every election. That's the way we should elect all offices.

The most important policy questions facing our state are education, water, economic development and, of course, public safety. Our elected officials should represent us all, not just members of a political party – because these issues affect us all.

The Make Elections Fair Act will ensure that no candidate can win their election outright in a primary election where less than 35% of voters are participating. It will require that every candidate for office face a competitive General Election with legitimate candidates capable of competing against one another.

The Make Elections Fair Act will provide Arizona voters with better choices, better results and a stronger Arizona. Please join the Professional Firefighters of Arizona in supporting Prop 140, the Make Elections Fair Act, it is critical."

- DON JONGEWAARD
President, Professional Firefighters of Arizona

77%

**OF ARIZONA
VOTERS BELIEVE
WE NEED TO MAKE
CHANGES TO OUR
PRIMARY SYSTEM**

SO WE ELECT LEADERS WHO REPRESENT MORE THAN JUST A SMALL SEGMENT OF VOTERS." VOTERS BELIEVE THE CURRENT SYSTEM REWARDS EXTREME CANDIDATES WHO ARE NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF BROADER VOTER INTERESTS.

VOTERS BELIEVE THE CURRENT SYSTEM REWARDS EXTREME CANDIDATES WHO ARE NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF BROADER VOTER INTERESTS.

**CENTER
FOR THE FUTURE OF
ARIZONA**



LAWMAKERS' BALLOT MEASURES BLOCK ELECTION REFORM

By Mark Cable, originally published 08/22/24 in The Arizona Capitol Times



In an opinion published in the Arizona Capitol Times on Aug. 1, 2024, "Election Reform Voters Have Been Waiting for, Finally", Al Bell correctly argued that Proposition 140, better known as the Make Elections Fair Act, represents an opportunity to improve both our elections and our state government.

Unfortunately, just passing Make Elections Fair this election is not enough. The state Legislature has referred several propositions to the ballot to undermine efforts at reform. It is unsurprising that those who have benefited from the status quo wish to keep things as they are. Here are three legislative referrals that voters need to be aware of in addition to Make Elections Fair.

Proposition 133 is the Legislature's attempt to permanently enshrine the current partisan primary system, which is precisely what the Make Elections Fair Initiative is trying to reform. The proposition is worded to outlaw both open primaries, ranked choice voting, and any other future reform or improvement. If you are in favor of Make Elections Fair, then you should definitely vote "No" on Proposition 133.

If you are not sure about the Make Elections Fair Act, you should still vote against Proposition 133, because making the current broken system forever unchangeable is a bad idea.