



IVC

INDEPENDENT VOTERS FOR COLORADO

Independent Voters File Amicus Brief in Support of 10th Circuit Appeal of State Representative Kathleen Curry; Right to Become Independent at Issue

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Leaders of two groups representing independent voters, Independent Voters for Colorado (“IVC”) and the Committee for a Unified Independent Party, Inc. (“CUIP”), today filed an amicus brief (attached) in *Curry v. Buescher*, the expedited appeal that seeks relief from discriminatory deadlines imposed on independent candidates. State Representative Kathleen Curry is the plaintiff in the case.

The amicus brief was filed on behalf of Jacqueline Salit, President of CUIP (also known as IndependentVoting.org), who leads a national association of independent voters with organizations in 40 states, and Joelle Riddle, a La Plata County Commissioner and founder of Independent Voters for Colorado. Riddle, like Curry, was a former Democrat who disaffiliated to become an independent and attempted to run for public office. Colorado imposes a 17-month waiting period for such candidates. The Curry suit challenges the constitutionality of this requirement.

The amicus brief states “...the district court approached the issues before it solely from the vantage point of the interests of the Democratic and Republican Parties, and more broadly, the system which they dominate. There is little, if any, recognition of the legitimacy of independent alternatives, nor of the rights of America citizens to participate in the political process as they choose, whether or not that is consistent with the interests of the parties.”

“There are a lot of people in this country who are very unhappy with the political parties and their intense partisanship,” said Salit. “Some are voters and some are officeholders. But whatever their status, they should have the right to leave a political party and become an independent without being penalized. The parties shouldn’t be

(More)

allowed to run the political process to suit their own purposes. The bottom line here is democracy, and that's what Kathleen, Joelle and I are asking the court to see."

"It is time that the court give voice to independent voters and candidates who are asking for something different, outside of the partisan boundaries that often hold hostage the very issues and concerns that matter to us the most", added Riddle. "We ask for the opportunity to offer more choice and a truer democracy to the people of Colorado."

The amicus brief, along with a motion asking the Court to accept it, was submitted by Harry Kresky, the country's leading legal advocate for independent voters. Kresky is currently lead counsel for a group of independent voters who intervened in a case pending before Idaho federal court to defend independents' right to participate in the primaries.

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