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INDEPENDENTVOTING.ORG APPLAUDS REP. JOHN DELANEY (D-MD) FOR INTRODUCING OPEN PRIMARIES LEGISLATION

IndependentVoting.org, a national association of independent voters, applauds Rep. John Delaney (D,MD) for introducing the Open Our Democracy Act, HB 2655, which allows independents to vote in nonpartisan open primaries for all U.S. House of Representative and U.S. Senate seats, initiates redistricting reform and makes Election Day a holiday.

With Congressional approval rating remaining at historic lows (19% as of May, 2015 - Gallup), the Open Our Democracy Act comes at an opportune time. Jacqueline Salit, President of IndependentVoting.org stated, "Congress has a very long way to go to restore its legitimacy with the American people. A good first step would be to pass Rep. John Delaney's bill and to put our elections on a nonpartisan footing. Those elections, not to mention our government, should belong to the people, not the parties."

The Open Our Democracy Act includes a provision to make elections nonpartisan and open up the election process to independents, now 42% of the voting population. The bill requires all candidates for the U.S. House and Senate to appear on a single ballot regardless of party affiliation and allows all voters the ability to cast ballots for any candidate, regardless of party affiliation. The top two vote-getters then go on to the general election.

The Open Our Democracy Act comes after the success of a voter initiative which was passed in California in 2010 that is widely regarded as having shaken up party control of the primary nominating process and saved the state from legislative gridlock and insolvency. The Open Our Democracy Act would abolish the practice of requiring voters to join a political party in order to vote in all elections.

"The Congress that works best for America is the Congress that best reflects America," said Congressman Delaney.

IndependentVoting.org, with activists in 45 states, has been in the forefront of supporting systemic reforms that open the election process to more voter participation while lessening partisan control.

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