

OPEN PRIMARIES

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Campaign Launched to Close Florida's Corrupt Write-In Loophole *Over 8 Million Voters Already Disenfranchised*

Naples, FL – In 1998, Florida voters passed [Amendment 11](#) with 64% support. The amendment called for primaries to be open to all voters if the winner of the primary will face no opposition in the general election. Since the amendment was enacted, Democratic and Republican consultants and candidates have found a way to subvert the law. They recruit sham write-in candidates to serve one purpose: to close primary elections that should have been open to all voters. It's called the "write-in loophole" and it's been going on for 20+ years.

[Florida Open Primaries](#)-a coalition of local and national activists- has [launched a campaign](#) to document the full extent that write-in candidates have been used to trigger a closed primary election and pressure the legislature to close the write-in loophole.

[Groundbreaking new research exposes massive fraud.](#)

No one has looked at the scale of these abuses. We studied [races for Congress and state legislature](#) over the 22 year period that the Universal Primary Amendment has been in place.

What we found was shocking.

- Between 2000 and 2022, a total of 114 legislative and Congressional primaries that should have been open to all voters were closed by write-in candidates.
- Republicans were shut out of 47 of these races, while Democrats were shut out of 67 races. Independent voters were shut out of all 114 primary races.
- **A total of 8,204,603 voters were disenfranchised by the application of the write-in loophole.**
- Phony write-in candidates were deployed by Democratic and Republican actors alike. **1,297,802 Republicans, 3,217,279 Democrats, and 3,689,522 independent voters were shut out of these primary elections.**

- This is happening all over the state of Florida. Races where one party had a sizable registration advantage, races where the parties were at parity but one party failed to recruit a candidate and everything in between were implicated.

How legitimate are these write-in candidates? Decide for yourself.

- 114 of the 137 write-in congressional and state legislative races candidates studied **spent \$0 on their campaigns.**
- At least 104 of these candidates had **no campaign staff**, listing themselves as their own campaign treasurer for example.
- Over a dozen of these candidates-and possibly more- filed from outside the district they were running in.

As Campaign Spokesman Bruce Armstrong declared: “The Florida Legislature has allowed the write-in candidate loophole to permit political operatives to manipulate election results through voter suppression for more than 20 years. The time is right to end this egregious abuse. They need to hear from us now.”

Open Primaries President John Opdycke added: “Floridians passed this open primary law in 1998 with 64% support. But partisan players--from both parties--don’t care about that. They care about winning, and if that means subverting and shutting out voters because it helps them win, they will do it. But voters in Florida and across the country are getting tired of this kind of cynical manipulation of the process. The time is ripe to make a change.”

Florida Open Primaries wants to accomplish two things in the next year. First, we are hoping that an academic institution will expand upon our research and dig even deeper into the extent that phony write-in candidates are used to lock voters out of primary elections in which they are eligible to vote. Our research only explored legislative and congressional races. Secondly, we want to put significant pressure on the legislature to fix the problem. We’ve already drafted sample legislation and we are looking for courageous legislators to work with us to build support in Tallahassee.

The write in loophole is a fraud. It must be outlawed. [Florida Open Primaries](#) is calling on all Floridians-Republicans, Democrats, and independents-to join us in making this happen.

Available for interview:

Bruce Armstrong, Florida Open Primaries Campaign Spokesperson (Naples, FL).

John Opdycke, Open Primaries President (Chicago, IL).

More information on Florida Open Primaries can be found at www.flopenprimaries.org
 Open Primaries is a national, nonprofit organization. More information can be found at www.openprimaries.org