



June 5, 2024

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

To: Ms. Karen Brinson-Bell  
Executive Director  
North Carolina State Board of Elections  
430 N. Salisbury St.  
Raleigh, NC 27603

State Board Members  
Alan Hirsch, Chair  
Jeff Carmon, Secretary  
Stacy Eggers IV, Board Member  
Kevin N. Lewis, Board Member  
Siobhan O'Duffy Millen, Board Member  
elections.sboe@ncsbe.gov

From: North Carolina Democratic Party  
220 Hillsborough Street  
Raleigh, NC 27603

*represented by:*

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**Re: Challenge to “New Party: Justice for All Party of NC” Petition**

On behalf of the North Carolina Democratic Party, we write to challenge Justice for All Party of NC’s (“Justice for All”) petition to be recognized as a political party under state law.

By separate letter of today’s date, the North Carolina Democratic Party also challenged We The People’s petition for party recognition. As that letter sets forth in detail, a “candidate campaign committee” is distinct from a “political party” under North Carolina law. Different campaign finance restrictions apply and different rules govern access to the ballot. That legal analysis—which we



incorporate here by reference<sup>1</sup>—demonstrates that a candidate campaign committee cannot circumvent the requirements for an independent candidate to access the North Carolina ballot by simply declaring itself a new political party and thereby gain access to the ballot with just one-sixth of the required signatures and three additional months to obtain them.

Nevertheless, the Cornel West for President 2024 campaign (“West Campaign”) has copied—nearly verbatim—the Kennedy Campaign’s playbook this election cycle in trying to avoid North Carolina’s independent-candidate requirements.

Less than a month after the Kennedy Campaign announced its plans to circumvent North Carolina’s ballot access requirements by starting a new political party, independent candidate Cornel West and his campaign followed suit by seeking to form the “Justice for All Party” in North Carolina and other states where it is “easier to gain access to the ballot [as] a party as opposed to an independent.”<sup>2</sup> Like the Kennedy Campaign, plans for the Justice for All Party are limited to states where it is “most expedient” to form a party; West still plans to run as an “independent in other states.”

Like the Kennedy Campaign, the West Campaign is open about its intentions in petitioning for recognition of a new party. The West Campaign instructs its circulators to “[m]ake sure signers understand the exact purpose of the petition—to get Dr. Cornel West and Dr. Melina Abdullah on the ballot as *independent candidates* for president and vice president of the United States.”<sup>3</sup>

And like the Kennedy Campaign’s We The People party, the West Campaign’s Justice for All party has no Internet presence separate from [cornelwest2024.com](https://www.cornelwest2024.com).<sup>4</sup> Justice for All has no public bylaws and no published platform or positions separate from the West Campaign. And it appears to have no financial existence outside of spending by the West Campaign. Neither the national nor the state party has registered or filed any campaign finance disclosure reports

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<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the North Carolina Democratic Party incorporates two sections of that letter: “A ‘Candidate Campaign’ Is Distinct from a ‘Political Party’” and “Definitions of ‘Candidate Campaign’ and ‘Political Party.’”

<sup>2</sup> @CornelWest, X (Jan. 31, 2024 12:43 PM, <https://x.com/CornelWest/status/1752749471622979858>) (Video at 0:18: “We’re calling for the Justice for All Party to be used to gain access to the ballot in those states where it’s easier to gain access to the ballot [as a] party as opposed to an independent. I’ll be an independent in other states.”), archived at <https://perma.cc/U84Y-VJT3>.

<sup>3</sup> Cornel West for President 2024, Circulator Instructions (last visited May 31, 2024) (emphasis added), [https://assets.nationbuilder.com/cornelwest/pages/231/attachments/original/1715553435/North\\_Carolina\\_JFA\\_Petition\\_Guide\\_CW2024.pdf?1715553435](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/cornelwest/pages/231/attachments/original/1715553435/North_Carolina_JFA_Petition_Guide_CW2024.pdf?1715553435), archived at <https://perma.cc/S393-PLNU>.

<sup>4</sup> Cornel West for President, “North Carolina for West!/Justice for All” (last visited May 31, 2024), <https://www.cornelwest2024.com/northcarolina>.



with the Federal Election Commission or the Board. In fact, the West Campaign—not Justice for All—issued the press release to “announce” that it “ha[d] successfully surpassed the required ballot access threshold in North Carolina,” claiming that “*Dr. West’s campaign* has collected more than 14,075 valid signatures.”<sup>5</sup> The West Campaign emphasized that it had “demonstrated considerable momentum . . . *paralleling the ballot access achievements of candidates like Kennedy.*”<sup>6</sup>

The parallels between the Kennedy and West Campaigns show that the Kennedy Campaign’s playbook, if successful, will only encourage other independent candidates to try to circumvent the North Carolina requirements applicable to them.

The Board should reject that playbook by denying both petitions.

Accordingly, the Democratic Party of North Carolina respectfully submits that the Board should reject Justice for All of NC’s petition to be recognized as a state party in North Carolina.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "A. Clayton", written in a cursive style.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Raymond M. Bennett", written in a cursive style.

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<sup>5</sup> Cornel West for President 2024, Dr. Cornel West Surpasses Ballot Access Threshold in North Carolina, Signaling Major Strides for Independent Presidential Campaign (May 20, 2024) (emphasis added) <https://www.cornelwest2024.com/ncjusticeforall>.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* (emphasis added).



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