

Orange County Non-Party-Affiliated Voters (i.e. Independents) Were Misinformed about the August 23, 2022 Elections

Chris Messina, Candidate for Orange County Mayor, and Demensio Barton, Candidate for Orange County School Board Chair take action to force a correction

ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA, USA, July 19, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Misinformation was sent to Orange County voters in the "Official Voter Information Card" notification letter which was released to all of Orange County's voters by the Orange County Supervisor of Elections office. This letter misinformed voters who claim "No Party Affiliation" (NPA) or Independent status. The instructions from the Supervisor of Elections in this second of three official mailings told NPA voters that they "must be registered with a political party to vote". This is only partially true. It is true for party line primaries. However, this year's elections have 41 total non-partisan County races, plus amendments.

These voters make up 31.2% of registered voters in Orange County (<https://www.ocfelections.com/#>), with a significant percentage Hispanic-Americans. Again, a majority of the races in the upcoming elections of August 23 are "non-partisan", meaning that ALL registered voters, regardless of party affiliation are eligible to vote. Some NPA voters in Orange County will even be able to vote on August 23, 2022 in party primary races such as State Senator District 15. But they may not know they can exercise their voting voice if this error is not corrected.

"We are concerned that the net effect of this notice is to direct NPA voters to stay home on August 23 ", stated Chris Messina, Candidate for Orange County Mayor. "Every registered voter in the state of Florida must know that this is one of the most important elections of our time and they not only can vote , but their vote will make a difference on August 23", stated Demensio Barton, Candidate for Orange County School Board Chair.

Mr. Barton and Mr. Messina have sent Mr. Bill Cowles, Orange County Supervisor of Elections a letter expressing concern about NPA voter suppression, particularly among Hispanic-Americans and other historically disenfranchised people groups. They also proposed specific language for the third and final notice from the Supervisor of Elections to Orange County voters clarifying that NPA voters can and should vote. The requested notice states:

Note To All Registered Voters:

The August 23, 2022 Primary will have a good number of non-partisan local elections, partisan elections, and amendments that are important to our County.

All Registered Voters may vote in the August 23, 2022 elections for non-partisan races and for amendments. These elections include all County-wide positions (such as Mayor, Commissioners, School Board, Soil and Water Conservation Supervisors) and Judges.

Please note that some races are partisan primaries, which are elections to choose a party's candidate for the general election; only members of political parties may vote in their party's primary unless no other candidates have qualified for the ballot. Your ballot will include all of the races in which you may vote.

Please know that changes to party affiliation must be made no later than 29 days prior to an election by sending a completed Florida voter registration application form or signed written request, including your date of birth, to the election office.

Mr. Messina and Mr. Barton will hold a press conference to further highlight this issue and call on ALL voters, including NPA/Independent voters to vote on August 23. The press conference will take place at 9:30AM on Wed. July 20, 2022, at the front parking lot of the Supervisor of Elections office on 119 West Kaley Street, Orlando. ###

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