

# The Justice Party Endorses Bernie Sanders for President

Formed in 2011 to provide a meaningful alternative to the money-controlled duopoly, the Justice Party (which nominated Rocky Anderson as its 2012 presidential candidate) is proposing to endorse Senator Bernie Sanders in his 2016 bid for the Democratic nomination. The reasons for the endorsement follow.

It may seem odd that the Justice Party would endorse a candidate for the nomination of either the Democratic or Republican parties. Upon deeper analysis, though, it makes a lot of sense in these circumstances.

First, the Justice Party's vision of social, economic, and environmental justice aligns exceptionally well with the progressive social, economic, and environmental agenda of Senator [Bernie Sanders](#). Both the Justice Party and Senator Sanders have as a primary objective the elimination of the [corrupting influence of money](#) within our political system. Both recognize the urgency of addressing [income and wealth inequality](#), and both understand the need for [social justice](#). Both are avid supporters of the movement to confront the climate crisis and [protect our environment](#).

The Justice Party's [Vision, Mission, and Core Values](#) and [Platform](#) have all been created since the party's inception in 2011, but well before Bernie Sanders had made any overtures about his presidential bid. The congruence between the Justice Party's founding principles and Bernie's positions on the issues is remarkable.

Second, to be a member of the Justice Party, one does not have to subscribe to party exclusivity. While it is more likely that, upon joining the Justice Party one would discontinue affiliation with another party, it is possible for a person to be a member of both some other party *and* the Justice Party. Many people have had an allegiance to a party for many years. The Justice Party founders believed it was more important to attract members on the basis of compatibility with its founding principles – *and to be overtly welcoming* – than to require a casting aside of a lifelong party membership which, for many, is challenging. Therefore, the endorsement by the Justice Party of a member of another party is entirely consistent with the openness and non-exclusivity of the Justice Party. (In fact, Rocky Anderson, the Justice Party's 2012 presidential candidate, was endorsed and ran on the ballot line of the Progressive Party in Oregon, the Natural Law Party in Michigan, and the Independent Parties of Connecticut and New Mexico.)

Third, the Justice Party is as much about a social movement as it is a political party. Recognizing that the most dramatic social changes in our country were brought about by a combination of social movements, electoral politics, and judicial decisions, the Justice Party seeks to integrate the first two (social movements and electoral politics), and hope that the judiciary will appropriately respond (as it did, for example, in *Brown v. Board of Education* (desegregation of the public school system) and, more recently, in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (marriage equality)). It is most often *we-the-people*, not those in political office, who *initiate* major social change. The electoral and judicial arms of our government often follow, but they seldom begin the process. Examples include the abolition of slavery, the women's suffrage movement, the labor movement, and the civil rights movement.

Bernie Sanders is bringing people together, not just to support his candidacy for President, but (more importantly) to address some of the major issues of our day through what could become a major, effective social movement.

Finally, the Justice Party is still in an embryonic stage. As we all know, the political system is *intentionally* stacked against new parties. The Justice Party will endeavor to develop active parties in all fifty states and to make electoral progress at both state and local levels. Doing that will result in more viable national electoral candidates, *i.e.*, for Congress and the Presidency. The laws in most states heavily discourage new parties by requiring enormous voter support to get on the ballot (which, of course, takes a significant infrastructure (and funding) – hurdles that start-up parties find very challenging to overcome). Through sheer determination and force of will, the *Rocky Anderson for President* campaign in 2012 was able to get on the ballot in 15 states, with write-in status in many more, which was an amazing accomplishment. It enabled Rocky and his running mate, Luis Rodriguez, to raise awareness across the country about crucial issues being ignored by the major party candidates [[VIDEO](#)]. Given those structural challenges, although the Justice Party is proactively seeking to identify a person willing to run as its presidential candidate in 2016, we must be prepared for the possibility that we will not be able to identify such a person. And if we are able to locate such a candidate, his/her job will be to wholeheartedly support Bernie Sanders through the Democratic primary and, if he wins the primary, through the general election in November, 2016. If, however, Senator Sanders does not win the Democratic primary, the Justice Party candidate will run for president.

Upon the Justice Party's endorsement of Bernie Sanders, we will strongly encourage all people who subscribe to the Justice Party's principles of *social, economic, and environmental justice* to lend support (time, money, and votes) to Bernie Sanders.

Rocky Anderson  
2012 Justice Party Presidential Candidate  
Justice Party Advisor

Jonathan M. Ruga  
Chair, National Steering Committee,  
Justice Party