

OPEN PRIMARIES

July 2, 2015

Congressman John K. Delaney
1632 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Delaney:

On behalf of Open Primaries, a national movement of diverse Americans who believe that no one should be required to join a political party to exercise his or her right to vote, we write to express our strong support for H.R. 2655, the Open Our Democracy Act of 2015. Open Primaries deeply appreciates your leadership in sponsoring this important legislation which will implement several key reforms to ensure that the American people get fair representation, responsible governance, and a renewed interest in working across the aisle from their federal representatives: Nonpartisan Top Two Primaries, Redistricting Reform, and time off for Election Day.

Nonpartisan Top Two Primaries is a system in which all candidates appear on a single ballot and each voter is free to vote for any candidate in the primary election. Not only does this reform give a voice to Americans currently forbidden from casting a vote solely because they identify as independent, but it has a tremendous ability to overcome government dysfunction by increasing electoral competition and creating legislation accountable to all voters rather than a partisan few.

In 2009, California was rated one of the most dysfunctional state governments in the nation by the National Journal. When they changed to Nonpartisan Top Two Primaries in 2012, their budget went from being late over 44% of the time to 100% on-time and public approval of the Legislature went from an all-time low of 14% to over 42%, all in under 3 years. But, they're not alone. Washington, Nebraska, and Louisiana have all adopted similar systems and experienced similar successes.

Independent Redistricting, an issue recently reinforced as constitutional by the US Supreme Court, is another tremendous, game-changing reform. Many states currently have a partisan redistricting system, which has the net effect of letting politicians pick their voters. By requiring the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study of redistricting processes and report on legislative recommendations for federal standards requiring independent redistricting commissions, the Open Our Democracy Act is ending this long-standing, backward practice in favor of more freedom and choice for the American people.

And lastly, by making Election Day a federal holiday, the Open Our Democracy Act makes a national commitment to addressing declining turnout numbers by providing millions of workers with the freedom and flexibility they need to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

The reforms proposed in the Open Our Democracy Act are proven solutions necessary to disrupt a system that is becoming less and less accountable to voters. We thank you, Congressman John K. Delaney, for introducing this important legislation and look forward to working with you to build support for this bill.

Sincerely,



John Opdycke
President
Open Primaries