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I am writing in support of LD 1121, An Act to Create an Open and Streamlined Primary System. All people who have rightfully registered to vote should have the opportunity to vote in Primary elections. Under the current system any voter who isn't a member of one of the two major political parties is essentially disenfranchised and doesn't have the right to vote for a future political leader. Yet those same voters support the two major parties through their tax dollars. We taxpayers pay the costs of holding primaries – from paying state and local officials to maintaining voting machines – through state tax dollars. The question becomes why should registered voters be prohibited from voting in elections that they are paying for through tax dollars simply because the voters have not joined a major political party? The answer is that they should have the same ability to vote in Primaries that enrolled voters have.

Do not take this to mean that I would support a semi-open Primary system. Generally speaking, partisan primaries are designed to advance the interests of political parties. They do nothing to advance the quality of our democracy. To the contrary, partisan primaries inhibit the participation of candidates who do not affiliate with a political party. Throughout the election process including the Primaries, all registered voters should have the opportunity to vote for the candidate they believe has the best ability to govern. That candidate may not be a member of a political party.

Most voters who do not enroll in a party do not want to be “pigeon-holed” into registering in a political party in order to vote; nor do they want to be limited to the choices on that party's ballot. Rather, they would prefer to vote for candidates regardless of party affiliation, candidates who best represent their values and beliefs and have the best ability to govern. Please support LD 1121, An Act to Create an Open and Streamlined Primary System. Thank you.