August 24, 2015

Hon. Sharon Runner
State Capitol, Room 4090
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

Subject: SB 49 – Special elections – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Runner,

The Peace and Freedom Party of California stands opposed to AB 49, due to its elimination of the option for individuals to run as write-in candidates and to the apparent move toward executive appointments for what should be elected positions.

This is a clear step away from the democratic process and disenfranchises voters and potential candidates. While recognizing that this bill applies to a narrow range of circumstances, we have serious concerns about laws that would shortcut the filling of positions that should be decided by the voters.

It should not be a responsibility of the Governor to choose those who will fill vacancies in Congress and the Legislature, nor should it be the Governor’s job to cancel special elections.

In addition, this bill has two specific problems. First, it doesn't specify the timeframe within which the Governor can cancel a special primary election. This can lead to situations in which a write-in campaign is under way when the decision to cancel is made, and in which election officials have already committed significant resources to conducting the election. Second, because of the compressed schedule for special elections it is possible that write-in candidates will have already qualified before the close of filing to be on the ballot. When that happens, cancelling the election will prevent voters from choosing already qualified write-in candidate or candidates.

If you would like to discuss our position on SB 49 further, please contact me at 916-698-8131 (mobile) or by email at debra.reiger@earthlink.net, or C. T. Weber at 916-320-9186 (mobile) or by email at ctwebervoters@att.net.

Yours truly,

Debra Reiger
State Chair
Peace and Freedom Party of California

cc: Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting
    Hon. Sebastian Ridley-Thomas, Chair
    Hon. Shannon L. Grove, Vice-Chair
    Hon. Travis Allen
    Hon. Mike Gatto
    Hon. Richard S. Gordon
    Hon. Kevin Mullin
    Hon. Henry T. Perea