

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For more information, please contact Bob Small (610-543-8427) or Ken Krawchuk (267-496-3332)

The Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition (PBAC) is pleased to report that their Voters' Choice Act has been introduced in the Pennsylvania Senate as Senate Bill 21.

The prime sponsor of the Act, originally authored by the PBAC in 2005, is state Senator Mike Folmer (R-48) of Lebanon. According to Folmer, "Both the federal and state Constitutions begin with the same three words: 'We The People.' In order to give the people a stronger voice in their state government, we need to eliminate barriers for candidates seeking office.

No state makes it more difficult for third party and independent candidates to run for office than Pennsylvania.

My 'Voters' Choice Act' significantly eases these restrictions."

The Act offers greater freedom of choice to Pennsylvania voters by making it much less difficult for independent and third party candidates to get their names on the November ballot. Under current law, Democratic and Republican candidates are required to collect between 1,000 and 2,000 signatures to get their names on the statewide ballot, while all others must collect as many as 67,000 signatures in recent years.

But under the Voters' Choice Act, independents and candidates of political bodies would need to collect the same number of signatures as the candidates of the two old parties, and once a third party registers 0.05% of the electorate as members of that party (approximately 4,200 voters), their candidates may be nominated according to the party's rules, and at the party's expense, without having to collect signatures.

Ken Krawchuk, a Libertarian member of the PBAC and two-time candidate for Pennsylvania

governor, applauded Sen. Folmer's initiative. "Why should one candidate be forced to collect thirty-three times as many signatures as another?" Krawchuk asked.

"The only thing the existing law does is stifle competition at the ballot box and prevent new ideas from being introduced into the political debate.

In a land that's known for freedom, how can such a thing be fair?"

According to Carl Romanelli, a Green Party member of the PBAC, "Passage of the VCA will demonstrate that legislators are serious about reform and leveling the playing field. It is heartening to see support for this legislation among Greens, Libertarians, Constitutionals, Reformers and independents.

We are respectfully requesting all PA Senators of goodwill to lead this effort for Pennsylvania."

The PBAC encourages all citizens to contact their state senators and request that they co-sponsor the Voters' Choice Act, Senate Bill 21.

The Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition is a group of individuals and organizations committed to building better government in Pennsylvania.

Formed shortly after the 2004 election cycle, the Coalition includes leading members of the Libertarian Party, the Green Party, the Constitution Party, the America First Party, the Reform Party, the Prohibition Party, the Socialist Party, the Unified Independent Party, the New American Independent Party, the Social Democrats USA, and the Ralph Nader campaign, among others.

The purpose of the Coalition is to reform the restrictive Pennsylvania ballot access laws and bring them in line with the constitutional mandate that "Elections shall be free and equal." More information about the Coalition and the Voters' Choice Act can be found at PaBallotAccess.org.

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