



Queens County Independence Party

Molly Honigsfeld, Chair
14-17 31st Avenue #3C
Astoria, NY 11106
www.ipnyc.org

Testimony of Bryan Puertas To the Charter Revision Commission Monday, April 12, 2010 Bronx, NY

Good evening. My name is Bryan Puertas, I am 25 years old, and I am here to talk to you about young people. Young people, like myself, are worried. Worried about finding our place in a troubled economy, an uncertain time, and a broken government. We see problems everywhere that can be solved, but instead we get band-aid measures and gridlock. We see politicians more concerned with the interests of their party than the interests of the people they have been elected to serve, even to the point of not doing their jobs. What kind of message is that supposed to send to us?

So young people, like myself, see this and increasingly reject politics as usual. We have become more and more independent. Not out of a sense of childish rebellion, but an intuitive understanding that the Democratic and Republican parties do not speak for us. Young people, like myself, look at each issue on its own, not as part of an overreaching ideology. And young people, like myself, vote for PEOPLE, not parties.

But what are we told here in NYC? That we should just get out and vote in November for candidates that we don't believe in, that we had no part in nominating and **are not responsive to our needs**. *If we go to vote in the primaries, we're told that we're not wanted unless we join their party, we're denied our right to vote*, even though we pay for the primary elections. What kind of message does that send? That's taxation without representation. We fought a war over that!

It doesn't have to be this way. We can have one primary election where everyone runs, regardless of party. Everyone gets to vote for whoever they like, for the person, not the party, and the top two vote getters go on to November. The party machines can still support whoever they like, but they don't get to tell us who we can and cannot vote for. We can give everyone an equal voice in nominating candidates we believe in. We can send the message that we want all voters to be a part of all rounds of voting. And we can tell our young people that we want them to be a part of a fair and democratic future in this city. So that's why young people, like myself, ask you to put nonpartisan municipal elections on the ballot this year. Thank you.