STATEMENT FROM DIANNE CURRY:

Dianne Curry took the opportunity this evening to announce at the Pulaski County Democratic Committee meeting at U.S. Pizza Company, that she was withdrawing as a Democrat running for Lt. Governor in 2014. Curry confirmed she will consider a bid for the U.S. Congress in the 2nd District.

Curry, who is President of the Little Rock School Board, released the following statement:

"I entered elective public service in 2006 because of our children. I have been blessed to serve three terms on the Little Rock School Board. And each and every day, it's been a labor of love for our young people here in Pulaski County and in Arkansas. How we lead, today, determines the tomorrow we leave for them. Delivering a better tomorrow for all Arkansans is why I entered this race for Lt. Governor. In a few short months I have travelled all over this state and met with countless Democrats in Warren, Nashville, Ft. Smith, Malvern, Conway, Bryant, Monticello, as well as in Little Rock. Also, I am proud to be an Arkansas Democrat. I have said time and time again, that we have the best leaders, the best vision, and the best that Arkansas has to offer. From the men and women who joined our call for quality education, to protecting the middle class, to speaking out for equality, for standing up for women’s healthcare as well as preserving a woman's right to choose. Together, we brought our issues to the forefront of the political discussion in a very short time. I have always been a defender of the defenseless, a voice for the voiceless, that is why you have stood by me—not because of me, but because of what I stand for. I have dedicated my entire life in pursuit of that ideal. My heart has always been with the everyday men and women who work the 9 to 5 to provide a better life for themselves and for their families.

We have a lot of work to do between now and 2014. We have to unite all our efforts to make sure we hold the Governorship, retake the Lt. Governor's office, retake the Secretary of State's office, and most of all retake the State Legislature of Arkansas for the people of Arkansas. The work we continue starting today, starting now, to make sure every vote counts means so much to me. But it means more to our young people. It's more than now we are fighting for in these elections, its the life, the state we will leave to our children and our children's children. What we are fighting for is bigger than just this race for Lt. Governor. We are in a fight to protect our most sacred constitutional right: access to the ballot box.

To that end, I am ending my race for Lt. Governor. We need to remember what has been said in civil rights efforts for generations, "The people united shall never be divided." We need to focus our efforts on those in office who have squandered the will of the people for petty partisan political agendas. There has been a lot of talk about business and the Lt. Governor's office. The main business of the Lt. Governor's office and for that matter all of state government, is the people's business.

In the coming days I will speak with my friends and supporters about a potential bid for U.S. Congress in the 2nd Congressional District.

Today is a day for reflection and rebirth. Today is both a beginning and an end. We embrace the future undaunted. We remain confident that the resounding ideals we stood for, we spoke up for, we believe in as progressive Democrats will have a lasting impression on politics in Arkansas.

John Burkhalter now is the sole Democrat in the race for Lt. Governor. The trust of the office he seeks is now in his hands. I hope and believe that he will honor that trust with tempered judgment and a servant’s heart. The same applies to Mike Ross in his bid to be Governor. Now, more than ever, our leaders must answer the call of service. Arkansas will face many challenges in the next few years. We need the Governor and Lt. Governor to be a team, to meet these challenges with dignity and loyalty to the people of Arkansas. We need results for our struggling middle class, resources for our renowned education system, and innovation for a vibrant Arkansas economy. We need to make sure also that everyone, regardless of sex, race, orientation, or financial situation has a seat and a voice at the table of state government in Arkansas.

Arkansas will always have a friend and an advocate in me. I seek only to serve this state and the betterment of its people.

We had hoped with my candidacy to make history in Arkansas. I’m proud to live in a state that can still make history by nominating and electing the first-ever African-American woman to seek statewide executive office, my fellow Democrat, Regina Hampton who is running for Arkansas State Auditor. I’m proud to be a part of our state’s rich history of progress and prosperity. While we may have seen one path end today, I want my friends and supporters to hold their heads high knowing that because of the trail we blazed, we’ve made it that much easier for the next generation to stand up and be heard, and know that this is by no means the end of a journey, but just a rest stop.

I will return soon to run for elective office. My issues will remain: A woman’s access to her own healthcare. Fair pay for hard work. Security for the middle class. A strong public education for our young people. These are the resounding issues of my years in public service. I am proud to be a true blue Arkansas Democrat and I will not hide from my convictions. We will stand strong and we will stand proud."