

## **PENNSYLVANIA DOES NOT HAVE FREE ELECTIONS!**

There are two ways to destroy democracy: one is by preventing people from voting, and the other is by preventing worthy candidates from running for office. In the 2006 election, candidates for statewide office running as independents or with third parties will be required to collect over 67,000 signatures in order to get on the November ballot in Pennsylvania, while candidates of the two old parties have no signature requirements.

No other state puts such a heavy burden on its independent and third party candidates. In fact, if Pennsylvania's ballot access laws applied to Utah, the Democratic Party would cease to be a political party; and if they were put into effect in Massachusetts, the Republican Party would not qualify as a party, and neither of them would be able to hold primary elections!

Often voters remain home because they feel the candidates of the two old parties don't represent their needs, and they are tired of voting for the lesser of two evils. With less-restrictive ballot access legislation, such as the Voters' Choice Act, voter turnout would increase and the citizens of Pennsylvania would have greater freedom of choice on Election Day. The burdensome, out of date, freedom-restrictive ballot access laws in Pennsylvania must be abolished and replaced with the Voters' Choice Act.

## **HOW THE VOTERS' CHOICE ACT WORKS**

The Voters' Choice Act (VCA) will give greater freedom of choice to the Pennsylvania voter by making it much less difficult for independent and third party candidates to get on the November ballot.

The VCA changes the way a third party is legally defined. Instead of requiring a third party's existence to be determined by how well a Democrat or Republican did in the last election, under the Voters' Choice Act a third party would be legally recognized once it has at least 0.05% of the total number of voters in Pennsylvania registered in their party. This is the way our neighboring state of Delaware legally defines a third party. Following this model, candidates from third parties, as with the two old parties, would have no signature requirement to have their names placed on the November ballot.

As for independent candidates, instead of having to obtain over 67,000 signatures on their nominating petitions in order to appear on the statewide ballot in 2006, independents would only be required to collect the same 2,000 signatures that the candidates from the two old parties need to get into their primary.

Without free and open elections, Pennsylvania government cannot be of, for, and by the people. The Voters' Choice Act promises to restore that balance.

## **THE VOTERS' CHOICE ACT: BECAUSE OUR DEMOCRACY DEPENDS UPON IT!**

Democracy in America was stronger in the 18th and 19th centuries than it is today. Back then, many other vigorous parties existed because citizens were free to form new parties, and the government treated old and new parties equally. In fact, there were no ballot access laws at all until 1888. In the 19th century almost 80% of the eligible population went to the polls to vote. Unfortunately, American politics have been dominated by the same two parties for the last 150 years, and as a result, recent figures show voter turnout to be as low as 50 to 60%!

Article 1, Section 5 of the Pennsylvania Constitution states: "All elections shall be free and equal." Yet statewide independent and third party candidates are required to collect over 67,000 signatures to be on the November ballot in 2006, where the candidates from the old parties need none.

Please call your State Representative and State Senator and ask them to support the Voters' Choice Act. Remind them that it will not change any requirements for their future election bids. To find out the names of your State Senator or State Representative you can call 800-932-0784 or 717-787-2121, or find out online at [www.legis.state.pa.us](http://www.legis.state.pa.us).

## **SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT BALLOT ACCESS REFORM!**

Suppose you went to the polls every November and found your candidate was not on the ballot. What if they had been removed because one of the two old parties made malicious use of our awful ballot access laws? What if your candidate had been prevented from getting on the ballot at all?

- ✓ *If you agree that voters should have more voices and choices*
- ✓ *If free and open elections are important to you*
- ✓ *If fairness is important to you*
- ✓ *If you agree that all serious candidates should have the opportunity to be heard*
- ✓ *If you believe that voters should decide elections, not severely restrictive ballot access laws*

Support the **Voters' Choice Act** by calling your State Senator or State Representative and let them know what you think and how you feel.

**"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little."**

**-- Edmund Burke (1729 - 1797)**

## **WHO IS THE PENNSYLVANIA BALLOT ACCESS COALITION?**

The Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition is a group of individuals and organizations devoted to building a better democracy in Pennsylvania, including leading members of the Libertarian Party, the Green Party, the Constitution Party, the Socialist Party, the Reform Party, the America First Party, the Unified Independent Party, the Prohibition Party and the independent candidacy of Ralph Nader, among others.

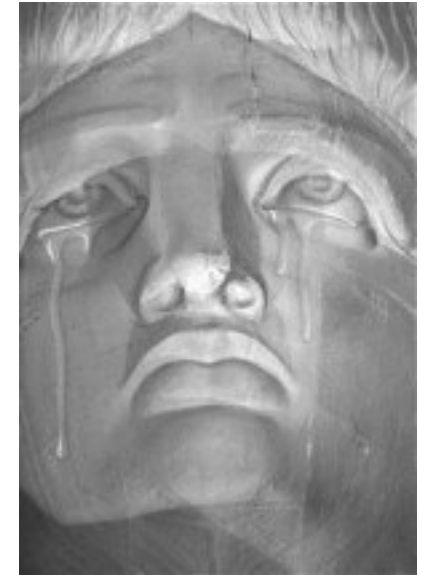
The purpose of the Coalition is to reform the restrictive Pennsylvania ballot access laws which force independent candidates and political third parties to repeatedly collect tens of thousands of signatures simply to get on the ballot.

**DOWNLOAD THE  
VOTERS' CHOICE ACT AND ITS  
ACCOMPANYING WHITE PAPER:  
[WWW.PABALLOTACCESS.ORG](http://WWW.PABALLOTACCESS.ORG)**

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## **THE VOTERS' CHOICE ACT: BECAUSE OUR DEMOCRACY DEPENDS ON IT**



**The Voters' Choice Act  
levels the playing field for  
independent and third party  
candidates, giving Pennsylvania  
voters greater freedom of choice  
on Election Day.**

**Ask your state  
legislators to support  
the Voters' Choice Act!**