

## Ballot Access Committee Report to NC

As mentioned in the Presidential campaign debriefing, our 2012 Presidential campaign was the best in terms of ballot access since Ralph Nader ran as a Green in 2000. However, we fell short of our targets and exhausted a great deal of effort in getting on the ballot. The biggest difference between the Libertarian and Green Parties in terms of Presidential ballot lines was in our starting point. The Libertarians started off with 26 ballot lines after the 2010 midterm elections and the Greens only started off with 16. There were too many states with weak or nonexistent state parties that the Ballot Access Committee (BAC) was in poor position to assist. Delays in receiving matching funds exacerbated the campaign's problems with trying to work in too many states at once on already scarce resources.

BAC will be discussing a draft plan that sets goals for ballot access in each year of the 2013-2016 election cycle. Ultimately, our goal is to be on the ballot in between 45 and 47 states on Election Day in 2016. To make this goal more achievable, we plan to have at least 25 ballot lines after the 2014 midterm elections and at least 35 at the end of 2015. If the Green Party can achieve ballot access from 2013-15, not only will our final goal be much more achievable, but our Presidential campaign will be able to focus on what it should- winning votes on Election Day instead of fighting just to give voters a chance to see us on the ballot.

Our plan is to get ballot access on the following timetable:

2013: Arkansas, Arizona, and Vermont.

2014: Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin.

2015: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

2016: Alabama, Connecticut, Kentucky, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington.

The states where we will be seeking ballot access in 2013 require an immediate focus. It is likely that the Green Party of Arkansas will start petitioning in September. Around this time, the weather will (hopefully) become more conducive to petitioning in Arizona. We need to get more than 23,000 valid signatures to get on the ballot in Arizona and 10,000 in Arkansas. We have succeeded several times in both states. BAC has already approved \$5,000 in funding for the Green Party of Arkansas. Ballot access in Vermont is much easier than in either Arkansas or Arizona, but it is necessary to start organizing now so we can hold the meetings and fill out the paperwork required in September.

In order to make our vision a reality, we need to take organizing and fundraising to another level. GPUS has been juggling bills and hanging on by the skin of its teeth for almost a decade as its state parties slowly deteriorated. We need to say "NO MORE!" to merely existing in survival mode. We need to raise the funds to not only win ballot access across the country, but also to organize so our ballot lines actually mean something. We need to hire organizers to go into the states where our parties have collapsed and revive them again. We need to run candidates not just for President, but local, state, and Congressional candidates as well.

Ballot access cost the Stein campaign, GPUS, and state Green Parties a total of about \$250,000 in 2012. We will need to raise at least this much money for ballot access over the next three years to have a chance at running a competitive Presidential campaign. As daunting as its sounds, it is less money than Matt Gonzalez raised for his campaign for Mayor of San Francisco in 2003.