Independent Candidate for Iowa Governor
Founder of Wild Willpower
WildWillpower.org
"Learning from the Past to Prepare for the Future."

OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN STATEMENT

ON PRIVILEGE AND OPPRESSION: THE JUXTAPOSITION IS STARK, AND POLITICAL THEATER APPEARS REAL

September 11, 2026

Dear **Rob Sand for Iowa**:

In your August 26 interview with **POLITICO**, you stated:

> "I just think girls' sports are for girls and boys' sports are for boys."[1]

I cannot overstate how disappointed I am in you, or how unrepresented I feel in this race.

Your statement went beyond expressing a policy position about athletic competition. In ordinary language, it carries the implication that transgender women are not really women at all.

After years in which transgender Iowans have endured escalating political attacks:

1. **Countless acts of defamation, yours not excluded;**
2. **Statements that, in effect, incite further harassment against transgender Iowans;**
3. **A manufactured, impossible condition of severe oppression and cruelty:** the stripping of Medicaid, removal of workplace protections/civil-rights-protections, and simultaneous work requirements in unsafe and unprotected conditions. The Medicaid we receive if we meet the work requirements, living without workplace protections against discrimination, still will not cover gender-affirming care.[2]

Did your statement, implying transgender women are men, help our situation in any way? No: it reinforced a prejudice that transgender Iowans are already being forced to live under.

And when it comes from someone campaigning to become a governor for "all Iowans," it raises an obvious question:

> **Why is Rob Sand reinforcing widely held prejudices against transgender women at the same time he claims to be "governor for all"?**

I want to be equally clear about something else.

I agree that there are legitimate fairness questions involving transgender women in sex-classified sports. My own policy says so.[3]

I support protecting women's sports where biological differences materially affect competition, and I propose exploring Open Leagues and other workable alternatives.[3]

But workable alternatives are different from joining in and reinforcing destructive rhetoric.

Iowa can protect fair competition without using rhetoric that, in effect, incites more harassment against transgender women than we already endure.

ON BIPARTISANSHIP AND POLITICAL PRIVILEGE

You have actively courted Republican voters under the banner of the "Rob-Publicans."[4]

Bipartisanship should not mean finding common ground by sacrificing a politically vulnerable minority.

From where I and many other Iowans stand, that is what your disregard for transgender Iowans looks like—and it is happening precisely when transgender Iowans need political leadership.

These concerns become especially difficult to ignore when placed beside the extraordinary financial privilege surrounding your candidacy.

Public campaign-finance records show that your wife and in-laws contributed approximately $11.5 million to your campaign committee since 2024.[5]

Your father-in-law, Nixon Lauridsen, alone contributed $4.019 million. Nixon, Walter, and Augustine Lauridsen also contributed a combined $215,000 to committees supporting Republican Gov. Kim Reynolds between 2015 and 2021.[5]

Comparatively, I have been fighting in court simply for the opportunity to appear on the ballot as an independent candidate—to present the campaign and platform I spent years developing to fellow Iowans. While you are lifted to power by money and media, my campaign suffered what I am in the process of proving was political sabotage, while one judge's factually incorrect decision kept me from having the opportunity to join in the debates or have my name on the ballot. Maybe that isn't how Judge Beattie sees it, but from my firsthand knowledge of the situation, that is exactly what is going on. I am still in the courts on this issue, despite the lack of media coverage which your campaign and the other mainstream candidate, **Zach Lahn for Governor**, so readily enjoy.

And Mr. Lahn, please don't take my criticism of Mr. Sand's campaign as support for yours. Your party, as the facts appear to support, is in violation of Iowa's Ongoing Criminal Conduct Act for

color-of-law violations against transgender Iowans. Just because the laws aren't being enforced by the same party who is breaking them, doesn't mean the statutes aren't being violated.

So, while Iowans appear to be shepherded into supporting one of the two parties, I implore Iowans to instead look behind the scenes, because we are getting played and divided against one another. I may not be able to prove intent, but the outcome is strongly evident.[5] [6]

Mr. Sand, you may be proud to be drawing Republicans into the **Iowa Democratic Party**, but meanwhile, it appears you are throwing transgender Iowans under the bus. And the old "vote Democrat or we'll end up with a Republican!" scare tactic that worked on me when I was in my 20s and 30s, has become stale after being repeatedly deployed every election cycle. I'm done with the two parties. I'm standing up for the future of Iowans instead, come hell or high water.

There are things in this world that are far more important than party loyalty. Standing up for what is right, and standing against that which is morally wrong, are two of those things.

Mr. Sand, the Medicaid rights of transgender Iowans may not mean much to you, because clearly you and your family have no trouble purchasing anything you want—including our elections. But please don't call yourself "Governor for All" when you are not standing up for all of us, and when you are actively reinforcing widespread prejudice and bigotry, even if that was not your intent.

ON LEADERSHIP

It is easy to stand with a majority when doing so is electorally convenient.

The test of character in government comes when the people who need representation are unpopular, politically inconvenient, or too small in number to reward you for defending them.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower did not accommodate widespread resistance to desegregation.

During the Little Rock crisis in 1957, he placed the Arkansas National Guard under federal control and sent soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division to enforce federal desegregation orders.[7]

Protecting an unpopular minority sometimes requires confronting a hostile majority.

THE JUXTOPOSITION IS STARK

Your primary campaign financiers helped bring to power candidates that defamed and kicked down a protected minority, taking away from us the little support we had: healthcare and workplace protections, even if those protections were only on paper (see Iowa's Civil-Rights Trap on **WildWillpower.org** for context).[5] [6]

Now that same family network dumps millions into a campaign that reinforces prejudices inflamed by campaigns they supported immediately prior.

Iowans, we need to dump these two parties. For every **#OneLessDemocrat** and **#OneLessRepublican** that stands up, the stronger our future becomes.

I, for one, am sick of what we have been allowing to continue for too many generations. It needs to be called out, seen for what it is, and dropped like yesterday's diapers. The whole thing stinks.

ON BALLOT ACCESS AND POLITICAL CHOICE

Mr. Sand, you have promoted ranked-choice voting.

But ranked-choice voting cannot create genuine political choice if independent and third-party candidates are prevented from simply reaching the ballot.

Ballot access comes before ballot ranking.

Gluba for Iowa knows what I am talking about.

I strongly encourage Iowans to examine his case and mine instead of just reading the headlines or the outcome of the court cases themselves.

The closer I have examined my own case, and based on conversations with Mr. Gluba, the more the process looks to me like censorship protecting political theater instead of what I would consider carefully adjudicated cases. We need to be paying closer attention to *our* court system.

If Iowa wants elections in which voters—not political institutions, money, procedural barriers, or entrenched parties—decide who deserves support, then ballot access must be part of the reform conversation too: not just ranked-choice voting.

TO MY SUPPORTERS AND POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS

Thank you for your continuing support.

If I am kept off the ballot (Wilson v. Pate is still active), I will still run a write-in campaign.

I intend to seek at least 2% of the statewide vote as part of building a durable independent political movement under Wild Willpower's platform and Code of Ethics.

Iowa historically allowed a political organization to qualify as a political party by reaching that threshold in the relevant gubernatorial or presidential election.

But the legislature changed that law in 2025.

Under current Iowa Code § 43.2, political-party status now requires meeting the 2% threshold in the last three preceding general elections.[8]

That change reinforces the larger question I am raising here:

How meaningful is political choice if Iowa continues making it harder for political movements outside the two major parties to establish themselves and compete?

Should we continue to allow our elections to be flooded with money, while voices of regular Iowans are drowned out by party machines?

I am still here.

I am still running.

And I am giving Iowans another choice.

Sincerely,

An Unrepresented Iowan and Active Independent Candidate for Iowa Governor

— Sondra Wilson

ENDNOTES

1. Erin Reed, "Iowa Dem Candidate Rob Sand: 'Girls' Sports Are For Girls,' Says Critics 'Get Mad If You Use This Word Or That Word,'" **Erin In The Morning**, Aug. 31, 2026. Reed reports Sand saying during an interview with POLITICO's Jonathan Martin: "I just think girls' sports are for girls and boys' sports are for boys." Sand also described the position as "fair and reasonable."

2. Iowa Senate File 418 removed gender identity from the Iowa Civil Rights Act and took effect July 1, 2025. Iowa HHS also states that beginning December 1, 2026, certain Iowa Health and Wellness Plan members must complete at least 80 hours per month of work, education, job training, community service, or qualifying combinations to enroll in or maintain Medicaid coverage; failure to meet the requirement may result in coverage being denied or discontinued.

3. Sondra Wilson for Iowa Governor: Response to Transgender-Related Inquiries — Policy on Transgender Issues, Child Protection, and Public Institutions. Wilson's policy states that women's sports exist to preserve fair competition where biological differences materially affect performance; that sex-classified categories should be protected without defaming transgender women; and that optional Open Leagues should be explored as a possible long-term alternative.

4. Rob Sand for Iowa announced the "Rob-Publicans" coalition on June 22, 2026, describing it as a coalition of more than 100 registered Republicans supporting Sand for governor.

5. Iowa campaign-finance records reviewed by Iowa First Check show approximately $11,519,247 in contributions to Rob Sand for Iowa beginning in 2024 from Sand's wife,

Christine Sand, and members of the Lauridsen family. The reported total includes approximately $4,019,000 from Nixon Lauridsen, $2 million from Nancy Lauridsen, $500,000 from Walter Lauridsen, and $500,000 from Augustine Lauridsen. The same contributor histories report that Nixon, Walter, and Augustine Lauridsen contributed a combined $215,000 to committees supporting Kim Reynolds between 2015 and 2021.

6. Iowa litigation over Medicaid coverage of gender-affirming surgery included Good v. Iowa Department of Human Services and later Covington v. Reynolds. In Covington, the Iowa Court of Appeals described a legislative amendment enacted after Good that permitted Medicaid providers to deny certain gender-affirming surgical procedures, while noting that the amendment did not prohibit providers from approving such claims.

7. National Archives, Executive Order 10730: Desegregation of Central High School (1957). On September 24, 1957, President Dwight D. Eisenhower placed the Arkansas National Guard under federal authority and authorized use of federal armed forces to enforce federal desegregation orders during the Little Rock crisis.

Iowa Code § 43.2, as amended in 2025 and appearing in the 2026 Code, defines a political party as one that received at least 2% of the vote for the relevant presidential or gubernatorial office at the last three preceding general elections. A political organization that does not satisfy that definition may still nominate candidates under Iowa Code chapters 44 and 45.