

HB 200 Open Primary Support Letters

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Dear Representative LeDoux,

We have a duty to continue to enhance our democracy. To me, this translates to better access to the polls and more candidates seeking to run for office.

Simply put, the current system of partisan primaries do nothing to advance the quality of our democracy. To the contrary, they inhibit the participation of candidates while also reducing voter turnout.

Partisan primaries are designed to advance the interests of political parties. The polarization this creates does not reflect the views of most of the electorate. In fact, it is the main reason our politics have devolved into gridlock, an “us vs. them” mentality that is destroying our democracy, state and country. As a result, voters become alienated and participation decreases, allowing for more polarization, gridlock and a perpetuating feedback cycle that spirals democracy downwards.

Independent voters represent an ever-increasing portion of the electorate. In Alaska, more than 50% of the electorate is not aligned with a party, yet our primaries are partisan and closed. This non-affiliation trend will accelerate as younger citizens register. In fact, less than half of all millennials choose to affiliate with a party.

We must institute a system that rewards dialogue, coalition-building and problem solving, one that encourages more people to participate both as candidates and as voters. We deserve a democracy that rewards candidates who appeal to the mainstream rather than the fringes.

There is objective proof that open primaries can solve these problems. I support HB200, applaud the leadership of Rep. LeDoux for introducing it and encourage the state legislature to pass it into law.

Thank you,

Matt Rafferty

1826 E 27th Avenue

Anchorage, AK 99508

I support HB200.

Alaska does not have a financial problem, nor does it have an oil price problem. Alaska does not even have an oil rate problem. What Alaska has is a governance problem, and this governance problem has allowed all these other concerns to become crisis.

This governance problem is a result of partisan politics which have not only caused legislative gridlock for the past two sessions, but have disallowed the legislature from addressing the greatest threat to Alaska's future, an economy that is nearly entirely reliant on oil, a cyclic and declining resource.

Currently, the major parties have separate party primaries. The candidates that advance in these primaries are encouraged to drive a hard-partisan line as that is the voter base that will place them in the general election. It is clear however, that these candidates do not represent most Alaskans as less than half of the registered voters are affiliated with a party. Consistently falling primary and general election voter turnout, 15% and 50% in the 2016 election respectively, is not the sign of a healthy democracy, and is leading to more and more partisanship in our elected government. This partisanship is clearly taking its toll on the effectiveness of Juneau to make the tough decisions that will set Alaska up for success.

HB200 looks to address this governance problem by disrupting the primary election structure and opening the primaries up to all registered voters in a top two primary. This will force anyone who wishes to advance through the primary election to appeal to the majority of voters, removing the large partisanship divides we currently see in the legislature.

Justin Hickel
justin.hickel@gmail.com

Representative LeDoux,

Thank you for sponsoring this bill promoting open primaries. The following is a letter I have written in support of HB 200 and open primaries in general:

I am writing this letter in support of HB 200: Nonpartisan Open Primary Elections. National politics are becoming increasingly divisive; and despite record low approval ratings for congress, the majority of the members of the House and Senate will keep their jobs. As voters we are often faced with two diametrically opposed options, and must choose between the lesser of two evils; which can be particularly vexing to voters in the middle who believe that both parties have something to offer. This is in large part due to a primary system that ensures that the most extreme voices are the loudest and clearest in determining who is selected. These “base” voters along with a few big money interests have overwhelming influence over our political choices.

To change to an open primary system would give a much greater voice to those of us in the “Silent Majority”. We are the moderates who may lean left or right, but don’t consider compromise with the other side to be a mortal sin. Politicians who can be held accountable to a greater majority of the people, rather than a small but vocal radical fringe element will be allowed greater freedom to actually address our national problems rather than continue to waste time with political posturing and legislation they know to be detrimental to the country.

Please do your part to bring about stability to our democracy by giving us better political options. Please support HB200.

Sincerely,

Matt Coates, CPA

Re: I urge you to support HB 200

Dear Gabrielle LeDoux,

I am writing to express my support for the open primary bill HB 200 by Representative LeDoux. Since its founding, Alaska had an open primary. But it was taken away from us by a court ruling. That means that Alaskans can no longer vote for whoever they want in the primary. We have to pick a party ballot. Worse yet, these elections are paid for by the taxpayers. Segregating voters in public elections is wrong. Alaska is facing huge problems. We need big solutions. "Partisan politics as usual" is not going to get the job done. Bringing back an open primary would change all of that. It would give the people of Alaska the voice they need to make real change. I urge you to support HB 200 for the open primary. It's time to return voter freedom. Let all voters vote for whoever they want, in every round of the election. Thank you,

Sincerely,
Vickie Holloway
indigomoon1224@yahoo.com

173 A
JBER, AK 99505
Constituent



April 10, 2017

The Honorable Matt Claman
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK

Dear Chairman Claman,

As your committee and the Alaska Legislature considers HB 200 (LeDoux), I strongly encourage you to keep in mind the beneficial impact of a similar reform in California.

California voters in 2010 enacted a “top-two” open primary system that has provided greater choice to voters, improved the relationship between voters and candidates, and encouraged incumbents to represent all of the voters in their districts and not just those from one political party.

As partisan gridlock hardened in the early 2000s, California Forward was charted as a bipartisan effort to identify and promote political, fiscal and other governance reforms that would ease the gridlock, encourage fiscal responsibility and improve results and accountability.

Many of the volunteer leaders and professional staff involved with CA Fwd from the start had decades of experience in and around the Legislature and the political process. After additional research, consultation and public engagement, CA Fwd identified several reforms that we believed would empower voters and encourage elected leaders across the political spectrum to work together to find compromises.

Restoring a top-two primary was made a priority, along with citizens redistricting to reduce gerrymandered districts and term limit reform to enable officials to serve their allotted time in the same position. Voters embraced all three of these reforms through a series of ballot measures.

While partisan leaders opposed citizens redistricting and top-two primaries, many current members of the Legislature believe they are operating under a better set of rules – ones that allow them to represent a broader range of voter concerns and even make a case to their own leaders why they must compromise to keep faith with the voters who elected them.

While there is still debate among pundits and political consultants, with each election it is becoming more clear that voters are the real winners.

California voters are benefiting from more vigorous debates leading up to primaries and general elections. Their vote – their voice – is not diminished because they are among the minority party in their district. And their vote is not diminished if they are among the rapidly growing numbers of Californians who choose not to join a political party.

In the November 2016 election, 15 of the 80 races for the California Assembly had candidates of the same party in the general election. Five of the 20 Senate races on that ballot featured candidates of the same party.

In most of those cases, under a closed primary system, the decision would have effectively been made at the June primary. But instead, those campaigns were vigorous through the fall, often grappling with difficult policy challenges of economic prosperity, environmental sustainability and social equity.

Voters in the political minority in their community may not have a member from their party on the general election ballot, but they almost always have a viable candidate in the runoff who is actively working to earn their vote and represent their interests in the capitol.

In turn, third-party advocates have complained that they are no longer guaranteed a candidate in the general election. But no party is guaranteed a candidate in the general election. And all parties are guaranteed a spot on the general election ballot if their candidate gets at least enough votes to come in second in the primary.

Finally some observers suggest the top-two primary results in more “moderate” lawmakers; in some cases that is true, usually when those moderate views reflect the voters in their district. But the more dominant factor is that the process produces lawmakers who must work to represent a solid majority of all of the voters in their district, not just those who are going to vote in a primary.

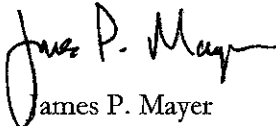
To be sure, this reform is not a bromide for all that ails our political system. And political process reforms alone will not eliminate difficult tradeoffs. Philosophical differences among the electorate will naturally produce disagreements among their representatives.

But in California, we have been pursuing strategic incremental changes with the potential to improve the relationship between voters and their representatives, as well as reforms that will help lawmakers with different political philosophies find common ground.

We have been so inspired by the pioneering work in other states that earlier this year CA Fwd convened public officials and reformers from across the nation to begin sharing ideas and lessons with the hope of learning from each other in an event titled the 50 State Solution.

It is in that spirit that CA Fwd humbly offers this brief assessment of our primary process reforms and encourages you to give serious consideration to similar reforms in Alaska. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information to inform your deliberations.

Sincerely,


James P. Mayer
President & CEO

Dear Representative,

I am writing to express my support for the open primary bill HB 200 by Representative LeDoux.

Since its founding, Alaska had an open primary. But it was taken away from us by a court ruling.

That means that Alaskans can no longer vote for whoever they want in the primary. We have to pick a party ballot.

Worse yet, these elections are paid for by the taxpayers. Segregating voters in public elections is wrong.

Alaska is facing huge problems. We need big solutions. "Partisan politics as usual" is not going to get the job done.

Bringing back an open primary would change all of that. It would give the people of Alaska the voice they need to make real change.

I urge you to support HB 200 for the open primary. It's time to return voter freedom. Let all voters vote for whoever they want, in every round of the election.

Thank you,

(210 signers from across Alaska)

First Name	Last Name	Address	City	Zip Code
Deirdre	Coval	338 Columbine apt a6	Soldotna	99669
Pat	Irwin	939 Ocean Drive Loop	Homer	99603
Elizabeth	Allen	510 Yak Rd 850-E	Fairbanks	99709
Angela	Ferrari	2426 Lord Baranof Dr	Anchorage	99517
Rosemary	Watabe	558 Ookpik Way	Fairbanks	99709
Paul	Markillie	10037 Cobblers Way	Grand Blanc	48439
Kathy	Ienniger	1291 Ivory Rd	Fairbanks	99709
Laura	Inglima	60210 BEA CREEK Dr	Homer, Ak	99603
Charles	Bingham	405 Marine St Apt No 6	Sitka	99835
Robert	Mikol	PO Box 80106	Fairbanks	99708
Kathleen	Holt	PO Box 794	Kasilof	99610
Carrie	Nash	740 Pelican Way	Fairbanks	99709
Elizabeth	Stewart	2767 John St	Juneau	99801
Scott	Chesney	PO Box 84396	Fairbanks	99708
Guinevere	Boyd	Mi 84 Parks Hwy	Willow	99688

Pamela	Minkemann	4100 Endeavor Circle	Anchorage	99515
Jeff	Huit	8023 Parkridge Cir	Anchorage	99507
Jacklyn	Jennings	1100 E Carney Rd	Wasilla	99654
Jesse	Shayne	22 Park Ave	New York	10016
Jessica	Passini	16307 Copper Mountain Cir	Eagle River	99577
Patricia	Carmichael	1213 Norman St	Anchorage	99504
Laurie	Cartwright	PO Box 283	Talkeetna	99676
Michele	Maley	3390 SW antelope Ave	Redmond	7756
Michael	McCurdy	4685 Sabrina Rd	Homer	99603
Bhree	Roumagoux	7350 Kidron St	Anchorage	99502
Sofia	Petroni	7071 Serenity Cir	Anchorage	99502
Judith	Hannig	353 E 8th Ave Apt 306	North Pole	99705
Cynthia	Reed	5471 Loeta Way	Fairbanks	99712
David	Jamison	3201 E 15th Ave	Anchorage	99508
Bradley	Kloeckl	448 Bonanza	Homer	99603
Jim	Schramek	PO Box 745	Petersburg	99833
Angelika	Fey-Merritt	1600 Beaver Pl	Anchorage	99504
Joel	Symons	7225 Bearfoot Dr	Anchorage	99502
Peter	Branson	PO Box 1259	Wrangell	99929
Dennis	Robinson	PoBox504	Unalaska	99685
Crystal	Brady	9301 Arlene st B4	Anchorage	99502
Allison	Johnson	1046 Dogwood St	fairbanks	99709
MaryLou	Vanderburg	PO Box 685	Valdez	99686
Karen	Harvey	PO Box 41	Talkeetna	99676
Kristin	Worman	2729 E 17th Ave	Anchorage	99508
Lyle	cronk	200 frank sam Dr	northway	99764
Shannon	Cogswell	PO Box 32075	Juneau	99803
Roger	Nilsson	3840 Remington Cir	Anchorage	99507
Jackie	Nelson	HC60 Bx 4180	Delta Jct.	99737
Maryellen	Lambert	6921 E 12th Ave	Anchorage	99504
Martha	Jacobson	PO Box 6113	Ketchikan	99901
Chris	Lyon	PO Box 1193	Delta Junction	99737
Kelly	Bay	PO Box MXY	Glennallen	99588

Marianna	Bartow	3220 Timberline Ct	Ketchikan	99901
Elena	Prisekin	Not telling you the street	Anchorage	99518
Suzanne	Cohen	725 5th St	Juneau	99801
Kim	Smith	PO Box 3235	Homer	99603
Garry	Wallan	7215 E 20th Ave	Anchorage	99504
James	Keegan	4205 Needle Nircle	Anchorage	99508
Rick	Sheppard	8020 Wilcox St	Anchorage	99502
Charmalee	Howard	7800 Ladasa Pl	Anchorage	99507
hans	geier	box 84080	fairbanks	99708
Anne	Faught	9897 Salcha Dr	Salcha	99714
Timothy	Whitesell	PO Box 1683	Cordova	99574
Terrie	Moore	4085 Stillwater Ct	Fairbanks	99709
Emily	Wentzel Walle	508 O'Cain Ave	Sitka	99835
James	Ingersoll	5440 W Placide Cir	Wasilla	99623
Jim	Brown	2675 Porter Pl	Anchorage	99508
Penny	Trow-Foreman	3906 Turnagain Blvd E	Anchorage	99517
Gael	irvine	8220 E Edgerton Parks Rd	Palmer	99645
Ronald	Holmstrom	415 D St	Anchorage	99501
Deborah	Ross	PO Box 19376	Thorne Bay	99919
Carol	Anne	1085 Breckenridge Rd	Fairbanks	99709
Stacey	Fritz	PO Box 84997	Fairbanks	99708
Kalyn	Kratz	4631 Sabrina Rd	Homer	99603
Belinda	Williams	1031 Gilmore Trl	Fairbanks	99712
Mary	Jo Towne	752 Northshore Dr	Wasilla	99654
Brandon	gchachuu	528 N Valley Rd	Anchorage	99504
Danielle	Redmond	1746 Second St	Douglas	99824
Jeremiah	Emmerson	PO Box 3565	Homer	99603
Sheila	Horton	24337 Rambler Rd	Chugiak	99567
linda	rabideau	3226 lake park Cir	anchorage	99517
Joleigh	Rainwater	PO Box 672465	Chugiak	99567
Karla	Hart	4950 Wren Dr	Juneau	99801
Andrea	Bond	6060 Grieme Rd	Salcha	99714
Maria	Horn-Rollins	7333 Linden Dr	Anchorage	99502

Dawn	Webster	5271 S Tennyson Ct	Wasilla	99623
Judith	Murphy	3875 Geist Road E-131	Fairbanks	99709
Cindy	Montgomery	PO Box 672035	chugiak	99567
Neva	Mills	7922 Steese Hwy	Fairbanks	99712
Joni	Bruner	1710 Tammy Ave	Anc	99515
Bonnie	Sutphin	9480 MORNINGSIDE Loop	Anchorage	99515
Jan	Blankenship	401 Angus Way	Juneau	99801
Mike	Notar	9350 Northland St	Juneau	99801
Willow	Tebo	433 E 14th Ave	Anch	99501
Susan	Sommer	711 N Gulkana Ct	Palmer	99645
Kevin	Kincaid	4000 Glacier Hwy	Juneau	99801
Jim	Eastwood	PO Box1185	Petersburg	99833
William	McCormick	1906 Mathies Ct	Jber	99506
Frances	Romick	801 colwell sr	Anchorage	99501
Ron	Baines	PO Box 522	Sitka	99835
Neville	Jacobs	1126 Sixth Ave	Fairbanks	99701
Granny	Robbi Douglass	594 Holiday St	Np	99705
Mark	Miraglia	7000 Tall Spruce Dr	Anchorage	99502
Christina	Jencks	1391 Lucille St	Wasilla	99654
Sal	Jimenez	6206 Prosperity Dr	Anchorage	99504
Joan	Davis	PO Box 2146	Barrow	99723
Mike	yourkowski	3059 kachemak Dr	Homer	99603
Deirdre	Aldridge-Pope	3305 Dorbrandt St	Anchorage	99503
Gary	Stroh	36995 K Bch	Kenai	99611
Chad	Wagner	PO Box 209	Sterling	99672
Dana	Shaultt	PoB 1066	Delta Junction	99737
Martha	Jacobson	PO Box 6113	Ketchikan	99901
Roberta	schowen	PO Box 789	Sterling	99672
Robin	Ouellette	4601 E Shoreline Cir	Wasilla	99654
Ruth	Alvarez	PO Box 3602	Homer	99603
Annette	Owens	PO Box 2823	Palmer	99645
Stephen	Hoffman	PO Box 7064	Ktn	99901
John	Creed	PO Box 1287	Kotzebue	99752

Robert	Burgess	224 Pebble Dr	Ester, AK	99725
Kyla	durhamdurham	PO Box 750754	Fairbanks	99775
Jan	woodruff	Box 117	Eagle	99738
Jo	Swiss	9715 Independence Dr B204	Anchorage	99507
Paul	Forward	107 Lindy Ln	Girdwood	99587
Gina	Creedon	PO Box 15053	Fritz Creek	99603
Katherine	Beatty	415 Willoughby Ave	Juneau	99801
Faith	Moeller	PO Box 1206	Kotzebue	99752
Joseph	Edwards	415 N Bragaw St	Anchorage	99508
Lora	Macauly	36900 ilene Dr	Anchor point	99556
Sean	rich	PO Box 35052	Juneau	99801
Margaret	McKay	10035 Chain of a rock St	Eagle River	99577
Patrick	Williams	164 Syracuse Ct	Fairbanks	99709
Marianna	Macomber	PO Box 4	Seward	99664
Erin	Tilly	3842 Hardluck Dr	Fairbanks	99709
Karen	Karen	4510 Thomas Ct	Homer	99603
Harry	Robinson	3835 Lee Ct	Juneau	99801
Elizabeth	Dennis	1120 N Tina Ln	Palmer	99645
Dave	Turbovsky	PO Box 80250	Fairbanks	99708
John	McIntyre	Box 1794	Bethel	99559
Dana	J Zillyette	2905 Cook Inlet View Dr A4	Kenai	99611
John	M. Ziv III	3239 Hiland Dr	Anchorage	99504
Nina	Lisa Tomlinson	230 S Franklin St	Juneau	99801
Risa	Carlson	PO Box 19185	Thorne Bay	99919
Vj	Coo	1130 Salmon Row #2	Ketchikan	99901
John	Macomber	33964 Tressler	srward	99664
richard	voss	1192 Donna Dr	Fairbanks	99712
Aaryn	Valencia	858 Old Steese Hwy N	Fairbanks	99712
Patricia	Rivera	3140 Moose Mountain Rd	Fairbanks	99709
James	Burnside	17881 E Winterset Dr	Talkeetna	99676
LeRoy.	N Gilkison	401Second Street	Cordova	99574
Jeff	jensen	627 Shelikof	Kodiak	99615
Patrick	Frymark	1631 Madison Dr	Fairbanks	99709

Jonathan	Ross	5424 Wandering Dr	Anchorage	99502
Michael	Stagno	Box 82636	Fairbanks	99708
Roxy	Keene Sanford Mills	135 S Kobuk	Soldotna	99669
Ivan	R. Vail	3051 Murphy Dome Rd	Fairbanks	99709
Shala	Kerrigan	7100 Lake Otis Pkwy Spc 18	Anchorage	99507
Bernard	Miller	3930 W Sullivan Ct	Wasilla	99623
Alicia	Sidebottom	370 Pioneer Pkwy	Palmer	99645
Cheryl	Lovegreen	3343 Seawind Cir	Anchorage	99516
Jacob	Spickelmire	3590 Spinnaker Dr	Anchorage	99516
Laura	Thate	895 W 12th St	Juneau	99801
Pamla	Berry	PO Box 1533	Valdez	99686
Kelly	Sidebottom	Farm Loop	Palmer	99645
melvin	morlen	4033 heath St	homer	99603
Bruno	Bryner	PO Box 247	Willow	99688
Donna	Braendel	PO Box 1148	Chickaloon	99674
Connie	Bennett	PO Box 91458	Anchorage	99509
Stephanie	Cullers	1015 E 20th Ave	Anchorage	99501
Evelyn	DuBois	12830 Gail St	Anchorage	99515
Bret	Burnett	PO Box 35793	Juneau	99803
Paulette	Sortor	PO Box 34	Homer	99603
John	Bennett	1479 Farmers Loop	Fairbanks	99709
Flor	M Banks	4670 Killen Ln	Fairbanks	99709
Lacretia	Ballance	55535 Prevet Ct	Homer	99603
James	Sutton	3157 Bresee St	Juneau	99801
Beth	Antonsen	102 Edgecliff Way	Ketchikan	99901
Emily	Stark	5814 Grand Teton Lp	Anchorage	99502
Kevin	Grein	4101 N Barbara St	Wasilla	99654
Shirley	Schneider	3708 E 68th Ave	Anchorage	99507
Kathy	McAfee-Morey	607 Ponderosa St	Kenai	99611
Steve	Peters	6672 N backroads Cir	wasilla	99645
Tom	Henry	12008 W Skyline Dr	Eagle River	99577
Vickie	Holloway	173 A Sparta Way	Jber	99505
Renee	Oistad	10330 Arborvitae Dr	Anchorage	99507

Douglas	A Wahto	16999 Point Lena Loop Rd	Juneau	99801
Carl	Jennings	PO Box 1178	Kotzebue	99752
Jonathan	Greene	325 mi Mud Bay Rd	Haines	99827
Deborah	Wells	3030 Davis Rd	Fairbanks	99709
Sue	christiansen	Pop box 3	Homer	99603
Cameron	Cowles	1036 Mila St	Anchorage	99504
Aubrey	A. Robison	8507 Sara Lynn Pl	Anchorage	99502
Alfredo	Bolivar	2425 Marian Bay Cir	Anchorage	99515
Shoshanah	Stone	2425 Marian Bay Cir	Anchorage	99515
Katherine	Tatakis	8645 Bell Pl	Anchorage	99507
Penny	Childs	PO Box 879406	Wasilla	99687
Tanya	Holley	9443 La Perouse Ave	Juneau	99801
Warren	Wilhoit	485W Fairview Ave	Homer	99603
Mark	Boberick	138 Baranof Ave	Fairbanks	99701
Casey	duer	5411 trena St	Anchorage	99507
Denise	DeVoll	4447 Four Paws Ln	Fairbanks	99712
Linda	Munns	PO Box 3361	Homer	99603
Grace	P Olrun	PO Box 111064	Anchorage	99511
Evan	Beedle	2221 Muldoon Rd	Anchorage	99504
Ruth	Bueneman	2002 Sandvik St	Fbks	99709
Rory	Spurlock	1501 Columbine St	Anchorage	99508
Sue	Pagenkopf	PO Box 544	Kasilof	99610
Brian	Lowe	107 2nd Ave	Fairbanks	99701
Nina	Faust	Box 2994	Homer	99603
Kathryn	Morgan	2674 Ravensflight Dr	Wasilla	99654
Avery	Reagle	4700 shoshoni Ave	Anchorage	99516
randy	paddock	8001 E 3rd Ave	anchorage	99504
L.	Stover	PO Box 241024	Douglas	99824
Doran	Howell	309 Erskine Avenue Apartment 415	Kodiak	99615
Tena	Brune	2543 Monashka Bay	Kodiak, AK	99615