Independent Candidate | Founder of Wild Willpower
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Official Statement
Regarding U.S. Marine Corps Veteran and Libertarian Candidate Nicholas Gluba — and the Lack of Integrity of Iowa's 2026 Gubernatorial Election
September 17, 2026

Recently Mr. Gluba and I began comparing our experiences surrounding our exclusion from Iowa's 2026 gubernatorial ballot.

When I first heard Gluba's account, I was skeptical. What he described sounded difficult to believe.

But I continued listening, interviewed him about what occurred, and compared his account against the public record.

After doing so, I reached a conclusion: **the State Objection Panel's decision does not add up, and Iowans need to stand up right now in order to receive a fair election.**

Read the Facts

Several facts merit public scrutiny:

1. My research found no indication that the three members of the Panel, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig, Secretary of State Paul Pate, and Attorney General Brenna Bird, ever served in the U.S. military. I am including this information because it provides crucial context that is necessary in order to evaluate the situation accurately.

2. Gluba's running mate, Jules Cutler, testified that she attempted to submit the required Affidavit of Candidacy and was told it was "not needed." Gluba informed me that he and Cutler repeatedly tried to submit it because they knew it was required, but the employee refused to accept it, insisting it "wasn't needed".

3. The three-member Panel, consisting of only Republicans, voted to push U.S. Marine Corps veteran Nicholas Gluba off the ballot. Instead of accepting his campaign's account,

they accepted the account of an SoS employee who admitted she could not even remember if Jules Cutler was present when they came into the office on June 2.

4. The security camera in the SoS's lobby was allegedly not recording, so no footage is available.

All the State had to do was listen to Gluba and Cutler, consider what had happened, and if there was an issue, simply let them file it shortly after the June 2 deadline.

Instead, the Panel acted like the Pharisees in the Gospels: they focused so much on the "letter of the law" that they violated the heart of it, keeping Gluba and Cutler off the ballot while simultaneously disrespecting a United States military veteran.

Iowans would rightfully assume that our "independent" judiciary would have corrected this situation. Instead, the Iowa Administrative Procedure Act requires the court to review agency factual findings under a "deferential standard"—even though, in this case, the judge expressly disagreed with the Panel's central factual finding. That doesn't sound like an independent judiciary to me. It sounds beholden, and like a mere illusion of separation of powers.

Why Didn't Gluba and Cutler Demand a Trial by Jury?

Even though Article I, Section 9 of the Iowa Constitution states,

> **"The right of trial by jury shall remain inviolate…"**

for some peculiar reason the court doesn't allow trial by jury in cases at equity.

The Principle of the Matter

It looks to me like a handful of gatekeepers possessed the authority to keep **Gluba for Iowa** off the ballot, but that doesn't mean Iowans should exclude his campaign from joining the debates and at least being heard.

The way I see it, as a United States military veteran who helped protect the safety and rights we enjoy every day, the least we can do, as Iowans, is stand up for Nicholas Gluba right now, and demand that all debates and major campaign events throughout the state respectfully include him.

To "Zach Lahn for Governor" and the Republican Party of Iowa

Zach Lahn, you have repeatedly positioned your campaign against Iowa's political establishment. You have said:

> **"I do believe that more choice is a good thing for voters."**

And:

> **“Enough of this partisan bullcrap that’s been going on for a long time. Both sides are implicated in many of these issues and we need somebody who’s going to fight the special interests, the corporate giants and lobbyists.”** [1]

I am asking you to look at the Gluba–Cutler case through those same principles: voter choice, skepticism of entrenched power, and a political system that should answer to Iowans rather than a small number of gatekeepers.

And it would not be the first time that a Republican candidate has taken a stance like this.

In 1980, Democratic President Jimmy Carter refused to participate in a presidential debate because independent candidate John B. Anderson was included. Carter later explained his thinking about Anderson’s inclusion this way:

> **“Obviously, Reagan knew that every time the independent candidate got a vote, it was a vote taken away from me.”** [2]

Republican candidate Ronald Reagan, however, insisted that Anderson be included. When Carter declined the three-way debate, Reagan went forward and debated Anderson anyway.

The **League of Women Voters** initially expected to leave an empty chair for Carter, although the chair was ultimately removed before the debate itself.

Reagan later explained that he saw no reason Anderson should be “excommunicated” from the debates. [3]

To “Rob Sand for Iowa” and the Democratic Party of Iowa:

Rob Sand, in 2024, when Nicholas Gluba and two other Libertarian candidates faced removal from Iowa's ballot, you were the one member of the State Objection Panel who voted to keep them on.

You said:

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[1] Iowa PBS, Iowa Press, “Republican Nominee for Governor, Zach Lahn,” July 10, 2026; Iowa Public Radio, “Zach Lahn and Rob Sand make their pitch to voters at the Iowa State Fair,” Aug. 16, 2026.

[2] PBS, Debating Our Destiny, interview with President Jimmy Carter, Apr. 28, 1989. Carter discussed the 1980 debate negotiations and explained his view that Reagan wanted independent candidate John B. Anderson included because Anderson would draw votes away from Carter.

[3] Washington Post, “If Anderson Sits In, Carter May Sit Out First Debate,” Sept. 4, 1980; Washington Post, “Reagan, Anderson and an Empty Chair,” Sept. 11, 1980; PBS, Debating Our Destiny, interview with Ronald Reagan regarding the 1980 presidential debates; Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Reagan–Anderson presidential debate, Sept. 21, 1980.

> **"Our job here is not to err on the side of kicking people off the ballot. Our job is to err on the side of keeping them on,"** and that the Panel should, **"[A]im in terms of inclusiveness on the ballot, not trying to exclude people."** [4]

Two years later, Nicholas Gluba has once again been removed from Iowa's ballot. But this time things are different. You were a powerless minority in a 3-person panel. Now you have the power, as a very popular candidate throughout the state, to make a real difference. Now is the time that your voice truly matters.

This Dilemma Transcends Politics: It Is About the Moral Integrity of Our State

This is about:

> **1.) Iowa's election integrity —** Our state appears to lack fundamental safeguards against outside interference with political campaigns, leaving candidates susceptible to exclusion from the ballot when such interference may be difficult or impossible to prove, even when it appears possible or probable.
>
> **2.) Disrespecting a United States Veteran —** It is disgraceful that Nicholas Gluba fought to protect our safety and preserve our rights, and that a handful of people who never served in that capacity kept him off the ballot. Now is the opportunity to do more than recite "Thank you for protecting our rights." Now is the time for Iowa's leaders to step up and show some real humility and honor. **Please turn this disgraceful moment into a moment of poetic justice, grace, and healing.**

Nicholas Gluba and I hold very different political views and we advocate substantially different platforms. But all that needs to be set aside because this moment calls for something more.

Iowa's election system needs to give voters meaningful access to competing ideas. That means making sure that Nicholas Gluba is included in the conversation and in every debate between now and November 3. **Let the candidates make their cases, and then let Iowans decide.**

Respectfully,
Sondra Wilson

"Everybody counts in applying democracy. And there will never be a true democracy until every responsible and law-abiding adult in it, without regard to race, sex, color or creed has his or her own inalienable and unpurchasable voice in government."

— Carrie Chapman Catt, 1917

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[4] Iowa Capital Dispatch, "Panel votes to remove Libertarian congressional candidates from ballot," Aug. 28, 2024; Iowa Public Radio, "State panel kicks Iowa's Libertarian congressional candidates off ballot," Aug. 28, 2024.