



## **Oklahoma's ballot access history since 1974**

Before 1974, only 5,000 signatures were needed to get minor and new party candidates on the ballot in Oklahoma.

The reason Oklahoma had someone else on the ballot in 1976 is because independent presidential candidate Eugene McCarthy won a lawsuit in the State Supreme Court. He was put on the ballot by court order, with no petition needed. The basis of his lawsuit was that Oklahoma had no procedure for an independent presidential candidate.

The reason Oklahoma had someone else on the ballot in 1984 is because the Libertarian Party won a lawsuit against the 90-day period for circulating the 5% petition. The Judge not only declared the 90-day period unconstitutional, he put the party on the ballot by court order, even though it didn't nearly finish its petition. So David Bergland, Libertarian for president, was on the ballot.

The reason Oklahoma had two minor party presidential candidate on the 1988 ballot is that both the Libertarians and the New Alliance Party used the 3% presidential petition that had been passed by the legislature in 1985, as a result of the 1984 court decision. The same goes for 1992, when the Libertarians and Ross Perot each did the 3% petition.

There were two minor party presidential candidates in 1996, and also 2000, because the Libertarian and Reform Parties each did the 5% petition.

By Richard Winger, *Ballot Access News* editor

### **More from [okvoterchoice.org](http://okvoterchoice.org):**

In 2003, Senate Bill 358 moved the deadline to form a party from May 31 to May 1.

In 2005, a majority of the U.S. Supreme Court expressed support for attempts to strike down restrictive ballot access laws in Oklahoma Libertarian Party lawsuit.