



## With primary victory, Loveless can continue civil asset forfeiture reform crusade

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OKLAHOMA CITY – Outside of the important issue of the state budget, one of the biggest topics discussed in the media during the recent legislative session was the Sen. Kyle Loveless’s civil asset forfeiture reform bill.

It was Loveless who took a stand on an issue that was adversely affecting Oklahomans whose assets were seized, following an arrest, and not always returned. Loveless saw this as an injustice and stood up to the law enforcement community by demanding that a criminal conviction be given before police can permanently seize a person’s property or money.

Law enforcement – police and district attorneys, in particular – argued that weakening civil asset forfeiture would drastically alter their ability to stop drug trafficking.

But it seemed the only people trying to thwart Loveless were law enforcement and their allies in the legislature. His constituents, he told *Red Dirt Report* on Tuesday night at his primary election watch party, were strongly supportive of his reform efforts.

Loveless, a Republican and a tireless battler for the average Oklahoman, noted that the state’s top law enforcement official – Attorney Gen. Scott Pruitt – admitted in an interview with the Cato Institute recently that drug dogs could be manipulated and that abuses of the civil asset forfeiture law do happen, essentially echoing Loveless’s own arguments in favor of reform.

Loveless also noted that Oklahoma County District Attorney David Prater has gone on the record in support of the controversial Electronic Recovery and Access to Data devices used by police in the state. These ERAD devices scan citizen’s prepaid cards and could be abused, privacy-rights activists have noted.

“Prater says it’s a valuable tool,” Loveless said, looking disgusted. One sensed that he was already prepping for another fight in the next legislative session over ERAD.

By the end of the night, Loveless would defeat Republican challenger, high school teacher Mike Mason, 55 to 40 percent.

Loveless said Mason was unclear about his position on abortion, had an “F” rating from a gun-rights group, and supported the Boren penny sales tax.

With Loveless’s Senate District 45 dipping into Cleveland County, that county’s GOP Chairman Dave Spaulding was on hand to talk highly of Loveless.

“(Civil asset forfeiture reform) is a huge topic,” Spaulding said, noting that fellow Republicans – outside of law enforcement – are largely supportive of Loveless’s efforts.