

Jill Not Hill: Green Party's Jill Stein Forges Ahead after Democratic National Convention

By [Ann Garrison](#)

Global Research, August 01, 2016

Region: [USA](#)

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Green Party presidential candidate Dr. Jill Stein has gotten more media coverage than ever before since Bernie Sanders endorsed Hillary Clinton and hundreds of Bernie delegates walked out of the Democratic National Convention chanting "JILL NOT HILL." Stein still faces exclusion from the nationally televised presidential debates and steep ballot access barriers in many states. I spoke to Rick Lass, the Stein campaign's ballot access coordinator, who said the campaign expects to spend half a million dollars just getting on the ballot.

Ann Garrison: Rick Lass, could you give us a summary of the state of Jill Stein's ballot access drive now?

Rick Lass: Definitely, we're movin' right along. Things are goin' quite well. We've, since we last talked, got on the ballot in a couple more states and August is our big month. We've got seven filings on August 1st and 2nd, another couple on August 10th, and another 15 between August 10th and September 9th. We're actively petitioning in every state we haven't filed in already, and things are lookin' good.



Dr. Jill Stein addressed the Black Men for Bernie rally at the Democratic National Convention. The group now supports Dr. Stein.

AG: I heard that one state you didn't manage to get on in was Oklahoma?

RL: That's right. They had a really high requirement of 40,000 signatures and a mid-July deadline. So there's actually three states that we're definitely not on. Oklahoma, North Carolina and Indiana. We will be write-in candidates in North Carolina and Indiana, but Oklahoma doesn't allow write-ins.

AG: That means that Jill will be officially registered as a write-in, so that a write-in vote for Jill will be counted, right?

RL: In Indiana and North Carolina, right, but not Oklahoma.

AG: What about Georgia, which also had really high signature requirements before a legal decision lowered them?

RL: In Georgia we turned in 10,000 signatures, a little more than that, and we need 7500 to be valid. So we're waiting, it's been three weeks now almost since we filed, and we haven't heard anything. They have a very rigorous test, just like the State of Nevada, where we filed 8500 and needed 5500 to be valid. And they actually compare the signature on the petition to the signature that they have on file that they've scanned of the person's original voter registration form. And they use that to disqualify certain signatures, which just seems absurd if you consider the person may have registered to vote 10 years ago or 15 years ago, or they might be signing the petition in 110 degree heat in Las Vegas in a shopping center parking lot somewhere and not be quite so careful as if they're in a government office signing an official form. So, in Nevada we've actually appealed the decision. They said we fell short by 600, and in Georgia, we're waiting to hear but we're very optimistic.

AG: OK, so are you optimistic that Jill Stein will be on the ballot in most states?

RL: Well, most definitely. I still think we're gonna be on in 46 states.

AG: Now I believe that Jill would have to get 15% in a major, nationally recognized poll to be able to get into the presidential debates. Is that right?

RL: I think you need three major recognized polls, and that's why there's a lawsuit that was filed almost four years ago against the Commission on Presidential Debates for their exclusive, monopolistic way of handling what used to be done fairly by the League of Women Voters. I was never a huge fan of Ross Perot but due to the fact that Ross Perot was on the debate stage back in '92, he got a very good percentage of the votes because people realized they had another choice and, instead of sitting home, they went out and voted to overturn the two-party system. And ever since then, they have not allowed a so-called third party candidate on the debate stage.

AG: OK, I'll try to catch up with you again to see how it goes in the critical month of August.

RL: Thanks for getting in touch and keeping people informed.

Ann Garrison is an independent journalist who contributes to the San Francisco Bay View, Counterpunch, Global Research, the Black Agenda Report and the Black Star News, and produces radio for KPFA-Berkeley and WBAI-New York City. In 2014, she was awarded the [Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza Democracy and Peace Prize](#) by the [Womens International Network for Democracy and Peace](#). She can be reached at ann@afrobeatradio.com.

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