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Oklahoma Independents Bring Up New Issues

The Oklahoma Coalition of Independents (OKIES), composed of political Independents and third-party members, has the goal of increasing voter choice for Oklahomans. Many OKIES members also seek to raise awareness on some often overlooked issues. Although as Independent candidates, gathering votes may be difficult, there is a degree of victory in just bringing these new ideas to the public.

Judicial Accountability: Bob Batterbee, Independent Candidate for House 74, said, "Whether judges are appointed or elected it is their performance on the bench and their accountability for improper activities that is crucial. We say that our system of government is a democracy, yet we have a judiciary with absolute power over our courts, unparalleled in history."

Ballot Access: Matthew R. Jones, Independent Candidate for House 4, said "Oklahoma has some of the toughest and most restrictive election and ballot access laws in the nation. We need laws that encourage democracy, not restrict it. We need laws that open up the political process to everyone, not narrow it down for a few."

Real ID Act & Privacy: Michael Hammer, Independent Candidate for House 59, thinks Oklahoma should repeal the fingerprint requirement for driver's licenses and not participate in the national ID plan. "These government intrusions make Oklahomans more vulnerable to identity theft and cost millions of dollars to implement."

Death Penalty: JM Branum, Independent Candidate for House 99, called for abolition of the death penalty. "The death penalty is racist, classist, and immoral. If elected, I would do all in my power to fight to abolish the death penalty, starting with a moratorium."

Educational Choice: Richard Prawdzienski, former Independent candidate for House district 39, said that over a life time, the average family pays more than \$100,000 in taxes for education. He suggested Individual Education Accounts saying, "Our government insures 30 year mortgages so we can buy \$100,000 homes, maybe it should consider backing 30 year loans for education."

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