

HQ for 'voting out candidates' opened

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Supporters of Taiwan's first Headquarters for Voting Out Candidates yesterday march through the streets of New Taipei City.

Photo: Chang An-chiao, Taipei Times

A group of activist organizations yesterday established a "Headquarters for Voting Out Candidates" (選出總部) in New Taipei City, announcing Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) legislative candidates Liao Cheng-ching (廖正興), Chang Ching-chung (張景忠) and Wu Yu-sheng (吳玉生) as their primary targets.

The headquarters — on Jingping Road in the city's Jhonghe District (中和區) — was jointly founded by four activist groups, including The People Rule, the Taiwan March, the Appendectomy Project and the Congressional Investigation Corps.

"Last year's Appendectomy Project recall campaign, which was aimed at ousting unqualified legislators, successfully prompted the second recall referendum in the nation's history," Appendectomy Project spokesperson Lin Zu-yi (林祖宜) said at the headquarters' launch ceremony.

Lin was referring to a landmark recall referendum launched in February last year against KMT Legislator Alex Tsai (蔡啟芳), which failed to attain the required 50 percent voter turnout.

Lin said that while the campaign yielded only limited results due to the strict regulations set out in the Referendum Act (referendum law) and the Civil Servants Election and Recall Act (recall law), they stepped up their efforts and launched the "Voting Out Candidates Movement" last month to make voters aware of the reprehensible conduct by some legislative candidates in the Jan. 16 elections.

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The movement targets Liao, Chang and Wu — all of whom are seeking re-election in the January race — because they were chosen as the three worst incumbent lawmakers in various surveys conducted by non-governmental organizations, Lin said.

They have adopted measures such as having hundreds of volunteers on weekends distribute flyers detailing why the trio deserve to be voted out in their respective constituencies, Lin added.

According to the movement's Web site, Liao is most notorious for his proposal to raise the already high thresholds for recalls, as well as his conduct in May last year when he threatened to delay the legislative review of the Judicial Yuan's budget proposals if it did not expedite the trial against Taipei MRT killer Cheng Chieh (鄭清).

According to the site, Chang should be voted out of the legislature over his move to rush the controversial cross-strait service trade agreement through a legislative committee review in March last year, and his stance against lowering the recall thresholds and the suspension of construction of the nation's controversial fourth nuclear reactor.

The site said Wu's censurable conduct includes his support for media monopolization and imports of US beef, as well as his obstructions of proposed amendments to the Referendum Act and the Assembly and Parade Act (集會遊行法).

Taiwan March Foundation head Chen Hui-min (陳揮文) said in addition to the movement they have also demanded that legislative candidates sign an affidavit pledging to push for reforms to the Referendum Act and the Civil Servants Election and Recall Act.

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