



May 27th, 2025

RE: Testimony in **Opposition of Assembly Bill 597** of the 2025 Nevada Legislature

Members of the Nevada Assembly:

The Nevada Republican Party strongly opposes any legislation seeking to impose an open primary system on our state—an idea that Nevada voters *already rejected* in 2024. This renewed push blatantly disregards the will of the people and undermines the fundamental rights of political parties to determine their own nominees.

Shockingly, the legislators presenting this bill are not only attempting to negate the will of the voters who soundly defeated a similar ballot initiative just last November—but now, in a clear display of arrogance and disregard for process, they have introduced the bill at the last minute, at the end of the legislative session. This maneuver leaves no room for proper research, scrutiny, or public debate. Such a tactic is not only undemocratic—it's deeply disrespectful to the people of Nevada.

The right to freely associate is a cornerstone of the First Amendment, and that includes the right of political parties to choose their own candidates without outside interference. Our current closed primary system ensures that those who identify with and support a party's values have the exclusive responsibility of selecting that party's nominees. That is not only fair—it's common sense.

Non-partisan voters already have a pathway to the general election. They may support independent candidates, create their own parties, or petition onto the ballot. But they do not—and should not—have the authority to shape the candidate slate of a political party they refuse to join.

The 2024 election outcome made this position unmistakably clear: Nevadans *do not want* open primaries. Attempting to override this decision through a last-minute



legislative maneuver is not just bad policy—it's a betrayal of voter trust. We urge lawmakers to reject this bill and respect both the democratic process and the expressed will of the people.

We'd like to thank Governor Lombardo and Lt Governor Stavros Anthony for their leadership and strong opposition to this bill. Lies and deceit may be the culture of corruption in Carson City, but that culture is what Governor Lombardo and the Nevada Republican Party are working to dismantle every day.

Sincerely,

Chairman Michael J. McDonald