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Brown County elections board asks federal judge to dismiss lawsuit

WFIU | By [George Hale](#)

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The Indiana Republican Party issued a 5-year ban against two men from seeking office as GOP candidates over allegations that they previously supported non-Republicans, which is against party rules.

The Brown County Election Board is asking to dismiss a lawsuit by two men barred from running for office as Republicans.

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In a motion to dismiss, filed this week in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, attorneys representing the election board wrote that they had not voted to prevent county commissioner Tim Clark and attorney Rich Stanley from seeking office as Republicans in future races.

"The Plaintiff's cause of action is incorrectly directed at the Brown County Election Board, which is under no duty to opine to the Plaintiffs, act prior to a timely election filing, or make any early decision regarding eligibility to run for office for the foreseeable future," the motion to dismiss stated.

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The Indiana Republican Party issued a five-year ban against Clark and Stanley from seeking office as GOP candidates over allegations that they previously supported non-Republicans, which is against party rules.

Their lawsuit, filed last month, alleges that the ban is retaliation for a complaint filed against Brown County GOP chairman Mark Bowman.

It says Bowman, who didn't respond to requests for comment, tried to undermine Clark's campaign by supporting an Independent candidate instead of Clark, who won the Republican nomination and general election.

"He wouldn't accept it. So, what he then did is he went out and he found another guy to run as an Independent against him," Stanley said.

The party ban, issued at the district level and upheld by the state GOP, cites Clark's contribution to a Democrat in 2018. But Stanley says that shouldn't prevent him from running as a Republican years later.

"They never cared about it. They're using it as an excuse to go after Tim because he filed this complaint against Mark Bowman," Stanley said in an interview.

Stanley says his own ban is effectively preventing him from running for office in the

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In its decision to ban Stanley from running as a Republican, the party produced evidence of a contribution to an Independent candidate last fall.

Stanley said that his wife, using a joint checking account, made that contribution without his knowledge. But he said that it made no difference when he pointed that out to local Republican Party officials.

Clark and Stanley filed a motion for summary judgment this week.

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George Hale

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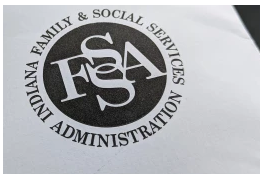
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