**Linda Curtis Biography**

Linda Curtis is a leading spokesperson, analyst and tactician for the Texas independent political movement.  Linda has a long history working in the independent movement; from her early efforts gaining ballot access for the first woman and African-American to get on the ballot in all 50 states (Lenora Fulani in 1988) to the Ross Perot founded Reform Party in the 1990s.

Following the implosion of the Reform Party, in 2001, Linda became a co-[founder of Independent Texans,](http://IndyTexans.org) the state’s only voter association for independent and non-aligned voters. In 2004, Linda helped coordinate the Austin Toll Party, founded by Sal Costello in Austin, Texas.  Sal’s efforts soon were joined by Terri Hall, who later founded the San Antonio Toll Party and Texas TURF.  These urban/suburban anti-toll efforts soon joined forces with Linda and David Stall and CorridorWatch.org’s efforts to defeat the Trans-Texas Corridor.  In 2006 Independent Texans endorsed Carole Keeton Strayhorn for Governor as an independent. Linda coordinated groups across the state that utilized Carole Strayhorn’s independent gubernatorial campaign to help defeat the Trans-Texas Corridor.

Together with Brian Rodgers, a local real estate developer and longtime Austin city activist, and Albert Marino, a new young Austin activists, Linda co-founded [*ChangeAustin.org*](http://ChangeAustin.org) in 2008.  In 2011-12, Linda served as coordinator for an Austin based cross-partisan coalition, [Austinites for Geographic Representation](mailto:http://AustinGeoRep.org) (AGR).  AGR led the effort to pass a historic change in Austin city council elections to single-member districts and the first independent citizens redistricting commission in Texas to draw the lines.

Independent Texans is taking a back burner to a new non-profit citizens lobby Curtis helped found for non-aligned voters – the [League of Independent Voters of Texas](http://IndependentLeagueTX.org). It has been focused on helping to build another cross-partisan coalition calling the question on the plan to bring the Keystone XL pipeline (owned by TransCanada) and two other tar sands pipelines (Seaway, owned by Enbridge and the Pegasus, owned by Exxon) through east Texas to Houston refineries and over a number of critical water ways, including the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer that serves 10-12 million people.  The organization is also focused on a variety of questions related to water and drought and the growing need for a comprehensive water conservation plan for Texas developed by ordinary Texans; rural, suburban and urban.

In Curtis’ view, the goal of the independent movement should be to change the culture of politics, not just the positions on issues.  As Curtis puts it, “In our view, politics is stuck in a time warp of the old ways of political machines.  It must become a tool for ordinary citizens to create their own consensus around new solutions to old and festering problems.  We know of no other way to do this than to focus, quite simply, on bringing ordinary citizens into political activity on the issues that unite — rather than divide — us.”

Curtis’ regularly speaks on these topics:

* + Why independents determine electoral outcomes, but have little power to change America and what we’re doing about it.
  + How voters can work together to defeat special interest dominance of both parties.
  + Why the future of the country rests on the development of the independent political movement — inside and outside both parties, with an emphasis on the latter.
  + Why we need a united “third force”, not a “third party.”
  + Whether there exists a “sweet spot” in the American body politic around which a super-majority of people can unite to take our country back.