

State Representative John D. Ragan
119 Morningside Drive
Oak Ridge, TN 37830
16 August 2024
Transmitted via USPS and Electronically

Mr. Scott Golden, Chair
Republican State Executive Committee of Tennessee
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'Tis substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free Government. — George Washington

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter. — Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Mr. Golden:

As a candidate, I am herewith contesting the 1 August 2024 Republican Primary Election for District 33 under Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) Title 2, Chapter 17. I submit this letter as written notice of contest with the Republican State Executive Committee and State Primary Board within the required five days following certification of the election. As further required, the other candidate affected by this contest has been notified herewith.

Specifically, I am alleging that at least the 1,135 voters in the 1 August 2024 Republican Primary Election in District 33 shown on the spreadsheet at attachment 1., do not qualify as “bona fide members of” the Tennessee Republican Party as specified in the T.C.A. and Tennessee Republican Party By-laws, Article IX. Section 1. Moreover, the number of these illegal voters and potentially others are sufficient to set aside the 1 August 2024 Republican Primary Election in District 33.

Consequently, I am humbly requesting the Tennessee State Republican Executive Committee (SEC) and State Primary Board to consider my contest and set aside the 1 August 2024 Republican Primary Election for District 33. Additionally, I lean on the precedent of the Kurita case, cited more fully in attachment 2., when recommending the selection of the nominee for November’s election.

The Tennessee Democrat Party long ago established that their primaries are for their party members only. In the well-known case of then State Senator Rosalind Kurita, the Tennessee Democrat Executive Committee set aside the election of Rosalind Kurita, despite her garnering more votes than opponent Tim Barnes. Barnes contested that Republicans had crossed over and voted Kurita, and the Democrat Party, under its bylaws, named Barnes the candidate.

I have been a supporter of legislation to address this crossover problem, but multiple efforts have failed to get the majority votes necessary in the General Assembly. If we cannot get bills passed to address the issue, then we must address these issues at the party level. I ask that Anderson County's District 33 be the bellwether county among Republicans for this issue.

All of the references to statute in this letter and in attachment 2., make clear that Republican Primary Elections are for the bona fide members of our Republican Party, and no other. These provisions squarely place authority for upholding the rights and expectations regarding ensuring participation by bona fide party members in contested primary elections with respective party's State Executive Committees and State Primary Boards.

Decidedly, an abundance of voter history proof exists that Democrats crossed over to affect this race. In fact, illegal "crossover" voting, based upon objective data analysis, was decisive. In past primary elections, crossovers comprised around 4% - 5%. However, data analyses in the 1 August 11, 2024 District 33 Republican Party Primary indicate more than double, even, more than triple that amount.

The apparent number of unethical crossover votes gives a very obvious indication of blatantly flaunting the integrity of the party primary system and Tennessee law. This immoral and illegal conduct must not be allowed to stand. Supporting my allegations, in addition to information at attachments to this letter, please note the following specifics:

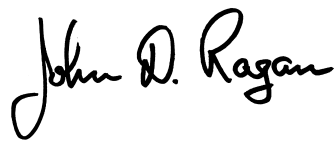
- On election night, my opponent's margin of victory in District 33 was 258 votes out of 5,668 votes cast — 4.6% of the vote.
- Based upon source guidance previously cited and further detailed in attachment 2., the 1,135 votes in District 33 challenged as illegal crossovers constitute 19.6% — outrageously more than triple the usual crossover rate.
- Failing to qualify as a bona fide Republicans by the Republican Party's published definition, voters who had never voted anything but Democrat in any of the last 4 Primary Elections made up 197 of these crossover voters combined with the 94 who had voted Republican once, but voted Democrat in 3 of the last 4 Primary Elections made up 291 (26% of the challenged votes) — alone more than the margin of victory.
- Of the contested votes, 518 (46% of the challenged votes) have only voted once in the last four state-wide Republican primaries and, thus, do not meet the Republican Party's published definition of a bona fide Republican — this figure alone is more than double the margin of victory.
- Not meeting the Party's definition of a bona fide Republican by never having voted during the last four opportunities in a Republican Primary were 617 of these crossover votes (54% which includes the 197 Democrat voters previously cited along with 420 who, despite opportunity, chose not to vote at all in previous Republican Primaries) — yet, again, alone more than double the margin of victory.

Please note that I have enormous respect for our election process, for the voters of Tennessee, our State Executive Committee, and for our Republican Party. It is uncomfortable to file notice

of contest, but I have come to a time for choosing. On behalf of other candidates who have faced similar circumstances, and in defense of future candidates who will invest heart, soul, and resources, this action is necessary to defend the votes of Republicans who are entitled to choose our nominees without interference from non-party-members. Additionally, I intend to submit more documents to include background material and supporting evidence for members of the State Executive Committee to review prior to their decision.

In summary, I am asking the Republican State Executive Committee and State Primary Board of Tennessee to thoroughly weigh the evidence I have presented and set aside the tainted results of 1 August 2024 Republican Primary Election for District 33.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John D. Ragan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John D. Ragan
State Representative
District 33

cc: Mr. Rick Scarbrough
62 Royal Troon Circle
Oak Ridge, TN 37830
rickscarbrough@yahoo.com

atch: 1. Contested Voter Spreadsheet Listing
2. Supporting Legal Citations
3. Anderson County Republican Party Meeting Attendance List
4. Additional Rationale