00:00:02:54 - 00:00:11:35

Chad Alexander

We have former state Senator AJ Griffin joining us. I think it's the first time she's been on the show since she left the state Senate.

00:00:11:40 - 00:00:14:43

AJ Griffin

Oh, no, no, I’ve been on a few times, but it's been a little while.

00:00:14:48 - 00:00:16:56

AJ Griffin

It's been a few years.

00:00:17:01 - 00:00:26:47

AJ Griffin

It's been a few years. Did you get mad at me? No, no, no. I've been out six years, and it's probably just been, you know, maybe 3 or 4 since I've been here. But it's been a while.

00:00:27:01 - 00:00:27:40

Chad Alexander

It's interesting, yeah.

00:00:27:48 - 00:00:34:39

AJ Griffin

Yeah, it's nice being here. Just so you know, the studio looks exactly the same.

00:00:34:44 - 00:00:45:07

Chad Alexander

It does, well we did change ... Don't look at that till we go to break. I keep that up there just for humor. When politics gets too hard, I get up there to laugh at that, and then I go right back at it.

00:00:45:12 - 00:00:46:08

AJ Griffin

Boom chicka.

00:00:46:10 - 00:01:03:57

Chad Alexander

Yeah. Oh, wow. For the reminder. But I always tape little things up that I keep for reminders of things like the number of Democrats registered in Pennsylvania in 2020 versus what they are today as the last time they counted. And then when they release their new numbers, I'll make a new friend. And I do that for the swings state.

00:01:03:57 - 00:01:08:23

Chad Alexander

So it keeps me knowing. And I feel very, very good about the Pennsylvania numbers.

00:01:08:28 - 00:01:09:02

AJ Griffin

Yeah.

00:01:09:07 - 00:01:28:47

Chad Alexander

So what you're on to talk about today, is it called Oklahoma United? Okay, Oklahoma United and it's about our primary process, which we've discussed on the show a couple of times in the last few weeks because I have talked about this with David Holt as a state senator. No Democrat ever filed for that seat.

00:01:28:52 - 00:01:45:04

Chad Alexander

We have closed primaries. Independents cannot vote in our primaries. Independents can vote Democrat primaries, but not Republican primaries. So Democrats and independents didn't get to vote for their state senator for 12 straight years, because no Democrat at that time would file on that seat.

00:01:45:05 - 00:01:47:54

AJ Griffin

Right. And that that's not unique to that district.

00:01:47:56 - 00:02:07:33

Chad Alexander

No. And as we have several districts especially across rural Oklahoma, we don't even have Democrat candidates running. I need to count the races up from the House and the Senate where you have a Democrat or Republican. But of the 125 races this year, over 100 probably do not have a Democrat in them.

00:02:07:38 - 00:02:08:39

AJ Griffin

Right well and there are urban districts

00:02:08:46 - 00:02:10:16

Chad Alexander

And the other side, their primaries.

00:02:10:16 - 00:02:15:32

AJ Griffin

And there are urban districts, then it’s the other way. There is no Republican that has filed.

00:02:15:37 - 00:02:38:53

Chad Alexander

We had Jason Dunnington, which you would call probably a classic liberal mainstream Democrat. He lost in a primary because primary turnout is so low. Republicans and Independents, I mean Republicans couldn't vote in that primary obviously. And I think it's before they let independents vote in the primaries, may have been the year they let them. They got beat by a far more progressive left candidate.

00:02:38:57 - 00:03:11:01

Chad Alexander

Because when you have these low turnout primaries and I talk about August of 2022, open U.S. Senate seat, there's a runoff, State Superintendent of schools runoff. Ryan Walters won that 53-47 with a 15% turnout, if there would have been a 25% turnout from the primary, he probably loses that thing. The 7.5% of Republicans, or 15%, can get you the Republican nomination, and a Republican almost can't lose statewide in Oklahoma, no matter what the floor.

00:03:11:06 - 00:03:18:53

Chad Alexander

51.9 million registered voters are Republicans. You got to get a lot of Republicans to win statewide. So what's the project you guys are with?

00:03:18:58 - 00:03:42:16

AJ Griffin

Well, the project would be to put a petition forward and to work to put on the ballot in November of 2026, a state question which would change Oklahoma's primary system to it's not necessarily an open. There's lots of different names for ways to do this, but basically would put every candidate, regardless of their party, on the same ballot.

00:03:42:17 - 00:03:43:11

AJ Griffin

The top two.

00:03:43:12 - 00:03:43:48

Chad Alexander

In June.

00:03:43:56 - 00:03:46:06

AJ Griffin

In June, during the primary ballot.

00:03:46:11 - 00:03:46:19

Chad Alexander

Everybody’s on there.

00:03:46:21 - 00:03:50:07

AJ Griffin

Top two vote getters move to the general election in November.

00:03:50:13 - 00:03:52:35

Chad Alexander

Is that if no one gets 50%?

00:03:52:40 - 00:03:54:13

AJ Griffin

Top two vote getters would move.

00:03:54:13 - 00:03:58:17

Chad Alexander

Even if you get over 50% the top two go, or if it's over 50%?

00:03:58:17 - 00:04:16:48

AJ Griffin

They would not eliminate a general election. Okay. So there would still be a vote in November. Because part of the goal is to, Chad we’re 50th in voter turnout in this country. Part of it is the fact that our voters are expected to go to the polls a lot and very frequently when they go. It doesn't matter. Yeah. Yeah.

00:04:16:49 - 00:04:42:27

AJ Griffin

I mean, you just talked about why we don't have general elections in November. It's already decided in the primary in so many of the districts. Um why in a runoff, the voter turnout is so poor. It's, they've just voted and now they're coming back to vote again in the same, basically the same election. So one of the goals is to increase voter participation by allowing the voters that fund elections to participate in the election.

00:04:42:32 - 00:05:09:55

Chad Alexander

I think there's two things there, and this is interesting. And you brought this to my attention. I wasn't aware of it. Voters in 71 of Oklahoma’s 77 counties will not vote for sheriff in November because the races will be decided in a partisan primary. So, if all Republicans vote in the primaries and people like, well, a Democrat could run well, there's a reason Democrats don't file, they can't possibly win.

00:05:10:00 - 00:05:15:59

Chad Alexander

I'll give you Texas County Oklahoma, for example, do you know what the spread between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton was in Texas County?

00:05:16:04 - 00:05:17:12

AJ Griffin

Oh gosh I can only imagine.

00:05:17:16 - 00:05:24:29

Chad Alexander

93%. No Democrat is ever going to file in Texas county. But if you're a Democrat, you're never going to vote for your sheriff.

00:05:24:29 - 00:05:54:43

AJ Griffin

And it's important to know that in the state of Oklahoma, municipalities determine their own process and they don't set their own election dates there. They choose from a slate that the state provides. But county elections are dictated by the state process, so they can't even if a county wanted to change and open their primaries for offices that are really nonpartisan in nature, like sheriff or county clerk or my favorite county assessor on a partisan ballot.

00:05:54:48 - 00:06:05:23

AJ Griffin

Think about that for a little bit. The job is to assess the value of property, and you must have a closed primary system for that job when it has nothing to do with the qualifications of the job.

00:06:05:23 - 00:06:27:53

Chad Alexander

But you know what does happen? You will see people running in counties big enough to have funding in a county assessor race that are sending out positions on abortion or other base issues for primary voters that have nothing to do with your job. A county assessor is never going to have a vote on abortion either way.

00:06:27:53 - 00:06:29:24

Chad Alexander

So what's it matter?

00:06:29:29 - 00:06:44:44

AJ Griffin

So if it's in those situations, it might actually take some of the politics out of what really should be nonpolitical in nature. Are you qualified to do the job at hand that you're being elected to do? So, and, it would change that process for those elections as well.

00:06:44:51 - 00:07:00:43

Chad Alexander

Yeah. And one of the arguments that I've heard, because I talk about how independents are able to vote in a Democratic primary, Republicans need to do the same thing. If you vote for somebody in a primary, you could be more likely to vote for them in the general election. So if you're a Republican, like, well, open it up to independents too so the Republican leaning independents can vote. So they've already had a chance to vote in a Republican primary. Why would we want to take independents out of the process? But a lot of people think if you have it at the primary, that Democrats are going to decide who the nominee is and the winners are, things like that, and we have all the states here that are.

00:07:21:31 - 00:07:28:09

Chad Alexander

And I'll let you get some of the great examples of states that have open primaries where you still see conservatives winning their primaries.

00:07:28:13 - 00:07:40:11

AJ Griffin

Well, just about everywhere, including Texas. And I think anyone that would argue that Texas is turning blue, or that Missouri is probably even a better example because that is more comparable to the state of Oklahoma.

00:07:40:24 - 00:07:41:09

Chad Alexander

Arkansas.

00:07:41:11 - 00:08:16:33

AJ Griffin

In a rural nature, Arkansas also has that. They’ve changed their process, and Missouri continues to have Republican supermajorities, they continue to elect Republicans statewide. Um, but their process now involves all the voters. So one of the things that we like to talk about is that an elected official that's elected to represent all of the voters, when you're selected by 50% of only those in your party, there's no way that you can necessarily be reflective of the entire electorate.

00:08:16:47 - 00:08:39:52

AJ Griffin

So allowing the entire electorate to participate in the entire process, we will have, not necessarily different types of elected officials. It's really not about who we're electing. It's about the voters. Right. And, and allowing disenfranchised voters to become more engaged in the process and to, to get what they're paying for. Well, these are taxpayers and . . .

00:08:39:52 - 00:09:01:46

Chad Alexander

These are and this is Oklahoma, which is about as right as California is left. California has this system. Steve Garvey, who is not going to win the U.S. Senate seat in California, but it's the first time in I think two cycles or three cycles that a Republican even made it to the U.S. Senate, because it's always two Democrats.

00:09:01:46 - 00:09:10:21

Chad Alexander

There'll be more times than not in Oklahoma you will end up with two Republicans, probably at the top of the ticket if you have a statewide primary, regardless of who's voting.

00:09:10:26 - 00:09:39:17

AJ Griffin

I've heard people say, you know, we need more people just registered as Republicans so you could run for office. And I’m like, no we really kind of need an actual, we need elections that involve everyone. And the goal isn’t to change, change who we’re electing, the goal is to allow voters to have a say in all elections at all.

00:09:39:21 - 00:10:10:40

Chad Alexander

You know, the nature of an argument is a good step. You know, I'll say this. Why we had a statewide primary in June. We had a 19.79% turnout in Republicans. Almost 81% of Republicans didn’t bother to show up. And if there would not have been the fourth district congressional race that came out of nowhere where millions were spent, it probably would be closer to 15%, because the 4th district had a much higher turnout than any of the other four congressional districts.

00:10:10:45 - 00:10:21:37

Chad Alexander

So then you get back to again, okay, well, 7.5% of Republicans can decide in a safe Republican seat who's going to be the winner of the election.

00:10:21:42 - 00:10:45:17

AJ Griffin

And which is a clear indicator of why we're last in the country in voter turnout, yeah, is the rest of those voters are disenfranchised. They don't necessarily feel like their vote matters. It does matter. It matters a lot. And we want it to matter more, because if you open up this process, I think it will change you know who's running, who's filing, how many people will get to go to the polls, which is important.

00:10:45:31 - 00:10:59:00

AJ Griffin

Like Oklahomans get that we want the government we deserve. And that represents Oklahoma. That isn't about parties. It's not necessarily about changing the makeup of the bodies. It is about engaging the voters.

00:10:59:05 - 00:11:29:30

Chad Alexander

Right. Because, I mean, you know, it's a Senate seat right now, has about 88,000 people in it. We had a runoff in Senate District 47. Kelly Hines and Jenny Schmitt, about 6000 votes cast. Yeah. So you have about 38,000, 40,000 registered Republicans there with 6000 vote casters. That shows you how few people are participating now, because we are 50th in the nation in actually getting people to vote, of voting age and registered voters.

00:11:29:34 - 00:11:47:30

Chad Alexander

So in addition to the petition process, I think you're going to see some opposition from both sides on this. Now I think, current elected officials, because of the current primary process, are probably really reluctant to speak out on this. But I think a lot of former Republicans . . .

00:11:47:35 - 00:11:48:35

AJ Griffin

Like yourself.

00:11:48:37 - 00:11:49:25

Chad Alexander

Like yourself.

00:11:49:25 - 00:11:50:04

AJ Griffin

Like myself.

00:11:50:06 - 00:12:20:10

Chad Alexander

I think you can find a lot of the former House Republicans and Senate Republicans that would tell you they would prefer to have a process because it's such a low turnout. You get into that runoff, you're going to base voters, people start going further right, further right, further right, trying to get those votes. And then you get up there. Well, if you do those things, a lot of people in those districts and you have a lot of other members that are in swing districts that are like, I don't want to vote on this bill, like, I’m there to represent my district.

00:12:20:14 - 00:12:36:22

Chad Alexander

They're overwhelmingly opposed to this bill. Don't put this on the floor. But someone promised it was going to get to that 7.5% number. That's so far out you can't go back. So then the people who made the promise start asking to file the bills.

00:12:36:36 - 00:13:02:19

AJ Griffin

So opposition to this movement will come from people who benefit from the current process, and there are people who benefit from it. It is a lot less work for an elected official to appeal to 7.5% of the voters in their district than it is to appeal to a majority of the individuals with as many varied opinions and ideas.

00:13:02:24 - 00:13:05:20

AJ Griffin

It's a lot more work to really do the job.

00:13:05:20 - 00:13:18:34

Chad Alexander

Because if we get 50% turnout in a presidential election, you got a whole lot more voters that are voting than in a closed primary runoff. And that’s when kids have just went back to school.

00:13:18:35 - 00:13:33:34

AJ Griffin

RIght. Well, and that's for elected officials from both parties. And if, if you're in a hard blue urban district, it's pretty easy to appeal to that small minority of the electorate.

00:13:33:35 - 00:13:36:35

Chad Alexander

Yeah, you only need 1200 to win that runoff.

00:13:36:40 - 00:14:00:44

AJ Griffin

Yeah. There's a lot of work to appeal to the others. But, you know, for those of us who love the best part of the job is constituent services and being able to listen to people's real concerns and take those real problems and issues and improvements that, you know, my constituents in Perry, and Pawnee, and Guthrie wanted to see, that was the part of the job I enjoyed a lot.

00:14:00:47 - 00:14:18:59

AJ Griffin

And I think that this um allows, it also when you get people involved as a voter, they have a vested interest in also communicating with their elected officials. And, but if you're not voting, you don't even know who's on the ballot. You never heard of these folks. You're not going to participate in the rest of the process either.

00:14:19:08 - 00:14:24:33

AJ Griffin

So we're leaving a lot of, a lot of voters, a lot of taxpayers unrepresented.

00:14:24:36 - 00:14:46:06

Chad Alexander

Well, and we had a Grady county commissioner, earlier this year, and it got some news because he got caught saying in a meeting that, if I get a request or a letter and it's a Democrat I don’t even bother to respond because a Democrat can't win there and your electorate is just Republican primary voters.

00:14:46:11 - 00:15:03:20

Chad Alexander

And so that's not what representative government was supposed to be. When you're like, you're supposed to represent all your constituents. Yeah, everybody. I mean, you could I heard you call Stephanie Bice’s office and you're a constituent, you have a problem they don’t ask your party registration or look it up or care. They're there for constituent service. She's very good.

00:15:03:20 - 00:15:28:36

Chad Alexander

They're very professional. But you do see people that aren't so professional. And that's not what government is. I do understand the fundamental argument of voter disenfranchisement. You say, okay, I may be a registered independent, but only Republicans ever file in my district and I haven't voted for a state rep. I haven't had a chance to vote for my state representative in eight years, ten years, 15 years.

00:15:28:41 - 00:15:33:53

Chad Alexander

Yeah. I mean, just wish you guys said a Democrat has not filed in six, seven, eight elections.

00:15:34:04 - 00:15:56:50

AJ Griffin

This process is designed for the voters to participate and we in Oklahoma are very lucky that we have some of the best processes for voting. We have very secure elections. We have paper ballots that can be recounted in a recount, and there's a high amount of integrity in the process.

00:15:56:50 - 00:16:18:02

Chad Alexander

And we do independent audits all the time. In every election we do independent audits as soon as they’re over we pick independent counting audits, different races, they always come out exactly like they were. When I saw the person that came in third in the Tulsa runoff for mayor by 800 votes for a recount, I'm like, I have done 6 or 7 recounts in Oklahoma.

00:16:18:07 - 00:16:42:29

Chad Alexander

We got one overturned. It was a four vote race. It was … but that's back when you had to connect the arrows. And if you didn't connect it all the way, I had something to challenge that. Once we went to the boxes where you just got ink in the box too, we never flipped a vote. So I'm like, I am never going to get a recount again under this process because it is a waste of my time.

00:16:42:29 - 00:17:08:02

AJ Griffin

We have it easy. It's easy to register. It's easy to change your registration if you need to. It's a very, very good process. That's not the problem. The problem we have in Oklahoma is that we don't have enough people going to the polls because, so frequently it just doesn't matter. It's already decided. And this is just a movement to hopefully flip that.

00:17:08:02 - 00:17:13:25

AJ Griffin

And we've got great elections. We need more Oklahomans participating in it because they pay for them, they fund them.

00:17:13:25 - 00:17:39:28

Chad Alexander

Point is what we're talking about now, there are metro seats that are blue seats that would allow Republicans and independents to have a vote. But we talk about candidates not even filing. And there's some seats Republicans don't even bother filing in. I mean, that hasn't been eight years in Oklahoma and Tulsa County, but especially in rural seats across the state. No Democrats are filing, there is a voter disenfranchisement argument.

00:17:39:33 - 00:18:00:55

Chad Alexander

I can't even vote for my state representative, even though it's two Republicans or three Republicans on the ballot. I can't even vote for one of the Republicans when it's only Republicans on the ballot. So a Republican is going to win either way. It's just which Republican. Yeah, but I think there are a lot that feel like they have to to win that really low turnout.

00:18:00:55 - 00:18:22:02

Chad Alexander

This base of voters that in both sides you know, that race there's that small portion fringe that are most likely to vote. But they are the fringe, but they can control the process and situation. And another would be do you want to nominate a Republican who couldn't get the votes that doesn't have any more appeal, but to their actual districts?

00:18:22:02 - 00:18:33:56

AJ Griffin

70% of the state legislative races in Oklahoma will not appear on the November ballot. Yes 70%.

00:18:34:01 - 00:18:35:52

Chad Alexander

Yeah. In 125 races.

00:18:35:55 - 00:18:49:49

AJ Griffin

So also when you ask an Oklahoma voter, who's your state senator, who's your state representative, and they don't know, part of it you think they may not even see their name on a ballot ever..

00:18:49:53 - 00:19:09:46

Chad Alexander

And, well, that's true. I mean, I know people, I won’t call them by name though, but if you ran for the state House and won once and you haven't had an opponent in the last three elections, your name I.D. has fallen so low. Now in rural Oklahoma, you know when they have three counties, only one state representative.

00:19:09:46 - 00:19:25:58

Chad Alexander

People pretty much all know who their state representative is, and that's only doing their job. Yeah, if the local cafe is a liberal shop, they know who those people are. You can be a senator in Oklahoma City and go out to dinner and nobody at the diner knows who you are.

00:19:26:03 - 00:19:39:26

Chad Alexander

And I do think that is the deal as well. We don't think a Democrat can win that seat, nobody files against the incumbent, the primary, it’s going to be hard to be them in the primary. Sometimes you can win one election and you get 12 years.

00:19:39:31 - 00:20:03:47

AJ Griffin

Well and Chad, you and I, we've been candidates. So we know that the process also really benefits by a rich array of people simply putting their name on the line. And that's the other thing we haven't talked about, is we have voters that are disenfranchised, but potential candidates are also definitely disenfranchised. We have seen drops in numbers of people filing.

00:20:03:47 - 00:20:26:14

AJ Griffin

There was a bump after the teacher walkout. We saw a few more races that we had additional people file in those, most of them on the Republican side in most of the state and then some districts on the other side. And we're also seeing a decline in the people that are wanting to run, which isn't good. This is supposed to be a robust, representative government system.

00:20:26:19 - 00:20:49:15

Chad Alexander

For my business I see it as a political consultant because I remember recruiting candidates in the early 2000s. Compared to recruiting candidates now, the political environment has become so toxic. You have a lot of people that would be great legislators and great candidates. They're like, I don't need this in my life. Everything's pretty good. The business is good, my family's happy.

00:20:49:19 - 00:21:01:07

Chad Alexander

This just seems like a pretty toxic process to be a part of, because we're living in a day where people feel like if they don't like something you did, you could be out to dinner with your family and they could start yelling at you while you're eating.

00:21:01:09 - 00:21:06:45

AJ Griffin

And I wouldn't say that is created by our primary process, but it is a contributing factor.

00:21:06:45 - 00:21:08:40

Chad Alexander

You can’t even recruit them.

00:21:08:49 - 00:21:24:07

AJ Griffin

It has allowed the environment to really become kind of closed off and mean closed primaries closed off the process to voters, to potential candidates. And so it reflects what we see at the ballot box.

00:21:24:12 - 00:21:59:25

Chad Alexander

Yeah. And I mean, most times in primary states, literally besides Oklahoma, Florida and Tennessee, I guess, are not Tennessee, Kentucky, Kentucky. Kentucky's right there . Those are really the only red states that have closed primaries. If you look at the rest of them, they’re blue states up in the northeast. Yeah. But I mean, the majority of the country, even the rest, you know, Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, I mean, strong red states have open primaries.

00:21:59:32 - 00:22:15:38

AJ Griffin

It's not a partisan issue. This is not a partisan issue. This is a representative government issue. Do we want representative government regardless of what flavor that is? If we want representative government, we need to tweak our process so that it allows it to be more reflective of the populace.

00:22:15:53 - 00:22:21:11

Chad Alexander

I totally agree, okay. Tell people how they could learn more about this organization.

00:22:21:16 - 00:22:52:25

AJ Griffin

Check out our website. There's information on the movement at ok-united.org. That's the organization that has been formed to raise money because these things are not free and, to kind of get the word out that there are people that are interested in all types and both parties representative what's of independents, Democrats or Republicans that are involved in that in the movement to collect the signatures and get this on the ballot.

00:22:52:25 - 00:23:10:49

AJ Griffin

Now, of course, it does have to go before the voters. And I said the voters would decide. And it's just a question. So it's nonpartisan. I think it's very interesting. We do that nonpartisan. Yeah. Obviously state questions go before all the voters because that issue is relevant to all the voters.

00:23:11:03 - 00:23:14:41

Chad Alexander

I actually believe it would pass if it was on the ballot.

00:23:14:49 - 00:23:33:45

AJ Griffin

I believe it would pass too in fact, this, this and polls very high, among the folks that we have started talking to. And as we educate individuals that this is not intended to diminish the value Republican and Democrat parties are still going to have to play a role in the political system. You're still going to have a label.

00:23:33:45 - 00:23:47:12

AJ Griffin

This doesn't mean you just have names without a party affiliation. We're keeping party affiliations, but we're going to allow all Oklahoma voters that fund these elections to participate in the entire process.

00:23:47:16 - 00:23:54:29

Chad Alexander

Basically and like you said, about 70% of our legislative seats are just being everybody's choosing between to vote for 2 or 3 Republicans to see which two go to the final.

00:23:54:38 - 00:23:59:12

AJ Griffin

Yeah, possibly in the urban areas it might flip the other way, It might be two democrats.

00:23:59:16 - 00:24:20:12

Chad Alexander

Yeah it could be the same way, two Democrats. Thank you for joining us today, former Senator AJ Griffin. I am Chad Alexander, if you'd like to join the conversation, 478-1520, text any questions or comments to 450 478 1520 we’ll be right back.

00:24:20:17 - 00:24:26:02

Chad Alexander

Welcome back to the ride, I am Chad Alexander.

00:25:11:18 - 00:25:31:20

00:26:37:35 - 00:26:59:21

Caller

Okay. And, you just had AJ Griffin on, and I think you've heard me suggest open primaries a number of times. And, I’m glad there is an organization trying to achieve it. Is there a way to get in touch with them without having email capabilities?

00:26:59:26 - 00:27:26:36

Chad Alexander

They have information about and contact information, things like that. And I don't know if they have a phone number. Yeah. They they've just now gotten organized. This is for 2026. So they're trying this on for about 2026. I think they're just getting started. But they have considerable backing in this group from both Democrats, independents and Republicans.

00:27:26:41 - 00:27:40:17

Chad Alexander

Like I said, there are former Republican legislators, not the first one to say it. Now, in the current system for like and for, I can tell you that. Absolutely. But to the system.

00:27:40:22 - 00:27:50:51

Caller

I think it gives any Oklahoman regardless of registration or non registration, as long as they are registered to vote but don’t have a party affiliation

00:27:50:56 - 00:28:17:19

Chad Alexander

Outside of deep blue states in the northeast and there’s not many actually of them, only Florida, Kentucky, Oklahoma, New Mexico, which is not a red state, Nevada which is well, there's purple state and Washington are the only closed primary states,and Oregon, excuse me, are the only closed primary states. And so, you know, you only have six states outside of the northeast with those primaries.

00:28:17:19 - 00:28:47:21

Chad Alexander

Every other Republican state across the country has open primaries. Texas has open primaries. Are they any less conservative? Is Ted Cruz still not the senator? Did he get beaten in a primary? John Cornyn still a US senator? Their lieutenant governor, other statewide elected officials are Republicans. And there's a myth in Oklahoma

00:28:47:26 - 00:29:13:42

Chad Alexander

That liberals are going to take over. I mean, Democrats are 28% of registered voters in Oklahoma. Texas has more Democrats than Oklahoma does. I know that is a scare tactic, that isn't real. When you look at it in practice and you look at the map almost every state has open primaries, West Virginia, most Republican state in

00:29:13:42 - 00:29:15:36

Chad Alexander

The country

00:29:15:41 - 00:29:26:47

Caller

I think in a way, and I could be wrong on this, but in a way I think it's a methodology of the closed primary to try to keep a stranglehold on the majority power, but I could be wrong.

00:29:26:56 - 00:29:32:01

Chad Alexander

I don't think it's a majority power, I don't think it's going to change parties. I think.

00:29:32:06 - 00:29:33:52

Caller

You know, just the closed primary thing.

00:29:33:54 - 00:29:52:55

Chad Alexander

You know, the closed primary, though, it's not that because there's not enough, you know, a Democrat can't win their seats or in some of the urban really blue seats or Republican win. So no, Democrats or Republican file. So you have Republicans in Oklahoma City who haven't been able to vote for their state representative for candidate for eight years either.

00:29:53:00 - 00:30:05:24

Chad Alexander

It happens to both parties. It just depends on where you live.

00:30:05:28 - 00:30:06:41

Caller

It's in the list.

00:30:06:50 - 00:30:28:29

Chad Alexander

And they usually have two Democrats in the general election. There's usually not an opponent that makes it to the statewide ballot. California, the general election they win the primary but they don't make the general election. And so they end up choosing between two Democrats. In Oklahoma, you probably see the same thing in statewide races. We'd be voting between two Republicans, even with open primaries.

00:30:28:33 - 00:30:57:42

Caller

And just from the political side, of course it was open to both Democrat and Republican. But the county sheriff election, it's coming up again. My deciding factor in supporting the current Sheriff Johnson was based on interviews and policy standings. He was more supportive of the constitution, Bill of Rights, citizens.

00:30:57:47 - 00:31:08:50

Chad Alexander

Percent voted for Sheriff Johnson. He's done a great job. I served with him in the general trust. He's as professional, ethical, as you can get.

00:31:08:55 - 00:31:12:38

Caller

And he's really turned the county sheriff's department operation around.

00:31:12:43 - 00:31:17:00

Chad Alexander

He’s done a phenomenal job as sheriff.

00:31:17:05 - 00:31:22:16

Caller

I know that had no real bearing on what we were discussing. But I.

00:31:22:16 - 00:31:23:14

Chad Alexander

I mean that was …

00:31:23:19 - 00:31:24:15

Chad Alexander

The point

00:31:24:20 - 00:31:32:34

Chad Alexander

AJ Griffin was saying that in 70 out of 77 counties. Democrats and independents will not be able to participate in the sheriff's races.

00:31:32:39 - 00:31:33:28

Caller

But I.

00:31:33:29 - 00:31:36:29

Chad Alexander

I don't even know why that's a partisan race honestly, it’s sheriff.

00:31:36:36 - 00:31:49:20

Caller

I think the open primary, they should have to state their qualifications, if any, and why they're running, what they hope to accomplish, and then they should have to have public debate.

00:31:49:24 - 00:32:14:40

Chad Alexander

And you gotta get out there and tell people what you're for. I think that’s the mistake the Harris campaign made. Hey Ben, I appreciate your call. Got it. Let's go to the text line Jake. Great job AJ from a fellow Guthrien. Oh nice. Nice shout out to AJ. Independent voters aren't disenfranchised by anyone other than themselves. They should register with a party, open primaries are poison for our GOP.

00:32:14:51 - 00:32:48:11

Chad Alexander

Please explain to me how they're poison for the GOP. Are they poison for the GOP in Texas with all elected Republicans across the state? How about Louisiana that has a Republican governor, Arkansas that has Sarah Sanders as governor. Kansas, Missouri, Georgia, North Carolina, Alabama, and Mississippi. Ohio. I mean, I'm naming red state after red state, South Dakota, North Dakota. What’s poison about it for the GOP?

00:32:48:18 - 00:33:07:08

Chad Alexander

Why is it the GOP employs it in all those states? And I'd like to know if you're a Trump supporter? Because if you're a Trump supporter, Trump won the nomination by dominating open primary states. The only states Ted Cruz won were closed primary states.

00:33:07:13 - 00:33:23:28

Chad Alexander

So if you wanted Donald Trump to win that primary, if every state was closed primary it probably goes 50/50 to Ted Cruz then. Donald Trump won some closed primary states too but Ted Cruz only state victories were in closed primaries states.

00:33:23:33 - 00:33:39:56

Chad Alexander

Sorry to point that out. So explain to me how they're toxic. It's easy to say their poison or toxic, but the facts do not bear that out with states with open primaries. Like I said there's only six states outside the northern states that have closed primaries.

00:33:40:01 - 00:34:01:32

Chad Alexander

Republican deep red states, the only state really more Republican than Oklahoma is West Virginia. They have open primaries. You see the Democrats taking over up there? And do you want independents who aren’t Republicans to join the party just to vote in primaries? To increase just the party number?

00:34:01:37 - 00:34:24:00

Chad Alexander

Alright we are gonna take a quick break. We had a couple other texts we’ll get to. We’ll be back for that. If you want to join us for our final segment 478 1520. I am Chad Alexander. This is the ride. Our resident expert on Oklahoma politics, Chad Alexander on talk’s radio new generation 1520 K OKC. Welcome back to The Ride, I am Chad Alexander. Let's go straight to the text line.

00:34:24:00 - 00:34:46:26

Chad Alexander

Jake what do you have over there? Reynolds says AJ Griffin just made my point. Welcome to the Oklahoma non democracy, sad. I don’t understand. I don’t know if we have time but if you can clarify the point that we made for you. Are they saying we're on the wrong side of democracy or we're on the right side? That’s the vibe I got.

00:34:46:30 - 00:35:08:47

Chad Alexander

But I mean I think it can be taken either way. That's the problem with text, that's why I don't do business by text. Some things get taken out of context then what you’re meaning to say. Yeah. I mean, that's why I pick up the phone and call people, things like that. Things get lost, my sarcasm gets lost in translation.

00:35:08:52 - 00:35:32:49

Chad Alexander

Happens to me all the time, but I can't do it. This new generation wants to text all the time. If it takes a long time, call me. We can text back for 30 minutes or I could get it done in five minutes. I say, let's save 25 minutes. The only thing that poisons elections is apathy and voter turnout by members of any party. If you think it's poisoned, get out and get your people to vote.

00:35:32:54 - 00:35:42:29

Chad Alexander

Yeah. I mean, 81% of Republicans didn't even care to take their vote in the primary process.

00:35:42:33 - 00:36:04:21

Chad Alexander

And the apathy is real. I said no, not for anything. When there's only six states west of the East Coast that don't have open primaries, and all the other super Republican states have open primaries and it hasn’t hurt them at all.