

**AB597**

27 May 2025

Oppose

Dear Senate and Assembly Legislative and Operations Committees,

Allowing nonpartisan voters to request partisan ballots and vote in primary elections complicates the voting process leading to confusion among voters and complexity in the system for election officials. The potential for voter confusion is real as nonpartisan voters could request partisan ballots. There is a risk that some voters may misunderstand the significance of their choices or inadvertently influence partisan primaries, which could impact party integrity. The implementation of these changes requires additional efforts by election officials, such as preparing separate ballots for nonpartisan voters who request partisan ballots and managing new voting procedures. Overall this bill will increase administrative costs and create logistical challenges.

Removing the prohibition on counting votes cast for candidates outside a voter's registered party raises concern regarding the integrity of the primary process, as votes from non-affiliated voters could influence partisan outcomes more directly. The optics created by this, in a state where public confidence in elections is low (as demonstrated by the Secretary of State making commercials trying to convince voters Nevada's elections are secure), would erode voter confidence even further. Additionally, nonpartisan voters could strategically vote in primaries to influence the selection of candidates, undermining the primary process's purpose of reflecting genuine party preferences.

Changes that allow nonpartisan voters, who deliberately choose to remain unaffiliated with any party, to participate in partisan primaries undermines the transparency of the party nomination processes. Nevada just defeated in the last elections "No on 3", a ballot question quite similar to AB597. How many times must Nevadans speak out against open primary elections?

I strongly urge you to oppose this bill; it is an attempt to create a uni-party.

Sincerely,  
Reva Crump, M.S.

Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Kimberly Fergus, and I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to Assembly Bill 597.

Let me begin by stating what cannot be ignored: **Nevada voters have already decided this issue.** In 2022, Question 3 — which proposed open primaries and ranked-choice voting — passed, but **with the requirement that it be approved again in 2024.** In that second vote, **the people of Nevada rejected it by a clear margin.** That result rendered the proposal legally and politically **dead.** The voters settled this matter — decisively and recently.

And yet, here we are — just days before the end of the 2025 legislative session — with AB597 being introduced as an **emergency measure** to implement, in statute, what the people have already voted down at the ballot box. This bill would amend NRS 293.257 and 298.680 to allow nonpartisan voters to vote in partisan primaries, fundamentally altering the purpose and integrity of the primary election process.

Furthermore, **this legislation imposes unfunded mandates** on local governments in Sections 1, 3, 5, and 9. These administrative burdens are not only costly, but were also **never requested by county clerks or election officials.**

Equally troubling is the broken public trust. **In November 2024, Speaker Yeager publicly stated he would not bring forward an open primaries bill in 2025 out of respect for the voters' decision.** That promise has now been broken. Introducing this bill as an “emergency” appears to be an attempt to bypass public scrutiny and legislative transparency — an **abuse of both process and leadership.**

The voters were clear. Twice. Leadership should mean respecting their decision, not circumventing it. I respectfully urge this committee to reject AB597 and uphold the will of the people of Nevada.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kimberly Fergus Clark County Sen 6 Ass 34 89134 [kfergus@kimersellshomes.com](mailto:kfergus@kimersellshomes.com)

To: Assembly Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections

Subject: Please Oppose AB597

Date: May 27, 2025, 10:00 AM

Dear Assemblymembers on the Committee of Legislative Operations and Elections,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to AB597. The purpose of "Open Primaries" may be to enable voters to vote for any party during primary elections, but this proposal undermines the clear message our community and state sent in November: we do not want ranked choice voting or open elections.

Despite any confusion around the ballot language, voters were well-informed about Proposition 3. I have full confidence that the results reflect the will of the people. Introducing AB597 again only deepens the growing mistrust in our electoral system. It is disheartening to see our elected officials bring this forward after voters have already spoken so clearly.

We must honor the choices of voters-it's how we express the values we hold dear in our neighborhoods. We want elections that are fair and transparent. For those who wish to vote in a primary, there's already a solution: choose a candidate who represents your party's principles, or switch parties to support a candidate aligned with your views. Open primaries only weaken candidates and dilute the representation voters deserve.

Additionally, of the 419 testimonies submitted, an overwhelming 89% are against AB597. This further demonstrates that Nevadans do not support this proposal.

Please respect the will of the people and oppose AB597.

Sincerely,

Erica Neely

I strongly oppose AB597

Allowing non-partisans to vote for partisan ballots in primaries would represent a fundamental change to our elections and completely dilute the clarity around the Nevada voter's choice.

While no election process is perfect, the reason why primaries were established was very straightforward: Republicans, Democrats, Independent Americans and other parties should choose candidates who represent their party platforms. The party members are informed about, active in, and involved with the political candidates. Common sense dictates that they should select their candidates.

If you are a Non-Partisan or No-Political Party voter, by definition, you are not interested in voting for partisan candidates. Because if you were, then you would be a party member.

Therefore, if they want to vote for a partisan ballot, voters should change from Non-Partisan to the Partisan party.

I don't agree that passing this bill will prevent outsiders from submitting ballot initiatives to support Jungle or Open Primaries. That is always on the table.

I urge the Nevada legislators to reject this undemocratic proposal outright and strongly oppose AB597.

Iris Stone

Las Vegas, Nevada

[stoneiris@icloud.com](mailto:stoneiris@icloud.com)

*Dear Assembly Legislative Operations & Elections Committee:*

*AB597*

*Please OPPOSE AB597. This UNFUNDED MANDATE is allowing nonpartisan voters to request and receive a partisan mail ballot of the Major political party of the voter's choice and vote in the primary elections. This would undermine the primary process, and the partisan parties would not be able to elect their true party candidate of choice. As a voter affiliated with one major party, I do not want non-party members to choose my party's candidate. This is just a ploy to upset the apple cart on one of the major parties to get a less competitive candidate on the ballot in the General Election. There are plenty of opportunities for nonpartisan voters to vote in primaries. They can change their party affiliation, vote then change back to nonpartisan. This is just an effort to erode the election process in order to have one superior party. The voice of the Nevada voters was quite clear in 2024 when question # 3 was voted down by the voters in the entire State of Nevada. This bill is another form of Rank Choice Voting and it is something Nevada voters do not want. Quit trying to remove the voice of Nevada voters! This bill was brought forward under an Emergency Request for a reason that is quite clear; to influence partisan outcomes more directly. This bill is a disgrace to the voters of Nevada and needs a NO vote.*

*Thank You,*

*Ann Sweder*

*Sparks, Nv. 89441*

I oppose AB597 because political parties do not want it because it neuters the nature of a political party. Political parties conduct their own caucuses and don't need the state meddling in their affairs as AB597 intends to do. This bill is a push toward Communism and must never become law!

*-Oscar Williams, Reno*