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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Title: Libertarian Party and Sare Campaign Successfully Invalidate Lee Zeldin's "Independence Party" Petition

ALBANY, NEW YORK, July 13, 2022 – In their meeting on Monday, July 11, 2022, the Commissioners at the New York State Board of Elections declared the Independence Party petition invalid due to an insufficient number of signatures. The Independence Party statewide slate consisted entirely of the Republican Party's slate led by Congressman Lee Zeldin for Governor. In addition to the Independence Party line, the Republican Party slate also filed petitions for the Parent Party, but it was ruled insufficient and invalid after a prima facie review by the New York State Board of Elections. (Note: since this was a Board of Elections hearing, there is no court case number. The hearing notice can be found [here](#), and the official summary of the findings invalidating the Zeldin petition can be found [here](#)).

Lee Zeldin's attempt to secure the 45,000+ signatures by submitting over 52,000 raw signatures passed the prima facie review. However, a challenge mounted by a team of Libertarian Party officials and volunteers associated with the Diane Sare for Senate campaign discovered that over 900 sheets, containing over 11,000 signatures were merely photocopies of original sheets also submitted by the Zeldin campaign, in an alleged attempt to fraudulently represent that the petition contained the requisite number of signatures.

"This was the Republican Party's attempt to reestablish the Independence Party of New York, which lost ballot access in 2020. The so-called Independence Party has drifted from its original meaning in order to take advantage of New York's fusion voting and misleadingly garner support from unwitting independent voters," said Andrew Kolstee, Secretary of the Libertarian Party, and objector to the Independence Party petitions. "In this case, the Republican Party attempted to use this tactic all the while continuing to pander to their Republican base, which is outnumbered 2:1 by the Democrats, instead of reaching out to voters all across the political spectrum. The Libertarian Party has successfully reached voters all across the political spectrum, something our candidate for Governor, Larry Sharpe, does very well."

"Republicans talk a lot about election integrity," said Kolstee, "but the Zeldin campaign attempted to fly under the radar and submit over 11,000 fraudulent signatures in an attempt to get a third line on the ballot, while New York's oppressive ballot access laws, which were changed in 2020 to prevent third parties from getting on the ballot, prevent voter choice. One can only determine if a petition sheet is a photocopy if the physical petition sheets are examined in person. The Zeldin campaign's attempt to defraud the electorate and pose as an independent

campaign by filing thousands of photocopied signatures is a slap in the face to New York State voters and the election process.”

“The Independence Party petition was passed by officials in the Republican Party, who did not need to pass any petitions to get Zeldin on the line for the Republican Party due to the party’s status as a ballot access party, while Zeldin’s Republican primary opponents required 15,000 signatures for a spot on the primary ballot. Meanwhile, unrecognized political parties such as the established Libertarian and Green Parties required 45,000 signatures to get on the ballot. The fact that candidates such as Lee Zeldin, a sitting Congressman backed by the Republican Party establishment as well as multi-millionaire Harry Wilson, who failed to qualify for a spot on the ballot under the Unite Party, shows that the increase of the signature threshold was meant to prevent any other candidate outside of the Republican and Democrats from qualifying. This is further demonstrated by the retroactive reversal of the ballot access that [Larry Sharpe](#) qualified for when he ran for Governor in 2018.”

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