BALLOT ACCESS NEWS

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DEBATE BILL INTRODUCED

On January 29, Congressman Timothy J. Penny, a Democrat from Minnesota, introduced HR 791, a bill requiring Democratic and Republican Party candidates for president in the general election to debate certain third party and independent presidential candidates as well as each other. The Rainbow Lobby is responsible for bringing this bill into existence.

The bill provides that Democratic or Republican presidential nominees may not receive primary election funding unless they promise that if they are nominated, they will debate certain of their general election opponents. Nominees of the two major parties would be required to debate each other at least three times, and to invite any third party or independent presidential candidates into the debates as well, if such third party or independent candidates were on the ballot in at least 40 states and had raised at least $500,000 in private contributions.

Third party and independent presidential candidates for president who met the ballot access criterion of the bill, starting in 1920, have been Eugene Debs (Socialist) in 1920, Robert LaFollette (Progressive) in 1924, Norman Thomas (Socialist) in 1928 and 1932, Henry Wallace (Progressive) in 1948, George Wallace (American Independent, American) in 1968, John B. Anderson (independent) in 1980, Ed Clark (Libertarian) in 1980, Ron Paul (Libertarian) in 1988, and Lenora Fulani (New Alliance) in 1988.

General election debates between presidential candidates never occurred until 1960 (the famous Abraham Lincoln-Stephen Douglas debates occurred in 1858 around a campaign for the U.S. Senate, not the presidency). The only third party or independent presidential candidate who was ever invited to debate his Republican and Democratic opponents was John B. Anderson in 1980. The League of Women Voters invited him to debate Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter. However, Carter then refused to participate, so a two-person debate between Reagan and Anderson was held. Carter and Reagan also debated each other that year, in two other debates at which Anderson was not invited.

Congressman Penny has represented the southeast corner of Minnesota since 1982. He hopes that people who support HR 791 will write their own member of Congress and ask that the member become a co-sponsor. There has never before been a bill which attempted to help third party and independent presidential candidates participate in debates. The bill has been referred to the Elections Subcommittee, chaired by Congressman Al Swift of northwest Washington state. Swift has never held hearings on the ballot access bill which was introduced by John Conyers in the last three Congresses, under the excuse that he didn't have time, and furthermore that many members of Congress are reluctant to lessen the authority of state legislatures. That latter excuse does not apply to the Penny debate bill, since states have no jurisdiction over presidential debates.

It is American political dogma that free competition between ideas is valuable. HR 791, titled the "Democracy in Debates Bill", clearly enhances that ideal. It will be interesting to learn what arguments will be raised against the bill. The text of Congressman Penny's remarks about the bill and the bill itself will be in the next issue.

CONGRESSIONAL BALLOT ACCESS BILL

There are some indications that Congressman John Conyers of Michigan will again introduce the ballot access reform bill, which he introduced in 1985, 1987 and 1989. Just in case he doesn't, the Rainbow Lobby has been working to get Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy II of Boston, Massachusetts to promise to introduce the bill, if Conyers doesn't. It would be fitting for a Massachusetts member of Congress to introduce the bill, since the voters of Massachusetts voted in favor of easier ballot access last November.

WYOMING BILL PASSES SENATE

Senate File 118, the ballot access improvement bill, passed the Wyoming State Senate on January 29. The vote was 29-1. The bill makes many other unrelated election law changes as well, and is sponsored by the Secretary of State.

The improvements in ballot access are: (1) the petition to qualify a new party is lowered from 8,000 signatures to 1,000 signatures; (2) the petition to qualify an independent statewide candidate is lowered from 5% of the last vote for Congress (which happens to also be about 8,000 signatures) to 1,000 signatures; (3) the vote requirement for a party to remain qualified is lowered from 10% for Congress, to 3% for any statewide race. In addition, the bill provides that small qualified parties should nominate by convention rather than by primary.

The bill will be heard in the House Corporations Committee in mid-February.

GEORGIA BILL PASSES SENATE

Senate Bill 25 passed the Georgia State Senate on January 28. It lowers the third party and independent statewide petition from 1% of the number of registered voters, to a flat 15,000 signatures. It also lowers the petition requirement for third party and independent candidates for district and county office from 5% to 2.5% of registered voters. Finally, it provides that a statewide third party is free to nominate candidates for district office without further petitioning. The same bill passed the Georgia State Senate last year but failed in the House.

Representative Bob Holmes has introduced the same bill in the House, where it is HB 197. However, the House bill has not made any progress yet.

VIRGINIA WRITE-IN BILL LOSES

On February 1, Virginia House Bill 1296 was defeated in the House Privileges & Elections Committee. It would have authorized write-in space on November ballots for president. Virginia permits write-ins for all office in the general election, except for president. The bill had been introduced by Delegate Alan Mayer, a Democrat.

The bill had previously passed a Subcommittee unanimously. It failed in the full committee because the Chairman of the State Election Board, Michael Brown, opposed it, even though the Virginia Constitution states "In elections other than primary elections, provision shall be made whereby votes may be cast for persons other than the listed candidates or nominees." Brown claims that this part of the Constitution only applies to election for state office, not federal office, since the Virginia Constitution doesn't mention anything about federal office. However, this position is inconsistent with practice, since Virginia does permit write-in votes for Congress.

The author of the bill plans to obtain a formal opinion from the Virginia Attorney General, interpreting the Virginia Constitution. However, since the Virginia legislature adjourns at the end of February, no further action will be taken on the issue this year.

MAINE LIBERTARIANS QUALIFY

On January 18, the Libertarian Party of Maine gained legal status as a political party by invoking a little-used provision of the Maine election law. Maine defines a political party to be an organization which either submits a petition signed by 5% of the last vote cast, or which polled at least 5% of the vote for Governor. However, the law also states that if an independent candidate for Governor or President polls at least 5% of the vote, he or she can "award" those votes to a previously unqualified political party, even if the independent candidate had not listed himself or herself on the ballot as the candidate of that group, and even if the candidate hadn't campaigned as the candidate of that group.

Independent gubernatorial candidate Andrew Adam, who polled 9.3% of the vote last November, awarded his votes to the Libertarian Party last month and also joined the party. Adam told the press he agrees with 80% of the Libertarian platform. The Maine law has existed since 1976. The only other time it was used was after the 1978 gubernatorial election, when an independent candidate also obtained over 5% of the vote, and awarded his votes to the planned Constitution Party, which was being organized by former Governor Meldrim Thomson of New Hampshire. However, in that instance, Thomson dropped his plans to organize the Constitution Party, and it never appeared on the ballot in Maine or in any other state.

The Maine Libertarian Party still faces the task of organizing a town committee in at least one town in each of the state's 16 counties, before the spring of 1992. Assuming this task is completed, Maine elections officials will hold a Libertarian Party primary in June, 1992, the first time a third party has held full party status in Maine since 1918.

GOOD BILLS INTRODUCED

1. Arizona State Senator James Sossaman, a Republican, introduced SB 1080 on January 30. It lowers the petition needed to qualify a new party from 2% of the last vote cast, to a flat 5,000 signatures. It also makes it somewhat easier for a party to retain status. It will have its first hearing in the Judiciary Committee in mid-February.

2. Hawaii Representative Mike O'Kieffe, a Democrat, introduced HB 317 on January 28. It would authorize write-in space on Hawaii ballots. Senator Tony Chang, also a Democrat, plans to introduce the same bill in the Senate.

3. Illinois Representative Thomas J. Homer, a Democrat, has introduced HB 33 to move the date of the Illinois primary for all office other than president from March to September (the presidential primary would remain in March). If the bill were enacted, the deadline for independent candidates (for office other than president) would automatically change from December of the year before the election, to June of the election year, a substantial improvement. Illinois now has the earliest deadline of any state, for non-presidential independent candidates.

3. Kansas Senator Don Sallee, a Republican, introduced SB 97 on January 31. It would lower the number of signatures needed to qualify a new party from 2% of the last vote cast, to a flat 1,000 signatures. It has been referred to the Elections Committee.

4. New York Assemblywoman Helene Weinstein, a Democrat, introduced AB 3117 on February 5. It would provide that the election code provisions on ballot access should be liberally construed by the courts, so that candidates should not be removed from the ballot for miniscule technical errors in their petitions. The same bill passed the Assembly last year but was defeated in the State Senate.

4. North Dakota Senator Wayne Stenehjem, a Republican, introduced SB 2391 on January 21. It would provide that elections officials should count and tally write-in totals for presidential candidates who file a declaration of candidacy to be write-in candidates at the November election. It has a hearing in the Political Subdivisions Committee on February 8.

5. West Virginia Senator John D. Holloway, a Democrat, introduced SB 147 on January 22. It would provide that elections officials should count and tally write-in totals for candidates who file a declaration of candidacy to be write-in candidates at the November election. It has been referred to the Government Organization Committee.

N.O.W. HEARING POSTPONED

The Commission for Responsive Democracy, established by the National Organization for Women to explore the idea of establishing a new political party, has had to postpone its Los Angeles hearing, which had been set for February 8-9. Many members of the Commission have been engaged in political activity in response to the war in Iraq, and were unable to appear at the Los Angeles hearing. No new date has been set yet.

BAD ARIZONA BILL INTRODUCED

Arizona State Senator Alan Stephens, a Democrat, introduced SB 1075 on January 30. It would double the number of signatures needed to qualify an independent candidate for the ballot, from 1% of the last vote, to 2%. It will receive a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee in the second half of February. Arizona already requires an independent candidate to collect all of his signatures in only 10 days, and does not permit voters who voted in the primary to sign the petitions. The existing law requires over 10,000 signatures. No statewide independent candidates qualified in Arizona in either 1988 or 1990. If the bill passes, it will be almost impossible for statewide independent candidates to get on the ballot. Please write Senator David Bartlett, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, State Capitol, Phoenix, Az. 85007, and ask him to oppose the bill. Don't feel you need to be a resident of Arizona in order to write. The ballot access laws of all the states have an impact on every voter in the U.S., particularly in presidential elections.

DUAL NOMINATIONS ISSUE IN COURT

On January 25, there was a hearing in the 7th circuit in *Swamp v Kennedy,* the case challenging a Wisconsin law which forbids a political party to nominate anyone who is the nominee of any other political party. The judges on the panel were Daniel A. Manion and Michael S. Kanne, Reagan appointees, and Thomas E. Fairchild, a Johnson appointee. Fairchild has a somewhat unfavorable record in ballot access cases, and Manion and Kanne have never before had a ballot access or a political party rights case.

At the hearing, Judge Manion showed by his questions that he is familiar with New York election law, which permits political parties to jointly nominate the same candidate. Judge Fairchild also showed that he is familiar with the idea, which was once partially permitted in Wisconsin. These two judges seemed to feel that the state hadn't presented any compelling reasons for banning the practice. However, the odds that the Wisconsin law might be struck down still seem remote, since there are no precedents directly on point which would support a ruling that the Wisconsin law is unconstitutional. Also, the vast majority of states do not permit political parties to jointly nominate candidates. The attorney for the Labor-Farm Party argued that the freedom of association part of the First Amendment protects a political party's right to nominate a candidate, even if that candidate is already the nominee (or soon may be) of another party.

PHILLIPS CALLS FOR NEW PARTY

Howard Phillips, head of the Conservative Caucus and the U.S. Taxpayers Alliance, has sent a mass mailing to people on his mailing lists, announcing the formation of a new party called the U.S. Taxpayers Party. Phillips is a former assistant to the chairman of the Republican National Committee and was President Nixon's first director of the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity. The address of the proposed party is 450 Maple Ave., East, Vienna, Va. 22180.

INDIANA VOTER LIST LAWSUIT

On December 28, 1990, the Libertarian and New Alliance Parties of Indiana filed a lawsuit in federal court against Indiana elections officials, in order to obtain a copy of the list of registered voters. Indiana provides this list free to the qualified parties, but not to any other political parties. There are no qualified parties in Indiana, other than the Democratic and Republican Parties. The lawsuit is likely to win, since in 1970 the U.S. Supreme Court summarily affirmed a similar ruling from New York. The Indiana case is *Libertarian Party of Indiana v Marion County,* no. IP-2240-C, Southern District, Indianapolis Division.

SOUTH CAROLINA ATHEIST LAWSUIT

On January 4, 1991, U.S. District Judge David C. Norton reiterated his earlier ruling, that Herb Silverman's lawsuit should be dismissed because it isn't ripe. Silverman is challenging the South Carolina Constitutional provision which bars atheists from holding the office of Governor. Silverman, an atheist, was a write-in candidate for Governor in November 1990 and had filed a lawsuit against that part of his state's Constitution, but the judge said the chances that Silverman would win the election were so remote, no actual case or controversy existed and the case was dismissed. Silverman has appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals, where the case is *Silverman v Ellisor,* no. 91-1022.

TENNESSEE POLL LIMIT THROWN OUT

On October 1, 1990, the Tennessee Supreme Court invalidated a Tennessee election law which mandates that no political activity take place within 100 feet of a polling place. The vote was 4-1. *Freeman v Burson,* no. 89-46-I. The court said that no political activity should be allowed *inside* the polling place, but said there was no compelling governmental interest in preventing it outside. Over the past few years, other state and federal courts have also struck down bans on political activity outside polling places. The Tennessee Attorney General has appealed the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court, where it is number 90-1056. The U.S. Supreme Court has not yet said whether it will hear the appeal. Third party and independent candidates have in recent years learned that petitioning outside polling places, at primary elections, is a good place in which to petition, since everyone standing in line outside the polling place is inevitably a registered voter.

9TH CIRCUIT GRANTS REHEARING IN BALLOT PAMPHLET CASE

On January 30, the 9th circuit granted a rehearing in *Geary v Renne II,* the California case over whether a candidate for non-partisan office may mention that he or she has been endorsed by a political party, in the candidate's statement in the government-printed Voters' Handbook. The original 9th circuit panel had ruled that the government may censor this information from the Handbook. The rehearing will require the convening of a special, eleven-judge hearing to reconsider the matter.

POLITICAL PARTY RIGHTS

1. On January 23, the Libertarian Party of California filed its appeal brief with the 9th circuit in *Lightfoot v Eu,* the case over whether the party has the right to set its own rules concerning nomination of candidates.

2. On August 20, 1990, a three-judge U.S. District Court in Alabama issued a disturbing ruling which forbad the Alabama Democratic Party from changing the way members of the State Democratic Executive Committee and members of 47 of the 67 county Democratic Executive Committees are selected, until the party clears the changes with the U.S. Department of Justice. *Hawthorne v Baker,* 750 F Supp 1090 (1990).

The Voting Rights Act, which has existed since 1965, has always been used by the federal government to control whether or not a state or local government (in certain states) may change its election laws, but in this decision, the act was interpreted to also control whether a political party may change its own rules. The Alabama Democratic Party attorneys do not seem to have argued that the First Amendment protects the party's right to set its own rules, free from federal government interference. Instead, they seem merely to have argued that Congress never intended the Voting Rights Act to cover the actions of political parties. However, the judges disagreed with this argument. No appeal is planned. No one alleged that the changes proposed by the Democratic Party were discriminatory. The three judges in the case were Frank M. Johnson, Myron H. Thompson, and Truman M. Hobbs, all appointees of Democratic presidents.

SWP ON BALLOT FOR CHICAGO MAYOR

The Socialist Workers Party successfully petitioned for a place on the ballot in the April, 1991 Mayoralty election in Chicago. 25,000 signatures were required. This is the largest petition hurdle that the Socialist Workers Party has overcome since 1986. The SWP candidate, James Mac Warren, will be facing a Democrat, a Republican, a candidate of the Illinois Solidarity Party, and perhaps a candidate of the Harold Washington Party.

FEC AGAIN WARNS OF $ SHORTFALL

The Federal Election Commission has issued a warning about a shortfall in public funds available for presidential candidates. It is now estimated that the Presidential Campaign fund will be short $15,000,000 in 1992, since so few taxpayers have been authorizing $1 of their taxes to go into the fund. The FEC predicts that the Treasury will fund the general election campaign fully, but will make up the shortage during the primary season.

PRESIDENTIAL CONVENTIONS SET

The Jan. 14 *B.A.N.* printed the dates of some presidential nominating conventions. An addition to the list is the Populist Party, which holds its presidential convention in September 1991. The city hasn't been chosen yet. Also, the listing erroneously stated that the American Party meets in June, 1991. It will be in December, 1991.

RECENT ELECTIONS

1. On January 8, a special election was held to elect a State Senator in California's Fifth District. Libertarian Tom Tryon polled 5.1% of the vote against Democratic and Republican opponents. The Libertarian Party had never before contested this seat, and was disappointed in the showing, since its candidate is an incumbent County Supervisor and is well-known in the district (in November 1990, Libertarian candidates for the California State Senate received 4.8% of the vote in the districts in which they ran against both a Republican and a Democrat).

2. On January 19, two Texas Libertarians ran in a non-partisan election for seats on the San Antonio River Authority. Otis Walker was elected from Goliad County, defeating two opponents. All three candidates in his race were write-in candidates; Walker won with 78 votes, whereas his opponents received 70 and 42 votes. The other Libertarian, Roger Gary, in Bexar County, was declared the winner on election night by 1,104 to 1,101, but a recount subtracted ten votes from Gary's total, so he lost.

FAVORABLE KANSAS RULING

On January 31, the Kansas Secretary of State re-interpreted the election law which governs how a political party may retain its status. He ruled that if any statewide candidate of the party polls as much as 1% of the vote, the party retains its position on the ballot. Previously he had ruled that all of the party's statewide candidates must poll 1%. The law itself is very difficult to interpret, but the new, favorable interpretation conforms to legislative intent.

WRITE-IN CANDIDATE SUES

Gary Robinson, a write-in candidate for Pennsylvania State Senate in the November 1990 election, has filed a lawsuit in state court against local elections officials for failing to mention how to cast a write-in vote, in their official instructions to voters. *Robinson v County of Montgomery,* no. 90-20767. He seeks a court order requiring that write-in instructions be included in the future.

SUPREME COURT HEARING ANNOUNCED

The U.S. Supreme Court clerk has indicated that the hearing in *Geary v Renne I,* the case over whether a state may forbid a political party from endorsing, supporting or opposing a candidate for non-partisan office, will be sometime in April, 1991. The Democratic and Libertarian Parties have filed an *amicus* brief in the case.

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1992 PETITIONING

STATE	REQUIREMENTS		SIGNATURES COLLECTED				DEADLINES	
	FULL PARTY	CAND.	LIBT	NAP	GREEN	WKR WLD	PARTY	CAND.
Alabama	12,157	5,000	13,000	2,700	0	0	law void	Aug 31
Alaska	2,035	2,035	0	0	already on	0	Aug 5	Aug 5
Arizona	21,109	10,555	*2,000	0	0	0	May 16	Sep 18
Arkansas	20,890	0	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	May 5?	Sep 1
California	(reg) 79,188	134,781	already on	0	*13,000	0	Dec 31, 91	Aug 7
Colorado	no procedure	5,000	0	0	0	0	–	Aug 4
Connecticut	no procedure	14,620	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	–	Aug 7
Delaware	(reg.) 145	(es) 2,900	already on	(es) 130	0	0	Aug 22	Aug 15
D.C.	no procedure	(es) 2,600	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	–	Aug 18
Florida	180,935	60,312	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	Jul 14	Jul 15
Georgia	26,955	27,009	already on	can't start	can't start	can't start	Aug 4	Aug 4
Hawaii	4,534	4,177	already on	0	1,000	0	Apr 22	Sep 4
Idaho	8,180	4,090	already on	can't start	can't start	can't start	Aug 31	Aug 25
Illinois	no procedure	25,000	can't start	already on	can't start	can't start	–	Aug 3
Indiana	no procedure	29,890	0	0	0	0	–	Jul 15
Iowa	no procedure	1,000	0	0	0	0	–	Aug 14
Kansas	15,661	5,000	already on	0	0	0	Apr 11	Aug 4
Kentucky	no procedure	5,000	0	0	0	0	–	Aug 27
Louisiana	(reg) 110,000	0	approx 150	0	0	0	Jun 30	Sep 1
Maine	26,139	4,000	*already on	0	0	0	Dec 12,91	Jun 2
Maryland	10,000	(es) 70,000	*valid 9,000	0	0	0	Aug 3	Aug 3
Massachsts.	no procedure	11,715	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	–	Jul 28
Michigan	25,646	25,646	already on	0	0	already on	Jul 16	Jul 16
Minnesota	92,156	2,000	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	ap. May 1	Sep 15
Mississippi	just be org.	1,000	already on	0	0	0	ap. Apr 1	Sep 4
Missouri	no procedure	20,860	0	0	0	0	–	Aug 3
Montana	9,531	9,531	0	0	0	0	Mar 12	Jul 29
Nebraska	5,834	2,500	100	0	0	0	Aug 1	Aug 25
Nevada	9,392	9,392	already on	0	0	0	Aug 11	Sep 1
New Hamp.	no procedure	3,000	already on	0	0	0	–	Aug 5
New Jersey	no procedure	800	0	0	0	0	–	Jul 27
New Mexico	2,069	20,681	already on	already on	0	already on	Jul 14	Sep 8
New York	no procedure	20,000	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	–	Aug 18
North Carolina	43,601	(es) 65,000	*12,000	0	0	0	in doubt	Jun 26
North Dakota	7,000	4,000	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	Apr 10	Sep 4
Ohio	34,777	5,000	0	0	0	0	Jan 6	Aug 20
Oklahoma	45,566	35,132	0	0	0	0	Jun 1	July 15
Oregon	(es) 36,000	(att.) 1,000	already on	0	0	0	Aug 25	Aug 25
Penn.	no procedure	(es) 27,000	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	–	Aug 1
Rhode Isl.	no procedure	1,000	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	–	in doubt
South Carolina	10,000	10,000	already on	already on	0	0	May 2	Aug 1
South Dakota	6,419	2,568	0	0	0	0	Apr 7	Aug 4
Tennessee	19,759	25	0	0	0	0	ap. May 1	Sep 3
Texas	38,900	54,269	already on	can't start	can't start	can't start	May 25	May 11
Utah	500	300	already on	0	0	0	Mar 16	Sep 1
Vermont	just be org.	1,000	already on	already on	0	0	Sep 17	Sep 17
Virginia	no procedure	(es) 14,500	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	–	Aug 21
Washington	no procedure	200	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	–	Jul 25
West Va.	no procedure	6,534	0	0	0	0	–	Aug 1
Wisconsin	10,000	2,000	already on	can't start	can't start	can't start	Jun 1	Sep 1
Wyoming	8,000	7,903	can't start	can't start	can't start	can't start	May 1	Aug 25

This chart shows petitioning for 1992. LIBT is Libertarian; NAP is New Alliance; WKR WLD is Workers World. Other qualified nationally-organized parties are American in S. C., Prohibition in N. M., and Socialist Workers in N. M. "FULL PARTY REQ." means a procedure by which a new party can qualify itself before it knows who its candidates are. Not every state has such a procedure. "CANDIDATE REQ." means a procedure whereby a petition names a particular presidential candidate (some of these procedures permit a party label, others only the label "Independent"). An asterisk means the entry has changed since the last issue.

ABORTION ISSUE MEETS ELECTION LAW

The abortion issue prompted the Missouri legislature to pass a law in 1986 stating that life begins at conception and that all other state laws be "interpreted and construed to acknowledge on behalf of the unborn child at every state of development, all the rights, privileges, and immunities available to other persons, citizens, and residents of this State". The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the right of the state to have such a law in *Webster v Reproductive Services,* 109 S.Ct. 3040, in 1989.

John Stiles, a Missouri resident who was born in 1967 and conceived in 1966, filed a lawsuit in federal court to require the state to let him run for the legislature at the 1990 election. Missouri's constitution requires that legislators must be at least 24 years of age. Stiles would have met the age requirement if his age were calculated from his date of conception, rather than his date of birth. However, he filed his lawsuit in federal court. The U.S. District Court, and the U.S. Court of Appeals, both properly ruled that the issue of Stiles' age is a matter of construing state law, and therefore the case should have been filed in state court (federal courts are forbidden to construe, or interpret, state laws). *Stiles v Blunt,* 912 F 2d 260 (1990). The judges also ruled that nothing in the U.S. Constitution forbids Missouri from requiring legislators to be at least age 24.

COFOE POSTPONES TAXPAYER DECISION

The U.S. Taxpayers Alliance, which is headed by conservative activist Howard Phillips, applied for organizational membership in the Coalition for Free and Open Elections in December. Organizational membership in COFOE is $100 per year and entitles the organization to name a representative to the national COFOE board. The Board considered the application at its Feb. 3 meeting, but postponed a decision because Board members felt they needed to know more about the Taxpayers Alliance. The next meeting will be March 17.

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BALLOT ACCESS GROUPS

1. **ACLU**, American Civil Liberties Union, has been for fair ballot access ever since 1940, when it recommended that requirements be no greater than of one-tenth of 1%. 132 W. 43rd St., New York NY 10036, (212) 944-9800.

2. **COFOE**, the Coalition for Free and Open Elections. Dues of $10 entitles one to membership with no expiration date; this also includes a one-year subscription to *Ballot Access News* (or a one-year renewal). Address: Box 355, Old Chelsea Sta., New York NY 10011. Membership applications can also be sent to 3201 Baker St., San Francisco Ca 94123.

3. **COALITION TO END THE PERMANENT CONGRESS**, formed in 1988 to work for reforms to make congressional elections more competitive, has a 9-point platform which includes easier ballot access for independent and minor party candidates. P.O. Box 7309, North Kansas City, Mo. 64116. Membership is $25 per year.

4. **FOUNDATION FOR FREE CAMPAIGNS & ELECTIONS**, has non-profit status from the IRS. Consequently, it cannot lobby, but deductions to it are tax-deductible. The Foundation was organized to fund lawsuits which attack restrictive ballot access laws. 7404 Estaban Dr., Springfield VA 22151, tel. (703) 569-6782.

5. **PROJECT 51-'92**, a Libertarian PAC, actively assists lobbying efforts in state legislatures (as well as organizing support for Libertarian petition drives). Contact Andre Marrou, 5143 Blanton Dr., Las Vegas Nv 89122, tel. (702) 435-3218.

6. **RAINBOW LOBBY**, organized in 1985, initiated the Conyers ballot access bill in Congress and maintains a lobbying office at 1660 L St., N.W., Suite 204, Washington, D.C. 20036, tel. (202) 457-0700. It also works on other issues relating to free elections.

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