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NEWS RELEASE

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**DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL OPERATIVES CHALLENGE KABOT'S PETITIONS
AS A WRITE-IN CANDIDATE FOR INDEPENDENCE LINE**

George Lynch, a political activist with the Southampton Town Democratic Party, has filed objections at the Suffolk County Board of Elections and a lawsuit in Supreme Court in an attempt to shut down an Independence Primary for the position of Suffolk County Legislator for the South Fork. The position is currently held by Democrat Bridget Fleming, and the 2nd Legislative District is comprised of the Towns of Southampton, East Hampton, Shelter Island, and a portion of Brookhaven Town.

Linda Kabot, the designated candidate for the Office of Suffolk County Legislator for the 2nd Legislative District on the Republican and Conservative lines for the November 5 General Election ballot, filed petitions at the Board of Elections for an opportunity to run as a Write-In Candidate for the Independence line in the June 25 Primary Election. Kabot collected 172 signatures from voters enrolled with the Independence affiliation under the "Opportunity to Ballot" provision of Election Law and filed by postmark April 11, the last date for write-in candidates to petition under the new political calendar implemented in New York State. A minimum of 132 signatures was needed to force the primary for the South Fork Legislative District, which spans from Moriches through Montauk, and includes Shelter Island also.

Lynch has filed specific objections to 45 voter signatures on Kabot's petitions alleging that there are 20 duplicate signatures to those already submitted to support Fleming's candidacy and further alleges that there are 25 signatures by voters not registered specifically as "Independence." If Lynch's specific objections are correct and those 45 signatures are nullified for Kabot, then her petition contains 127 signatures which is 5 less than the required 132 signatures necessary to allow the write-in opportunity to ballot. Lynch's objections are now under review by the Republican and Democratic Commissioners of the Board of Elections, which would both need to agree to invalidate signatures for reasons set forth by the Objector George Lynch. In addition to arguing that duplicate signatures from voters that signed for Fleming

should only count for Fleming, Lynch has questioned signatures that appear more in print form, than script cursive form, and makes other claims.

Kabot stated, “This voter petition is to allow for a write-in opportunity and it is amazing to me that Fleming’s Democratic Party cronies are trying to challenge voter signatures and block ballot access. What are they afraid of? Let the voters decide who they believe best represents them, and allow for choice at the ballot box, including by write-in. It is not the Independence Party that is objecting to these voter signatures. The Independence Party platform was always centered on supporting ballot access for reform-minded candidates who have demonstrated their independence, commitment to good government and who can look past political party labels to govern with common sense.”

“This is a power play by the Democratic Party Bosses to intimidate and obstruct and attempt to control whose names appear on what party lines on the ballot for Election Day. It makes no sense that the Southampton Town Democratic Party stalwarts are attempting to squash the democratic process of choice, not only with my write-in petition, but also within their own party for a Town Council candidate and in another minor party’s petitions supporting that same Democratic contender, plus against the Working Families petition for a write-in opportunity put forward by two Republican-Conservative Town Council candidates,” said Kabot.

“Fleming should tell her Democratic Party operatives to back off and not disenfranchise voters – not object to voter signatures and not attempt to rig the ballot with deal-making by party bosses. Let the people decide and exercise their right to choose, including by write-in if necessary in the interest of good government. Let the voters decide who they believe best represents them, not Party Bosses who control ballot access through deal-making, and not through courtroom battles over voter signatures,” continued Kabot.

Suffolk County Democratic Party operatives are supporting George Lynch’s voter signature objections with a lawsuit, which is called “Order to Show Cause In Connection With a Petition for Review Under Election Law 16-102” and “Request for Judicial Intervention” filed in Supreme Court on April 23. This legal maneuver requires that Kabot now have a lawyer appear in court on May 8 at 9:30 am to represent the “Committee to Receive Notices” that is identified on the Independence Petition supporting her write-in opportunity to ballot, which are three registered Independence voters. Lynch’s lawsuit also requires Suffolk County Board of Elections Commissioners be present or represented by County Attorney on May 8. As the Citizen Objector, Lynch is therefore requesting a Supreme Court Judge to invalidate

the Opportunity to Ballot Petition by Write-In for the Independence Line in an attempt to block any effort by Kabot to ask Independence Voters to choose their representation on Primary Day, June 25.

“This is the game of petition warfare and how the Democratic Party wants to strong-arm and restrict ballot access. It takes courage to run for public office and fortitude to stand up in the face of challenge. It is very hard to get one’s name onto a ballot when interested in running for office. A true Independent who wishes to run on a true Independent line would require over 1,500 voter signatures for this particular elected office (Suffolk County Legislator LD#2) and approximately 1,200 for a Southampton Town elected office, so these political party machinations, deal-making and horse-trading, and efforts to block write-in candidates on minor party lines are a deterrent to candidates who might want to run for office, and a disenfranchisement of the voters, who desire to have choice and truly independent candidates considered. It is time for the people to rise up. Choose your representatives wisely come Primary Day June 25 and then on Election Day November 5,” stated Kabot.

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Additional background info regarding June 25 Primary Day and other candidates facing challenges:

The incumbent County Legislator for LD#2 is Bridget Fleming, registered Democrat who is the designated candidate on the Democratic Party, Working Families Party, and Independence Party lines. If the Board of Elections deems Kabot’s Opportunity to Ballot Independence petitions sufficient and if Kabot is successful as a Write-In Candidate in the June 25 Independence Primary, the Independent line would then have Kabot’s name on the November 5 General Election ballot, in addition to the Republican Party and Conservative Party lines which Kabot currently is designated to run on for Suffolk County Legislator.

Other elected positions are also in play for the June 25 Independence Primary, including Southampton Town Supervisor Jay Schneiderman, now registered Democrat, who is being challenged by Alex Gregor, who is registered Independence and currently serves as Southampton Town Superintendent of Highways.

In addition, incumbent Southampton Town Receiver of Taxes Theresa Kiernan is being challenged by Southampton Town Democratic Party Leader Gordon Herr in the June 25 Independence Primary. Theresa Kiernan is on the November 5 General ballot on the Republican and Conservative Party lines, while Gordon Herr is on the Democratic

and Working Families Party lines. The winner of the Independence Primary June 25 for the Tax Receiver's position will have the Independence line on the November 5 General Election Ballot.

The New York State and Suffolk County Party Leader Frank MacKay did not allow the written authorizations (called "Wilson Pakulas") for the candidates who filed petitions with ample voter signatures for an Independence Primary for Town Council and Town Trustee positions. The Independence line was only party-leader authorized by Wilson Pakula to Democrat incumbent Councilman John Bouvier and Democrat Craig Cattalonotto, while ballot access efforts by Democrat Eileen Duffy and Conservative Charles McArdle were shut down by the party boss. Likewise, the Independence Party Leader denied ballot access authorization by Wilson Pakula for the Trustee candidates Democrats Eric Shultz, Fred Havemeyer, David Mayer, and Andrew Brosnan while providing authorization to Republican Scott Horowitz, Republican Don Law, and Conservative Megan Heckman – the latter of which will run with Trustees Bill Pell and Ann Welker, who are both Independence-enrolled voters and did not need Independence party leader authorization, and but did need Democratic party leader authorization. (Note: Trustee Ann Welker was previously a registered Democrat and is now enrolled Independence.)

Kabot's Independence petition did not require a Wilson-Pakula authorization from the Party Leader because she filed opportunity-to-ballot as a write-in candidate.

"I believe it is important for the people to decide on their representatives. It is unfair when so many voter signatures are submitted in support of placing certain names on the ballot and then a party leader does not authorize that person to run. It's contrary to the reform-minded, independent agenda that the Independence Party originally set forth as its objective as an alternative to the major political parties and the ideals of good government, free from corruption, ballot-rigging, deal-making, pay-to-play politics and self-interest of the political players involved," commented Kabot. "It is also disconcerting to see political operatives filing objections at the Board of Elections to challenge voter signatures and push for invalidation of another candidate's petition for ballot access, or even for a write-in opportunity. The voters intent to allow for choice should be respected, not just another game of 'inside baseball' where political parties battle it out with objections at the Board of Elections and in the Supreme Court."