

January 22, 2026

To the People of Oklahoma,

Under Oklahoma's primary election system today, Democratic voters pick Democratic nominees in party primaries, Republican voters pick Republican nominees in party primaries, and Libertarian voters pick Libertarian nominees in party primaries. The three parties' candidates then face off in the November general election along with any Independent candidates who file.

But State Question 836 would end this system. Instead, all Oklahoma candidates for an office—Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, and Independents—would be placed on a single “jungle primary” ballot. All voters would participate in that single election, and the two candidates receiving the most votes, regardless of party, would proceed to the general-election ballot.

That would mirror California elections.

We, the undersigned, strongly oppose that proposal.

First, SQ 836 is not what its proponents claim. This is not an “open primary” where you get to pick which party primary you participate in each cycle. Further, SQ 836 will likely reduce voter participation in Oklahoma. Average voter turnout in California's primary elections is actually *lower* today than it was before the adoption of that state's chaotic SQ 836-style system. Finally, the system does not produce “moderate” candidates but instead helps candidates advance to the November ballot by appealing to fringe voters during the multi-candidate first round of voting, as can be seen by the results of California elections.

Second, the practical effect of SQ 836 is to limit voter choices. Under SQ 836, there is virtually no chance any Libertarian or Independent candidates will ever be placed on a November general-election ballot in a competitive race. And, in many cases, SQ 836 would limit voter choice in November to two members of the same political party, as happens routinely in California in state and federal elections.

Third, SQ 836 will produce absurd outcomes in defiance of voter preferences. Had SQ 836 been in place in 2018, Oklahomans would have had to choose between two Democrats for governor that November, because the Republican vote was split among 10 candidates in the primary. Thus, even though 452,606 Oklahomans cast a vote for a Republican gubernatorial candidate compared to just 395,494 for a Democrat, the 2018 general election would have involved only two Democratic candidates.

SQ 836 is bad policy and bad for Oklahoma. When asked to sign a petition to place SQ 836 on the ballot, we urge voters to say, “No!”

Respectfully submitted by the undersigned members of the Oklahoma Legislature:



Representative Kyle Hilbert
Oklahoma Speaker of the House



Senator Lonnie Paxton
Oklahoma Senate President Pro Tempore

Oklahoma House of Representatives

Representative Eddy Dempsey
District 1

Representative Jim Olsen
District 2

Representative Bob Culver
District 4

Representative Josh West
District 5

Representative Rusty Cornwell
District 6

Representative Steve Bashore
District 7

Representative Mark Lepak
District 9

Representative John Kane
District 11

Representative Mark Chapman
District 12

Representative Neil Hays
District 13

Representative Chris Sneed
District 14

Representative Tim Turner
District 15

Representative Scott Fetgatter
District 16

Representative Jim Grego
District 17

Representative David Smith
District 18

Representative Justin Humphrey
District 19

Representative Jonathan Wilk
District 20

Representative Cody Maynard
District 21

Representative Ryan Eaves
District 22

Representative Derrick Hildebrant
District 23

Oklahoma Senate

Senator Micheal Bergstrom
District 1

Senator Ally Seifried
District 2

Senator Julie McIntosh
District 3

Senator Tom Woods
District 4

Senator George Burns
District 5

Senator David Bullard
District 6

Senator Warren Hamilton
District 7

Senator Bryan Logan
District 8

Senator Avery Frix
District 9

Senator Bill Coleman
District 10

Senator Todd Gollihare
District 12

Senator Jonathan Wingard
District 13

Senator Jerry Alvord
District 14

Senator Lisa Standridge
District 15

Senator Shane Jett
District 17

Senator Jack Stewart
District 18

Senator Roland Pederson
District 19

Senator Chuck Hall
District 20

Senator Randy Grellner
District 21

Senator Kristen Thompson
District 22

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District 25

Representative Dell Kerbs
District 26

Representative Danny Sterling
District 27

Representative Danny Williams
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Representative Mark Lawson
District 30

Representative Collin Duel
District 31

Representative Jim Shaw
District 32

Representative Molly Jenkins
District 33

Representative John George
District 36

Representative Ken Luttrell
District 37

Representative John Pfeiffer
District 38

Representative Erick Harris
District 39

Representative Chad Caldwell
District 40

Representative Denise Crosswhite Hader
District 41

Representative Cynthia Roe
District 42

Representative Jay Steagall
District 43

Representative Brian Hill
District 47

Representative Tammy Townley
District 48

Representative Josh Cantrell
District 49

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Senator Brian Guthrie
District 25

Senator Casey Murdock
District 27

Senator Grant Green
District 28

Senator Julie Daniels
District 29

Senator Spencer Kern
District 31

Senator Dusty Deevers
District 32

Senator Christi Gillespie
District 33

Senator Dana Prieto
District 34

Senator John Haste
District 36

Senator Aaron Reinhardt
District 37

Senator Brent Howard
District 38

Senator Dave Rader
District 39

Senator Adam Pugh
District 41

Senator Brenda Stanley
District 42

Senator Kendal Sacchieri
District 43

Senator Paul Rosino
District 45

Senator Kelly Hines
District 47

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Representative Jason Blair
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Representative Kevin West
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Representative Nick Archer
District 55

Representative Dick Lowe
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Representative Anthony Moore
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Representative Carl Newton
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Representative Mike Dobrinski
District 59

Representative Mike Kelley
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Representative Kenton Patzkowsky
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Representative Trey Caldwell
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Representative Toni Hasenbeck
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Representative Clay Staires
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Representative Rob Hall
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Representative Mike Lay
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Representative Mark Tedford
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Representative Kevin Norwood
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Representative T.J. Marti
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Representative Mike Osburn
District 81

Representative Nicole Miller
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Representative Eric Roberts
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Representative Tammy West
District 84

Representative David Hardin
District 86

Representative Emily Gise
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Representative Max Wolfley
District 95

Representative Preston Stinson
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Representative Gabe Woolley
District 98

Representative Marilyn Stark
District 100

Representative Robert Manger
District 101