



LNC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES

APRIL 15, 2015

DISTRIBUTION DATE: APRIL 16, 2015

CURRENT STATUS: **CANDIDATE FOR AUTO-APPROVAL**

CALL TO ORDER

Nick Sarwark called the meeting to order at 9:03 p.m. Eastern.

ATTENDANCE

Executive Committee members participating at the beginning of the call were: Nick Sarwark (Chair), Arvin Vohra (Vice-Chair), Alicia Mattson (Secretary), Sam Goldstein (At-Large), Jim Lark (Region 5), Bill Redpath (At-Large)

Tim Hagan (Treasurer) joined the meeting at some point following the call to order.

Staff participants were: Wes Benedict (Executive Director)

Other invited participants were: Tina Kelly (Vice-Chair of Oklahoma LP), Zachary Knight (Secretary of Oklahoma LP), and Richard Prawdzienski (of Oklahoma).

PURPOSE

The meeting was called for the purpose of discussing lobbying for ballot access law improvements in Oklahoma.

OKLAHOMA BALLOT ACCESS LOBBYING

General discussion yielded the following background information: A bill was passed overwhelmingly in the Oklahoma House that would reduce the petition signature requirements for new parties from 5% of the most recent presidential vote down to 1% of the most recent gubernatorial vote. The comparable bill in the Oklahoma Senate was amended in committee to require 3% (instead of 1%) of the most recent gubernatorial vote. The amended bill passed out of committee (on a 10 – 1 vote), and is now eligible to come to a vote in the Senate.

There is insufficient time before the end of the legislative session to permit a lobbying effort for a Senate floor-amendment with a reasonable chance of reducing the required percentage (the last day for hearing bills from

the House is April 23). If the current Senate version were to pass, the Speaker of the House would likely agree to accept that modification without a need for a reconciliation conference. If so, the bill could be sent to the Governor during this term. The Speaker of the Senate has historically been opposed to ballot access reform, and he can prevent the bill from coming to a vote. However, the strong support the bill received in committee and in the House should argue in favor of bringing it to a vote.

Under current law, it would require approximately 66,000 valid signatures to qualify a new party. If the Senate version became law, it would require approximately 24,000 valid signatures, which is roughly a 64% reduction.

Mark Snyder, a former Oklahoma State Senator who is now a lobbyist, has quoted the LNC a price of \$3,000 to lobby for the bill's passage in the Senate before the end of the legislative term. Ms. Kelly indicated that the Oklahoma affiliate doesn't have the funds available to do this on their own.

Mr. Redpath moved to retain Mark Snyder's lobbying firm for \$3,000 for efforts on behalf of House Bill 2181 in this Oklahoma legislative session.

Upon request by Dr. Lark, Mr. Sarwark agreed that if this motion passes, he will ask Mr. Snyder as part of the engagement to gather and report to the LNC any information that would be useful in future efforts should the bill ultimately not pass during this legislative session.

Following debate, the vote on main motion was as follows:

Voting "aye": Hagan, Lark, Mattson, Redpath, Sarwark, Vohra

Voting "no": Goldstein

The motion passed with a vote total of 6-1.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned without objection at 9:41 p.m. Eastern.