November 6, 2013

Commissioners Robert Bauer and Benjamin Ginsberg

GSA, 1776 G Street NW., Washington, DC 20006

Dear Commissioners Bauer and Ginsberg:

The government shutdown is just one of the most recent evidences that partisan and bi-partisan politics are destroying our country. The good news is that you have an opportunity to recommend meaningful structural reform of the American political process.

My name is Susan Doup. I am a registered Democrat and a member of Independent Ohio, a grass-roots organization of independent voters committed to protecting the rights of Ohio's independent voters and to working for a less partisan, less bi-partisan political dialogue based on sound reason and critical thinking. My personal trip from moderate Democrat to independent voter has taken me several years.

This is an exciting and challenging time for independent voters and for the independent movement. We do not strive to become yet another political party. Independents seek to diminish the regressive influence of parties and partisanship by opening up the democratic process to all eligible voters.

As the independent movement grows, 41% of college students consider themselves independents as do 35% of African Americans under the age of 30, the barriers that limit independent participation have become even more obvious.

I am an independent, one of 1100 who signed on to a letter encouraging you to recognize that the most important aspect of our election process is ensuring it is open to all eligible voters. You know that 40% of Americans consider ourselves independent, and we have testified before your committee that we are not able to fully participate in the democratic process due to partisan primaries, registration requirements, rulemaking bodies, ballot requirements, redistricting and other laws that deny equal voting rights to all voters; including independent voters. In addition, voters do not have initiative and referendum rights in half the states. I urge you to address these in your final report.

Respectfully,

Susan Doup

Member, independent Ohio

Wakeman, OH