



## **RESOLUTION URGING THE TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO PASS LEGISLATION REQUIRING PARTY REGISTRATION**

**WHEREAS**, the Tennessee Constitution affirms that “all elections shall be free and equal,” reflecting our state’s commitment that elections represent the genuine choice of voters; and

**WHEREAS**, while Tennessee already requires closed primaries under Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-7-115, which states that “a person who is not a bona fide member of a political party shall not vote in the primary election of that party,” and further makes false representation of party affiliation a Class C misdemeanor under Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-19-102 and § 2-19-107, the state currently lacks any mechanism for voters to formally register party affiliation, making enforcement of these provisions impossible; and

**WHEREAS**, Tennessee’s current primary election system allows individuals to participate in any party’s primary election, enabling voters who do not align with that party’s principles and values to influence that party’s nomination process; and

**WHEREAS**, this structural inconsistency of Tennessee law prohibiting “crossover” voting in party primaries while offering no system for voters to declare or verify party affiliation, not only makes statutory safeguards impossible to enforce, but fundamentally undermines the integrity of party primaries by allowing individuals who do not share that political party’s principles to determine its nominee, thereby diluting the voice of genuine party members and weakening the party’s ability to choose authentic representatives for the general election; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Supreme Court in *California Democratic Party v. Jones* (2000) affirmed that the First Amendment protects a political party’s freedom of association, including its right to determine who may participate in selecting its nominees, and that “open” or “blanket” primaries which allow nonmembers to influence a party’s nomination unlawfully infringe upon that right; and

**WHEREAS**, states as politically diverse as New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Nevada, protect this right for a political party’s freedom of association and require party registration for primary participation, showing that this is not a partisan issue; and

**WHEREAS**, party registration enables voters to engage meaningfully in their chosen political community and provides a clear record that ensures trust and integrity in the nominating process; and



**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Hamilton County Republican Party urges the Tennessee General Assembly to pass legislation requiring party registration so that Tennessee's existing closed-primary statutes, requiring participation by bona fide members of a political party, can be properly administered and enforced;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution be sent to Governor Bill Lee, Lieutenant Governor Randy McNally, Speaker Cameron Sexton, and all Republican legislators, encouraging swift action on this important reform.

Adopted this 26th day of November, 2025 by the **Hamilton County Republican Party**