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From: **Jason Bollinger** <bollinger4liberty@gmail.com>

Date: Tuesday, July 19, 2022

Subject: Closed Primary Platform Submission

To: Jason Bollinger <bollinger4liberty@gmail.com>

County Chairmen and District Chairmen, please forward this email to the delegates for your respective counties and districts.

My name is Jason Bollinger and I'm the county chairman for Faulkner County. As most of you would agree, and consistent with our state motto of "regnat populus" (the people rule), I believe that our politics and subsequently our party is best ran from the ground up. One aspect of being "the party of local control" means that information is disseminated and transparency is provided to where it matters most.. the people. It is for these reasons, and my hope for your support once you have the information, that I want to share with you the step-by-step "marked up" version of a platform revision/resolution I submitted that would add closed primaries to our party platform. A modified version of this submission will be voted on during the state convention this Saturday.

The current resolution started as a platform revision that was submitted to the appointed platform and rules committee on 5/23/22. Prior to the deadline of 5/24/22. In fact, I was told that this submission for closed primaries was the only platform or rule change that was submitted in the appropriate way prior to the deadline. I tell you this in order to illustrate that appropriate process was followed to the letter.

My initial submission to the committee stated (platform language in red):

I do not have the particular language worked out and may have some better language tomorrow. But, I did not want to wait to send and miss the deadline.

Most likely under the section of "Government Reform" I would like to propose an addition to the platform illustrating Republican support for closed primary elections in our state.

With the state wide movement of Common Grounds and the reportedly higher amount of cross-over voting taking place in our state, I believe the time is now for our party (and subsequently the legislative body) to discuss this change.

Verbage could be something similar to "In order to ensure the sanctity/authenticity of the preferential primary election process of all parties in the state of Arkansas and to discourage cross-over voting that is intended to adversely influence the preferential primary process for those parties and disenfranchising their voters Arkansas Republicans support a closed primary process in our state."

It is worth noting that this submission was made the night before the preferential primary election and is NOT in response to the result of any particular race. It was also made quickly, late at night, and I fully anticipated changing the language once I had more time to think through the particulars.

Following that initial submission, I amended the platform proposal to more simply state "In order to ensure the integrity of the preferential primary election process, Arkansas Republicans support closed primaries in our state."

Markup version: "In order to ensure the ~~sanctity/authenticity~~ integrity of the preferential primary election process of all parties in the state of Arkansas and to discourage cross-over voting that is intended to adversely influence the preferential primary process for those parties and disenfranchising their voters Arkansas Republicans support a closed primary ~~ies~~ process in our state."

As a proposed platform submission, this modification was made in order to make it as simply stated as possible and to eliminate language that would cause the submission to be rejected by the platform committee.

The platform committee met to discuss and vote on this and other various submissions that were made after the deadline. Due to the complexity of the issue, the language for the platform amendment I submitted for closed primaries was tabled. It was then discussed that, due to the winners of the primary races swearing to uphold the GOP platform as it is, it would not be appropriate to make any major revisions to the platform until before the next filing period and that the platform submissions would be reworked into resolutions.

As a result, I reworked the previous platform submission into a resolution stating that the platform change would be made prior to the next filing period. I sincerely appreciate John Nabholz's leadership in this process and for Eddie Arnold and Austin McCollum who championed the issue in the committee. The resolution was submitted as follows:

A Resolution to address cross party voting in the RPA platform

WHEREAS, our nation and our state continue to feel the after effects of allegations of fraudulent voting and ongoing risks of voter disenfranchisement;

WHEREAS, recognizing the power of the Republican brand in Arkansas, entities and organizations such as Common Ground Arkansas and leftist journalists have openly advocated for cross party voting in Republican primaries, further fueling distrust in the preferential primary voting process among legitimate Republican voters;

WHEREAS, opposing political parties are also openly advocating for top-two and majority-vote/jungle preferential primaries;

WHEREAS, in 2022 fourteen states successfully conduct closed primaries, fifteen states successfully conduct semi-closed primaries, and Arkansas is among the remaining states with open primaries;

THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED, that the RPA Platform Committee, in sufficient time to be considered at a state committee meeting or a special state convention before the November filing period of 2023, include language in the party platform addressing cross party voting and/or closed primaries in the state of Arkansas.

Additional meetings were held on 6/9 and 6/11 and resolution was amended into the current resolution you have all previously received and passed to go to the convention. This is markup version that I have created.

A RESOLUTION TO ADDRESS CROSS PARTY VOTING ~~IN THE RPA~~ PLATFORM

WHEREAS, our nation and our state continue to feel the after effects of allegations of fraudulent voting and ongoing risks of voter disenfranchisement;

WHEREAS, recognizing the power of the Republican brand in Arkansas, entities, ~~and organizations such as Common Ground~~ Arkansas and leftist **activist** journalists have openly advocated for cross party voting in Republican primaries, further fueling distrust in the preferential primary voting process among **legitimate** Republican voters;

WHEREAS, opposing political parties are also openly advocating for top-two and majority-vote/jungle preferential primaries;

WHEREAS, in 2022 fourteen states successfully conducted closed primaries, fifteen states successfully conducted semi-closed primaries, and Arkansas is among the remaining states with open primaries;

THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED, ~~that the RPA Platform Committee, in sufficient time to be considered at a state committee meeting or a special state convention before the November filing period of 2023, include language in the party platform addressing cross party voting and/or closed primaries in the state of Arkansas~~ Republican Party of Arkansas calls for the study of the problems experienced in our state with Cross over Voting.

I am satisfied with modifications such as the addition of the word “legitimate” before Republican voters in the 2nd line.

However, for reasons that are evident, I am dissatisfied with the resolved portion of the resolution. Because the resolution was originally drafted to include language of cross over voting and closed primaries in our party platform, the resolution as it stands accomplishes very little.

When I am asked why I am involved in the Republican Party and why I serve in the role I am in, I reply that I believe that the only hope for conservative ideals in our country is the Republican Party and the only hope for the Republican Party is ACTIVE conservatives. Through this belief, I want America and our wonderful state to move into the future by pulling on the best of her tradition and living up to the best of her ideals. I believe, that the principles of our founding are a force for good in this world, that those principles remain the foundation of the solutions for problems we are facing today, and I also believe that our party platform captures those ideals very well.

However, as we are all acutely aware, not everyone feels this way. In our state we have many people who voice that the principles of our founding are force for evil in the world. That modern problems require new “modern” philosophies. That the views of federalism, self governance, family values, and even rights endowed to us by our Creator are in need of some updating. Those “new” values do not represent our party and do not represent our state. Those voices are openly wishing for our values and our party to diminish in influence. It is disturbing that through our current open primary process we welcome those same voices that wish to see our destruction into influencing who WE select to represent OUR party in the general election.

Our political opponents are openly and presently advocating for their people to actively participate in our process. This is not a future concern. This is a present concern. We cannot afford one, two, or three election cycles to go by before we address this problem in our party. Benjamin

Franklin famously told an inquiring woman what the gathering in 1776 had produced, "A republic, madam, if you can keep it." In order to "keep it" and to keep the American experiment alive into the future our state and our country needs the Republican Party. We need a Republican Party represented by Republicans.

Therefore, it is my intention, from the floor of our State Convention on Saturday, to amend my submission for closed primaries BACK to a platform submission stating that "In order to ensure the integrity of the preferential primary election process, Arkansas Republicans support closed primaries in our state."

If I am unable to secure this platform change, I will then later amend the resolution to it's original language resolving, that "the RPA Platform Committee, in sufficient time to be considered at a state committee meeting or a special state convention before the November filing period of 2023, include language in the party platform addressing cross party voting and/or closed primaries in the state of Arkansas."

In this endeavor of closed primaries, I have the support of numerous State Representatives, State Senators, and others in leadership who agree that the time is now and that they would sponsor legislation. They also agree that this can be implemented in a way that is simple and not requiring excessive tax payer dollars. By including this in our platform, that prompts our legislative body to discuss the particulars of how this is best executed. In a time where voters are becoming increasingly discouraged by the meaning of their vote, a change to closed primaries will reassure preferential primary voters that their votes are meaningful and the results of the their elections are legitimate.

I'm happy to address any questions. Thank you and I hope for support in this amendment on Saturday.

Regnant Populus

Jason Bollinger
Chairman



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