LIBERTARIAN PARTY BALLOT ACCESS COMMITTEE REPORT

Libertarian National Committee meeting

New Orleans, Louisiana

June 30, 2018

Dear Colleagues:

The following memo addresses ongoing petition drives and petitioning opportunities for the LNC in 2018.

The Ballot Access Committee (“BAC”) currently consists of Ed Marsh, Dustin Nanna, Mark Axinn, Richard Winger and me. I want to thank all the BAC members for their work on this committee and input into this written report and any oral report that I will deliver in New Orleans. I will likely have updates at this LNC meeting.

I will be using the vernacular “Gross” and “Net” to describe “Total” and “Valid” signatures, respectively.

We currently have ballot access for statewide office in 2018 in the following 40 states: AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT (US Senate + one US House district only + two CT House districts), DE, DC, FL, GA, HI, ID, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MA, MD, MI, MS, MO, MT, NE, NH, NV, NM, NC, ND, OK, OR, SC, SD, TX, UT, VT, WV, WI & WY.

Upcoming petition drive:

The NY petition drive is for a six week period (July 10-August 20). The LPNY needs 15,000 net sigs to place its statewide candidates on the ballot. If the LPNY candidate for Governor earns at least 50,000 votes, the LPNY will be a recognized political party in New York State through the November 2022 general election, which means no petition drive would be necessary in 2020.

I will forward the encumbrance request for $30,000 from the LPNY to the LNC EC to the entire LNC in a separate email. The Ballot Access Committee previously recommended an encumbrance of $35,000, but due to a generous pledged donation from Michael Chastain, the LPNY funding request has been reduced.

Now, the ongoing drives:

OH: Party petition deadline is Tuesday, July 3. The one and only signature turn-in to the Secretary of State’s office will be on Monday, July 2. Net sigs needed: 54,965.

The LPOH will turn in slightly over 100,000 gross signatures, with about 62,500 net signatures, just to be sure that we have enough net sigs. Volunteer gross sigs to date: 7,392.

IL: 25,000 net sigs needed. Drive started Tue, March 27. Turn-in was on Mon, June 25. The Exec Comm encumbrance for this was initially $48,000, with $8,000 added in a June 20 EC conference call. It is expected that all $56,000 will be spent.

Here is the report from LPIL Ballot Access Coordinator Krysta Walker.

Yesterday at 9 a.m., party members and candidates submitted over 47k raw signatures to the State Board of Elections. WCIA covered the submission of our signatures at the SBOE. I believe this is the first time that we have had active press coverage of that part of the morning, so that is very exciting. We then went to the capital where we had a press conference.

We made our goal of 18k volunteer signatures by Sunday evening. I am so very proud of each and every one of our members who collected signatures. 23 chapters participated.

Special mention to our top 3 chapters and top 3 volunteers. BRAVO!

Top Chapters

DuPage                  3712

Metro East            2630 (Illinois suburbs near St. Louis)

Chicago                  2473

Top Collectors

Jason Spyres          1670

Justin Tucker          1643

Claire Ball               1063

The next step will be our signature defense [if a challenge to our sigs is filed].

TN: The LPTN states that they collected 17,000 signatures for the 2017 petition drive with volunteers and petitioners paid for by the LPTN. We do not know the breakdown between volunteer and paid sigs.

Additionally, the LNC sent $8,000 to the LPTN. LPTN Chair Cole Ebel says the LPTN never used that money. LP Executive Director Wes Benedict has asked the LPTN to return the $8,000, but the LPTN has not agreed to that.

Additionally, Michael Chastain sent $2,500 for signatures to the LPTN. Cole Ebel states that that money was not spent, and Michael Chastain has not asked for his unspent contributions to be returned. The same is true with Bill Redpath, but for $750.

LPHQ also spent $7,250 for SMI (Sean Wilmoth) to collect signatures, but no signatures were collected and the $7,250 paid to SMI was not returned. Per the terms in our contract with SMI, SMI should return the funds minus expenses incurred attempting to collect signatures.

I will now address other states:

AZ: No LP candidates on the ballot this year. The statewide candidates were challenged off the ballot by the Republican Party. Only registered Libertarians and Independents, which constitute only about 34% of Arizona registered voters, were eligible to sign our candidates petitions to get on the primary ballot. Our candidates did not get enough such signatures.

ND: The LPND will lose ballot access after the November 2018 election, because only one candidate ran in the LPND 2018 Primary (Roland Riemers) and he received fewer than 300 votes. Under ND law, his name will not be printed on the general election ballot. Unless lobbying succeeds, the LP will probably have to fund a petition drive in ND before the 2020 campaign. A party petition is 7,000 valid sigs, but only about 7,500 gross sigs would have to be gathered.

On our June 27 telephone conference call, the Ballot Access Committee unanimously approved a motion to recommend that a $2,500 encumbrance be made to help fund petitioning to place a Libertarian candidate (possibly Roland Riemers) on the ballot as an Independent for the 2018 general election. That will help our Arizona lawsuit, as we could then say that only Arizona did not have a Libertarian candidate on the ballot for a federal or state office in the 2018 general election.

PA: There is a 5,000 net sig petition drive in PA to put Ken Krawchuk on the ballot for Governor and candidates for other offices. The EC has not encumbered funds for this. I was approached by a member of the LPPA who inquired about LNC funding help. I stated that, given the then current LNC cash position, I could not bring such a request to the Executive Committee. I personally gathered 280 gross sigs on PA Primary Day, Tuesday, May 15. The LPPA and its candidates should be able to handle this themselves.

VA: The Matt Waters for US Senate campaign funded its 10,000 net signature petition drive itself. The drive ended on Tuesday, June 12. Over 14,000 gross sigs were turned in. While official word has not been received from the State Board of Elections, it should be assumed that Matt Waters is on the ballot. Corey Stewart, a Trump supporter, won the Republican nomination for US Senate. If Matt Waters earns 10% of the vote, the LPVA will be a recognized party in VA through the 2021 general election.

Legislation & Lawsuits:

NY: The LPNY and I won our lawsuit against the state’s ban on out-of-state petitioners. In the settlement, however, the ban will continue to be in effect through Election Day 2018.

OK: A bill to change the retention requirement from 2.5% for Governor or President to 2.5% for any statewide office over a four year period passed and was signed into law. Richard Winger thinks that we will never have to petition again in OK.

Sum of LNC 2018 petition drive expenditures through June 27: $109,073. LNC 2018 budget has $250,000 for ballot access expense.

It is the opinion of Ken Moellman, and I can’t disagree, that it is going to be very difficult going forward to pay only $2.50 per gross signature on LP petition drives.

Bill Redpath

Chair

Ballot Access Committee