



Husted orders Libertarian Candidate off ballot

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By **Jim Heath**

COLUMBUS, Ohio - Secretary of State Jon Husted decided late Friday to remove Charlie Earl, the Libertarian candidate for governor, off the May primary ballot.

That decision effectively removes the possibility of a Libertarian name being on the November ballot.

Husted said he is following the recommendation of a hearing officer who concluded Earl and Steve Linnabary, the Libertarian candidate for Attorney General, do not have enough valid signatures on petitions.

The decision is being hailed as a victory for state Republicans who were concerned that Earl could garner 3 to 5 percent of the statewide vote in November.

Republican governor John Kasich narrowly defeated then-Democratic governor Ted Strickland in 2010 by a 49 to 47 percent margin.

Kasich's two point victory came in an election year heavily dominated by GOP candidates who swept every statewide office in Ohio.

Republican strategist Terry Casey said the evidence was clear that Libertarian operatives failed to meet the legal requirements on petitions.

"I was shocked when I saw the involvement of the Ohio Democrat Party in collusion with Libertarians," said Casey. "There was testimony about the breakfast between the Libertarian Party head and Ohio Democrat Party chairman Chris Redfern. I'm shocked the Democrats are this desperate."

Democrat operatives were quick to criticize the decision and suggested Kasich supporters are trying to clear the ballot.

"Kasich and his allies have moved heaven and earth to keep Charlie Earl off the ballot, they know he would take votes from Kasich," said Dale Butland of Innovation Ohio. "But you have to give Republicans credit because when it comes to voter suppression they don't discriminate. Whether you're black or you're white, unless you plan to vote for Kasich, they don't want you at the polls."

Last year, Republican lawmakers approved a law, signed by Kasich, making it harder for minor party candidates to get on the ballot.

That was thrown out later by a federal judge.

Original Video: <http://www.10tv.com/content/stories/2014/03/07/columbus-husted-orders-libertarian-off-ballot.html>