



Committee for an Independent Voice - NH

Independent Voters Press Hillary Clinton on Proposed Plan to Limit Their Voting Rights

Dem/Repub Legislators Plan “St. Valentines Day Massacre” of Independents

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Concord, NH—Independent voter and activist Betty Ward of Concord, NH put the role of independents in the presidential election front and center during Hillary Clinton’s Concord visit Saturday, as Democratic and Republican legislators in the state plan to deliver a nasty Valentine’s Day message to independents. The legislators have reintroduced a bill to restrict independents’ participation in presidential primaries, a bill which independents defeated in 2005. A hearing on HB 196 is scheduled for February 14, 2007 before the House of Representatives, Committee on Election Law.

Ward, an activist with the New Hampshire Committee for an Independent Voice (NH-CIV), drew applause from audience members when she began her question to Clinton by stating that 42% of NH voters were independents. Ward continued, “On one hand, we are congratulated when we help a candidate win, but on the other hand, Democrats and Republicans have introduced legislation that limits our voice in elections.”

Clinton responded by saying everyone should be included in the process, and cited some minor parties in New York that work together in the fusion process.

“Senator Clinton made a general statement about the need for independents to be included,” said Ward. “But our concerns at this moment are very specific. Our state legislature has reintroduced a bill to limit independents’ participation in the presidential primary elections, and we are fighting against it. Senator Clinton didn’t speak as clearly as she needs to. We’re going to be asking all the presidential candidates exactly where they stand on this issue.”

Ward added, “Senator Clinton seems to think that being independent means being in a party. That shows she doesn’t know who independents are. Independents don’t like parties and most of us aren’t in one. But we still want the full rights of participation that are guaranteed by the Constitution.”

Independents have voted in presidential primaries in New Hampshire since 1910.

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