

# The Oregonian

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Neel Pender's opinion piece criticizing the movement for open primaries ignores the growing disenfranchisement of many Oregon voters by the major political parties ("Open primaries won't end political gridlock," Oct. 4).

Almost half a million voters in this state are registered as nonaffiliated. These are people who no longer believe the major parties offer real solutions to the challenges we face.

These voters are not permitted to participate in the party primaries and are forced to choose among candidates in the general election that they had no role in selecting.

The rules for getting independent candidates on the ballot are onerous.

The proponents of open primaries are under no illusions that this change would solve all the problems of our political system. But it's an important step in reforming that system.

DAVID V. ELLIS Oregon Committee for an Independent Voice Northeast Portland