COVER SHEET - NOTICE OF FILING OF MOTION OR PETITION UNDER LOCAL RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE

CASE CAPTION:		CIVIL CASE NO.
Sonja Keohane, Richard Keohane v. Delaware County Board of Elec	•	
NATURE OF MATTER FILED: (please		
Petition Pursuant to Rule 206.1	Response to Petition	Motion for Judgment on the
☐ Motion Pursuant to Rule 208.1	Response to Motion	Pleadings Pursuant to Rule 1034(a) Summary Judgment Pursuant to Rule 1035.2
☐ Family Law Petition/Motion Pursu	ant to Rule 206.8	Tursuant to Ruic 1033.2
	SIBLE FOR SERVICE LEARING DATE UPON	OF THE RULE RETURNABLE N <u>ALL</u> PARTIES
A motion or petition was filed in the ab	pove captioned matter on the	day of,, which:
Requires you, Respondent, to file a	n Answer within twenty (20)	days of the above date to this notice, or risk
the entry of an Order in favor of the Pe	titioner. Answers must be fil	ed and time stamped by the Office of
Judicial Support by 4:30 PM on the fol	lowing date	
you must be prepared to present all test present.	timony and/or argument, and	must ensure that your witnesses will be
Was timely answered, thus requirir on:,		wing hearing in the above captioned matter m
At this hearing, all parties must be prepared their witnesses will be present.	pared to present all testimony	and/or argument and must ensure that
Qualifies as an Uncontested Motion nor the scheduling of a hearing in this		nires neither an answer from the Respondent
Has been assigned to Judge		
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Mailing date:	Processed b	y:

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IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

SONJA KEOHANE, RICHARD KEOHANE, and BARBARA WELSH,	CIVIL DIVISION
Petitioners,	No.
V.	ELECTION APPEAL
DELAWARE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS,	ELECTION APPEAL
Respondent.	

PETITION FOR REVIEW IN THE NATURE OF A STATUTORY APPEAL

Petitioners Sonja Keohane, Richard Keohane, and Barbara Welsh, qualified registered electors of Delaware County, by and through their undersigned counsel, American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania and the Public Interest Law Center, appeal pursuant to 25 P.S.

§ 3157 from the decision of the Delaware County Board of Elections ("Board") on May 23, 2023, to not count their provisional ballots voted in the 2023 municipal primary, ¹ and aver as follows:

INTRODUCTION

- 1. "Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy and the fundamental right upon which all our civil liberties rest." *Wesberry v. Sanders*, 376 U.S. 1, 17 (1964). It includes the right of eligible voters both to cast their ballots and to have them counted.
- 2. This appeal concerns the decision of the Delaware County Board of Elections (the "Board") to disenfranchise Petitioners, who each voted a provisional ballot at his or her polling place on May 16, 2023, after the Board had canceled the mail-in ballots they had previously submitted, because of purported defects on the outer envelope or a missing inner secrecy envelope.
- 3. Sometime prior to the May 16 primary, the Board established and implemented a policy of allowing voters to cure defects in mail ballots, but only if the voter followed a novel procedure found nowhere in state law, requiring the voter either to (a) obtain and complete a replacement ballot in person at the office of the Bureau of Elections (the "Bureau") in Media, PA, or (b) request that the Bureau mail a replacement ballot to the voter in advance of election day. *See* https://delcopa.gov/publicrelations/releases/2023/flawedvotebymailenvelopes.html (last visited May 25, 2023). Meanwhile, guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of State

¹ Petitioners are all voters in Pennsylvania House District 168. As Petitioners do not seek a recount or recanvass under sections 1701, 1702 or 1703 of the Election Code, and no race in their election district is close enough for the affected voters' provisional ballots to potentially impact any outcomes, there is no need for the Court or the Board to suspend certification of any race in District 168, or in any other election district. Rather, Petitioners seek an order declaring the Board's decision unlawful and requiring the Board to amend the final vote count to include Petitioners' provisional ballots.

provided that a voter could obtain a provisional ballot at the polling place if, among other reasons, the voter "returned a completed absentee or mail-in ballot that was rejected by the county board of elections...." https://www.vote.pa.gov/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Voting-by-Provisional-Ballot.aspx (last visited May 25, 2023).

- 4. Petitioners did not complete the Board's unique "cure" process, but instead went to their polling places on Election Day and completed provisional ballots after learning that the county had canceled their mail ballots, in order to ensure that they would get to have their votes counted in the primary election.
- 5. The Board itself has acknowledged that, in fairness, Petitioners' provisional ballots should be counted in light of its previous decision to cancel their mail ballots, but the Board nevertheless decided on May 23, 2023 not to count six provisional ballots. The Board based this decision on a mistaken interpretation of the Election Code.
 - 6. Petitioners are aggrieved by this order and decision and hereby appeal from it.

JURISDICTION

7. The Court has jurisdiction over this statutory appeal pursuant to 25 P.S. §3157(a).

PARTIES

8. Petitioner Sonja Keohane is an 80-year-old longtime qualified registered voter who resides in Delaware County and attempted to vote by mail ballot in the municipal primary. The Board notified Mrs. Keohane that it had canceled her ballot on May 10, 2023. *See* May 25, 2023 Declaration of S. Keohane ("SK Decl.")² at ¶ 10. Mrs. Keohane completed and submitted a provisional ballot in person at her polling place on May 16, 2023. *Id.* ¶ 13.

² A true and correct copy of Sonja Keohane's Declaration is attached hereto at Exhibit A.

- 9. Petitioner Richard Keohane is an 81-year-old longtime qualified registered voter who resides in Delaware County and attempted to vote by mail ballot in the municipal primary. Prior to Election Day, the Board notified Mr. Keohane that it had canceled his ballot. *See* May 25, 2023 Declaration of R. Keohane ("RK Decl.")³ at ¶ 8. Despite serious physical challenges in getting to his polling place, Mr. Keohane completed and submitted a provisional ballot in person at his polling place on May 16, 2023, to ensure his participation in the primary election. *Id.* ¶ 10.
- 10. Petitioner Barbara Welsh is a 79-year-old longtime qualified registered voter and trained poll worker, who resides in Delaware County and attempted to vote by mail ballot in the municipal primary. The Delaware County Board of Elections notified Ms. Welsh that it had canceled her ballot on May 11, 2023. *See* May 24, 2023 Declaration of B. Welsh ("BW Decl.")⁴ at ¶ 10. Ms. Welsh completed and submitted a provisional ballot in person at her polling place on May 16, 2023. *Id.* ¶ 12.
- 11. Respondent, the Delaware County Board of Elections, is a local government agency responsible for overseeing the conduct of all elections in Delaware County, including adjudicating and deciding whether to count provisional ballots in accordance with the Election Code. *See* 25 P.S. § 2642 (powers and duties of boards of elections); *id.* § 3050(a.4) (adjudication of provisional ballots); *see also* Delaware County Home Rule Charter § 421.

DECISION OF THE BOARD AT ISSUE

12. Petitioners appeal from the decision of the Board not to count Petitioners' provisional ballots, which these impacted voters completed after the Board had notified those

³ A true and correct copy of Richard Keohane's Declaration is attached hereto at Exhibit B.

⁴ A true and correct copy of Barbara Welsh's Declaration is attached hereto at Exhibit C.

same voters that it had canceled – and therefore would not count – their previously submitted mail ballots because of purported defects involving the ballot envelopes.

13. The Board announced its decision orally at a public hearing on the disposition of provisional ballots on May 23, 2023. *See* 5/23/23 Tr. (Ex. E hereto) at 59:19 to 60:10.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Voting by Mail in Pennsylvania

- 14. The Pennsylvania Election Code permits registered voters to vote by mail, either as an "absentee elector," if the voter satisfies prescribed conditions, such as current military service, disability that prevents attendance at polling place, or absence from municipality on Election Day, *see* 25 P.S. § 3146.1, or as a "mail-in" elector if the voter applies for a mail ballot by the deadline, without any requirement that the voter provide a reason for voting by mail instead of in person, *see id.* § 3150.11.
- 15. Under Pennsylvania law, identical procedures govern how voters apply for, complete, and return both absentee and mail-in ballots.⁵ Pennsylvania mail ballot applications require the voter to provide his or her name, address of registration, and proof of identification, 25 P.S. §§ 3146.2, 3150.12. Proof of identification includes either a Pennsylvania driver's license number or the last 4 digits of the voter's Social Security number. 25 P.S. § 2602(z.5)(3). Once the county board of elections verifies the voter's identity and eligibility, it sends the voter a mailing that contains: 1) the ballot; 2) a "secrecy envelope" marked with the words "Official Election Ballot"; and 3) a pre-addressed outer return envelope that contains the voter declaration prescribed by law, which the voter must sign and date. The packet also contains instructions to the voter for properly marking and submitting the ballot.

⁵ We refer herein to both types of ballots simply as "mail-in" or "mail" ballots.

- 16. A mail-ballot voter is supposed to mark the ballot, place it in the secrecy envelope, and then place the secrecy envelope in the outer return envelope. *Id.* §§ 3146.6(a), 3150.16(a). The outer envelope includes a printed declaration that the voter "shall then fill out, date and sign." *Id.* The voter delivers the entire package by mail or by hand to the county board of elections, and delivery is timely if made by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. *Id.* §§ 3146.6(c), 3150.16(c).
- 17. Widespread voting by mail ballot in Pennsylvania is relatively new, having been adopted by the Pennsylvania Legislature in 2019 for implementation in May 2020. Act of Oct 31, 2019, P.L. 552, No. 77, § 8. Clerical mistakes by mail voters are not uncommon. In the November 2022 general election, more than 16,000 mail in ballots in Pennsylvania were set aside because they lacked secrecy envelopes, proper signatures, or dates. *See* https://apnews.com/article/2022-midterm-elections-pennsylvania-united-states-government-alc75c9cfc2f1bfca21ac4a4cbfe60f0.

The Board Canceled Petitioners' Mail Ballots

- 18. Petitioners, and three other qualified voters, timely submitted their mail ballots prior to the May 16, 2023 primary election day, but the Board determined that their submissions could not be opened and counted because of mistakes in how these voters completed their mail ballot package. Either they forgot to sign the outer envelope, omitted the date or wrote an incorrect date, or forgot to insert the ballot into the secrecy envelope.
- 19. Upon information and belief, all of the impacted voters were otherwise qualified electors who were registered to vote, who validly requested and returned their mail ballots, and who properly completed and submitted provisional ballots at their polling places on May 16, 2023.

- 20. Upon receipt of the mail ballots at issue here, the Board reviewed the envelopes and determined that the voters had made errors that would prevent the Board from counting the ballots under Pennsylvania law.
- 21. Each of the Petitioners received notice by email that the Board had canceled their mail ballots and would not count them.

Conflicting Guidance for Curing Cancelled Mail Ballots

- 22. The Board posted guidance on flawed mail ballots on its website. See Delaware County, Delaware County Bureau of Elections Issues Final Guidance Regarding Flawed Vote-by-Mail Envelopes (May 6, 2023), available at https://delcopa.gov/publicrelations/releases/2023/flawedvotebymailenvelopes.html. This web page (the "Guidance") identified "flawed ballots" as "those that are damaged, unsigned, undated, improperly dated, unsealed, or not placed in the 'secrecy envelope' before being placed in the larger 'Ballot Return Envelope.""
- 23. The Guidance instructed voters to cure their mail ballots in a process that is not provided under the Election Code, stating as follows: "Voters who receive notice that the ballot envelope is flawed must correct the ballot in-person at the Voter Service Center, located on the 1st floor of the Government Center Building, at 201 W. Front St., in Media, PA. If time permits, the voter can ask for a replacement ballot to be mailed. Voters will have the opportunity to receive a replacement ballot and complete and return their ballot during the same visit. Voter's valid ID is required."
- 24. In addition to the notice from the Pennsylvania Department of State, the Board also sent an email and a mailed a letter to Petitioners with instructions on how to "cure" the defect in the ballot.

- 25. The Guidance does not mention provisional ballot voting at all. Nor does the Guidance warn voters that if they cast a provisional ballot after submitting a defective mail ballot, the Board will not count the provisional ballot.
- 26. The instructions also did not advise voters that if they requested a replacement ballot in writing and did not return it, they could vote a provisional ballot and that ballot would be counted.
- 27. However, guidance from the Department of State instructed that voters could obtain a provisional ballot at their polling place if, among other reasons, the voter "returned a completed absentee or mail-in ballot that was rejected by the county board of elections...." https://www.vote.pa.gov/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Voting-by-Provisional-Ballot.aspx.
- 28. Upon information and belief, the Board's email notice and the letter sent to voters also contained instructions to voters about how to correct their canceled ballot. The instructions did not mention provisional voting, nor warn that if the voter voted a provisional ballot, no ballot from the voter would not be counted.
- 29. Meanwhile, at least one Petitioner who contacted the Bureau of Elections in the days preceding the May 16, 2023 primary was instructed by the Bureau to cast a provisional ballot at her polling place. *See* SK Decl. at ¶ 11.
- 30. Upon information and belief, at the same May 23 meeting when to Board decided not to count the provisional ballots at issue in this appeal, it also decided to count at least five provisional ballots from voters who were very similarly situated to Petitioners. Like Petitioners, these voters had submitted defective mail ballots and then submitted provisional ballots at their polling places on Election Day.⁶

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⁶ Petitioners do not challenge the Board's decision to count these provisional ballots.

31. The Board did not advise voters through any ballot instructions, email or mail notice, or in the Guidance, that if they requested a replacement ballot in writing and did not return it, they could then vote a provisional ballot and that ballot would be counted.

Petitioners' Efforts to Vote

- 32. Although the Board notified each of the Petitioners that it had canceled their ballots and informed them they could correct their ballots in-person at the office in Media or request for a replacement ballot to be mailed to them, none of the Petitioners was able to go to Media in person, nor did time permit any of the Petitioners to have a replacement ballot mailed to them or for them to return it to the Board by the deadline.
- 33. All of the petitioners appeared in person at their polling places on May 16 and completed and submitted provisional ballots.
 - 34. These provisional ballots were otherwise valid and acceptable for counting.
- 35. Each of the Petitioners had every reason to believe that they could go to their polling place and cast a provisional ballot, which would be counted.
- 36. Indeed, the Board's policy is to permit voters whose mail ballots were canceled to complete and submit a provisional ballot at the polls. In fact, Delaware County specifically trained poll workers (including Petitioner Welsh) to allow such voters to cast a provisional ballot. *See* Election Day Guide for Poll Workers, Primary election, May 16, 2023 at 51, *available* at https://delcopa.gov/vote/pdf/2023/ElectionDayGuideforPollWorkers(May2023).pdf

Petitioners Sonja and Richard Keohane:

37. Petitioners Sonja and Richard Keohane are 80 and 81 years old respectively and vote in nearly every general and primary election. SK Decl. ¶ 5; RK Decl. ¶ 5.

- 38. On May 10, the Board sent Mr. and Mrs. Keohane emails letting them know that their mail ballots were canceled. SK Decl. ¶ 10; RK Decl. ¶ 8.
- 39. Mrs. Keohane called the Delaware County Bureau of Elections on speaker phone with her husband present. The woman who answered the phone told Mrs. Keohane that she would have to go to Media and fill out a new ballot. When Mrs. Keohane explained that she and her husband could not because of health and mobility concerns, the woman offered to mail replacement ballots but did not think they would arrive in time. The woman then told Mr. and Mrs. Keohane they could vote on a provisional ballot. SK Decl. ¶ 11; RK Decl. ¶ 9.
- 40. Mr. and Mrs. Keohane were not able to go to Media to fill out new mail ballots. Mr. Keohane uses a walker and has a catheter, Mrs. Keohane has bad knees, and they were concerned that they would not be able to find parking and walk to the building. SK Decl. ¶ 7; RK Decl. ¶ 9. Even getting to their polling place and voting a provisional ballot was difficult for Mr. Keohane. RK Declaration ¶ 13.
- 41. Voting is very important to Mrs. Keohane and is the only meaningful way she can let the government know what she thinks. SK Decl. \P 6. She believes her vote should count and is part of this lawsuit for herself and all the people who are not able to challenge a ruling like this. *Id.* \P 21
- 42. Likewise, voting is very important to Mr. Keohane. He was in the Navy and believes voting is part of his civic duty. Having served our country, Mr. Keohane has felt compelled to vote ever since leaving the service. RK Decl. ¶ 5. Mr. Keohane is very frustrated that somebody can simply throw out his vote. *Id.* ¶ 13

Petitioner Barbara Welsh:

- 43. Petitioner Barbara Welsh is 79 years old, a member of the League of Women Voters, and a trained poll worker. BW Decl. ¶ 6.
- 44. The Board notified Ms. Welsh by email on May 11, and by a letter she received on May 15, that the Board had canceled her mail ballot. *Id.* ¶ 10. There was not sufficient time to request a replacement ballot be mailed to her, and Ms. Welsh was unable to go in person to correct her ballot in Media on May 15. *Id.* ¶¶ 10-11.
- 45. However, Ms. Welsh is very familiar with voting by provisional ballot, both from her poll worker trainings in Media and working at the polls as a clerk in the November 2022 general election and in the May 2023 primary election *Id.* ¶ 7. Ms. Welsh thought it would not be a problem to account for any issues with her mail ballot by voting a provisional ballot on Election Day. *Id.* ¶ 10. Accordingly, after working the polls on May 16, Ms. Welsh went to her precinct and cast a provisional ballot. *Id.* ¶ 12.
- 46. As someone who has voted in nearly every general and primary election and who believes in the importance of voting in a democracy, Ms. Welsh was shocked and disappointed to be disenfranchised. She never imagined she would be denied the right to vote. *Id.* ¶¶ 3, 5, 15.

The Board's Decision to Disenfranchise Petitioners

- 47. The Board, through its designated provisional ballot review board, began review of the provisional ballots on May 17, 2023.
- 48. On May 18, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. the provisional ballot board held an "exhibition" session during which it disclosed its recommendations for counting or not counting provisional ballots.

- 49. The Board did not notify Petitioners of the exhibition or of the provisional ballot review board's recommended disposition, and Petitioners remained unaware of these events until after the exhibition session had already concluded.
- 50. The Board permitted representatives of candidates and political parties to review Board's recommendation but did not permit any voter or any other person to attend the exhibition of provisional ballot recommendations.
- 51. At the exhibition, the Board permitted representatives of parties and candidates to lodge challenges to the Board's recommended disposition of provisional ballots.
- 52. It is the Board's policy and practice to consider challenges thus lodged at a public hearing, and not to consider any other disputes over the disposition of provisional ballots.
- 53. Upon information and belief, an attorney or representative of a political party initially challenged the recommendation not to count the ballots at issue here, but then withdrew the challenge, and did not complete the process of "lodging" such a challenge.
- 54. Upon information and belief, the Board adopted the policy of not counting provisional ballots voted to cure flawed mail ballots because of its perception that such ballots "were vulnerable to being rejected by the courts."
- 55. On May 23, 2023, the Board considered the recommended disposition of the provisional ballots at a public hearing.
- 56. Upon unanimous vote, the Board decided not to count the ballots at issue in this appeal, despite various Board members' commentary acknowledging the unjust nature of this result. Tr: 11:13-21, 12:15-13:9, 38:14-39:15, 40:1-41:11.

GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

The Board Misapplied the Election Code

- 57. The Board based its decision on a misreading of the Election Code, relying solely on an unpublished and nonprecedential Commonwealth Court decision, *In Re Allegheny Cty*. *Provisional Ballots in the 2020 Gen. Election*, No.1161 C.D. 2020,2020 WL 6867946 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2020). That decision did not fully engage with the question presented here and should not be applied in this case.
- 58. Although the Board felt bound by this unpublished and nonprecedential Commonwealth Court decision, Board members repeatedly stated on the record that they were troubled by the result and hoped the courts would reconsider. *See, e.g.*, Tr. at 11:13-21 (stating "it poses an unreasonable burden on folks where casting provisional ballot should be as good as coming into Media and curing a ballot. And so I do hope the courts have an opportunity to reconsider this question in the future."); Tr. 12:18-24. (stating "I do think that a voter that comes in and cast a provisional ballot, that that court opinion should be reconsidered. And while we're here as a Board to follow the election law, which usually in most cases favors the voter, I think that this one is also an undue burden.").
- 59. One Board member even called the outcome a "travesty of justice." Tr. 41:101-
- 60. In *In Re Allegheny County Provisional Ballots*, the Commonwealth Court construed the Pennsylvania Election Code to prohibit the counting of provisional ballots if "the elector's absentee ballot or mail-in ballot is timely received by a county board of elections." 25 P.S. § 3050(a.4)(5)(ii)(F).

- 61. The Commonwealth Court's decision ignored and did not address the preceding section in the statute, which states:
 - (5)(i) Except as provided in subclause (ii), if it is determined that the individual was registered and entitled to vote at the election district where the ballot was cast, the county board of elections shall compare the signature on the provisional ballot envelope with the signature on the elector's registration form and, if the signatures are determined to be genuine, shall count the ballot if the county board of elections confirms that the individual did not cast any other ballot, including an absentee ballot, in the election.
- 25 P.S. § 3050(a.4)(5)(i) (emphasis added). This section reflects the goal of provisional ballots, namely, to preserve the fundamental right to vote.
- 62. The General Assembly added subsection (F) to the Election Code as part of Act 77, see 2019, Oct. 31, P.L. 552, No. 77, § 3.2. The *In re Allegheny County* decision read this subsection in a way that makes it inconsistent with § 3050(a.4)(5)(i)'s requirement that the Board must count provisional ballots upon confirming that the individual did not cast any other ballot in the election. When two separate statutory provisions can be read either as harmonious or as in conflict, courts should construe them as in harmony with each other. *See, e.g., In re Borough of Downingtown*, 161 A.3d 844, 871 (Pa. 2017); 1 Pa.C.S. §§ 1922(1)-(2), 1933.
- 63. Here, subsections 3050(a.4)(5)(i) and 3050(a.4)(5)(ii)(F) are readily harmonized. If a mail ballot is canceled and cannot be counted because of a defect on the envelope, and the voter does not cure that defect by 8:00 p.m. on election day, the mail ballot was not "timely received," nor was it "cast," because it is not a ballot that can be tabulated. Therefore, subsection 3050(a.4)(5)(ii)(F) does not bar the Board from counting the provisional ballot, and subsection 3050(a.4)(5)(i) requires the Board to count the provisional ballot.
- 64. This reading of the Election Code gives meaning to the General Assembly's intent. The General Assembly prohibited counting provisional ballots when the county has

received a voter's absentee or mail ballot exists to prevent double voting. And the General Assembly gave voters the fallback option of casting a provisional ballot to ensure that voters would have a safety net to protect them from disenfranchisement.

- 65. Because the provisional ballot is reviewed and adjudicated after Election Day, the Board will be able to determine whether the voter's mail ballot contained a fatal defect and count the provisional ballot. Alternatively, if the mail ballot was counted, then the Board will not count the provisional ballot.
- 66. This process is consistent with existing Pennsylvania Department of State ("DOS") Guidance regarding the use of provisional ballots as way of curing defects in mail ballots. The DOS website lists the reasons for which a person may be issued a provisional ballot, and includes a voter who "returned a completed absentee or mail-in ballot that was rejected by the county board of elections" and who believes they are otherwise eligible to vote. *See* Pa. Dep't of State, *Voting by Provisional Ballot*, https://www.vote.pa.gov/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Voting-by-Provisional-Ballot.aspx
- 67. This DOS guidance is an authoritative and correct reading of the Election Code, and an unreported, nonprecedential opinion does not render it invalid.
- 68. The Board's unique cure process creates an unacceptably high risk that voters will be disenfranchised because many will be unable to travel to Media on short notice, even though they may have been able to appear in person at their local polling place to vote provisionally.
- 69. The Board's policy of not counting provisional ballots that voters cast to cure canceled, deficient mail-in ballots frustrates the policy underlying the enactment of the Help America Vote Act ("HAVA"). 52 U.S.C. § 21082.

- 70. Section 3050(a.4) implements HAVA for Pennsylvania. And it goes further than HAVA, by ensuring the availability of provisional ballots in non-federal elections, such as this month's election. A voter's right to cast a provisional ballot under HAVA is mandatory and unambiguous. *See*, *e.g.*, *Common Cause Ga. v. Kemp*, 347 F. Supp. 3d 1270, 1292–93 (N.D. Ga. 2018) (citing *Fla. Democratic Party v. Hood*, 342 F.Supp.2d 1073, 1079 (N.D. Fla. 2004)) ("The purpose of HAVA's provisional voting section is to ensure that voters are allowed to vote (and to have their votes counted) when they appear at the proper polling place and are otherwise eligible to vote.").
- 71. The Election Code instruction to counties to count provisional ballots cast by eligible voters who appear at their correct polling place and who are found not to have cast any other ballot in the election, is the implementation of policy to avoid disenfranchisement. 25 P.S. § 3050(a.4)(5)(i).

The Board's Decision to Not Count Petitioners' Provisional Ballots Violated Their Fundamental Right to Vote

72. Article I, Section 5 of the Pennsylvania Constitution guarantees that "Elections shall be free and equal; and no power, civil or military, shall at any time interfere to prevent the free exercise of the right of suffrage." Under this guarantee,

all aspects of the electoral process, to the greatest degree possible, be kept open and unrestricted to the voters of our Commonwealth, and, also, conducted in a manner which guarantees, to the greatest degree possible, a voter's right to equal participation in the electoral process for the selection of his or her representatives in government.

League of Women Voters of Pa. v. Commonwealth, 178 A.3d 737, 804 (Pa. 2018).

73. The Pennsylvania constitution requires the Board to demonstrate a compelling interest to justify its policy of not counting provisional ballots voted to cure flawed mail ballots because such action will most assuredly disenfranchise voters. *See Perles v. Cty. Return Bd. of*

Northumberland Cty., 202 A.2d 538, 540 (Pa. 1964) ("[E]ither an individual voter or a group of voters are not to be disenfranchised at an election except for compelling reasons."); see also Shambach v. Bickhart, 845 A.2d 793, 801-02 (Pa. 2004) (the Election Code "must be liberally construed to protect voters' right to vote").

- 74. The Board cannot demonstrate a compelling interest that justifies its complete disenfranchisement of voters, especially when a procedure already exists to prevent the loss of the fundamental right to vote.
- 75. The Board's requirement that a voter submit a request for a replacement ballot in writing before being entitled to cast a provisional ballot unconstitutionally burdens the fundamental right to vote. *See, e.g., In re Nader*, 858 A.2d 1167, 1181 (Pa. 2004) (noting that "the right to vote" is "fundamental"), *overruled on other grounds by In re Vodvarka*, 140 A.3d 639 (Pa. 2016). Pennsylvania law forbids counties from imposing rules applicable to the right to vote when such regulation denies the franchise, or "make[s] it so difficult as to amount to a denial." *Winston v. Moore*, 91 A. 520, 523 (Pa. 1914); *see also DeWalt v. Bartley*, 24 A. 185 (Pa. 1892) ("The test is whether legislation denies the franchise, or renders its exercise so difficult and inconvenient as to amount to a denial").
- 76. The Board's insistence that a voter who submitted a defective mail ballot must request a replacement ballot before being entitled to cast a provisional ballot is unnecessary and arbitrary, because the Board had already canceled the voter's mail ballot and already determined that the ballot will not count. The request for a replacement ballot has no bearing on that and serves only to disenfranchise voters.

WHEREFORE, Petitioners respectfully request this Honorable Court to enter an order reversing the decision of the Delaware County Board of Elections, declaring that the Election

Code and Pennsylvania Constitution require the counting of Petitioners' ballots, directing the Board to count the provisional ballots cast by Petitioners in the May 16, 2023 election, and enter such other and further relief as provided by the Pennsylvania Election Code or as this Court deems just and appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: May 25, 2023

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CIVIL DIVISION

Sonja Keohane, et al.,		
Petitioners,	NO	
V.		

Delaware county Board of Elections, Respondent.

VERIFICATION

I verify that the statements made in this <u>Petition for Review in the Nature</u> of a Statutory are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief. I understand that false statements made herein are subject to the penalties of 18 PA. C.S,Subsection 4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Date: 0/25

CIVIL DIVISION

	Keahan ioners,	e, et a	al.,	NO	
Delawar Respo		v. Board	Of	Elections,	

VERIFICATION

I verify that the statements made in this <u>Petition for Review in the Nature</u> of a are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief. I understand that false statements made herein are subject to the penalties of 18 PA. C.S, Subsection 4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Date: <u>May</u> 25, 2023

Barbara St. Helsh

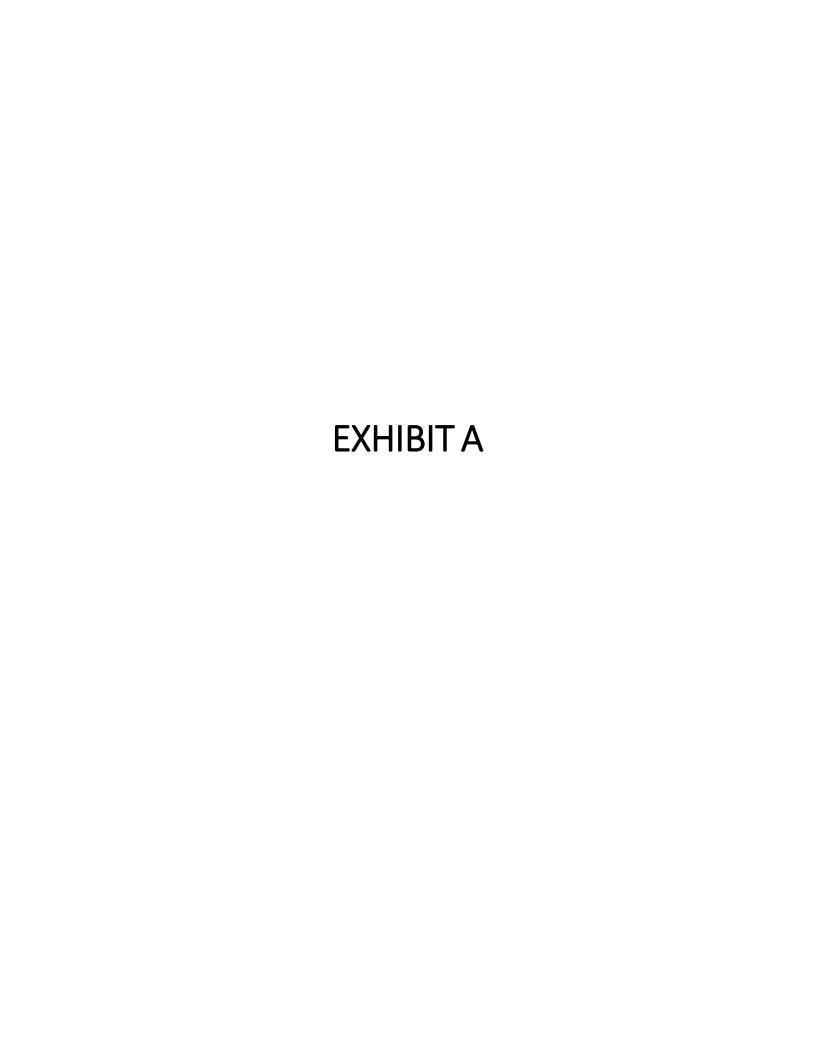
CIVIL DIVISION

			NO	_
Sonja Keohane	, et al	٠,		
Petitioners,	į.			
	٧			
Delaware county	Board	of	Elections,	
Respondent	VER	IFICA	TION	

I verify that the statements made in this <u>Petition for Review in the Nature</u> of a <u>Statutory</u> are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief. I understand that false statements made herein are subject to the penalties of 18 PA. C.S,Subsection 4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Date: 25 May 2023

Sonja K Kechane



DECLARATION OF SONJA K. KEOHANE

Pursuant to 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904, I, Sonja K. Keohane hereby declare as follows:

- 1. I have personal knowledge of the matters in this declaration and this is what I would testify to if called as a witness in Court.
 - 2. I am 80 years old and am otherwise competent to testify.
- 3. I am a resident of Delaware County and have lived at the same address in Wayne, Pennsylvania since 1975. I have been registered to vote in Delaware County since we moved here in 1975. Prior to that, we lived briefly in Annapolis because my husband was in the Navy.
- 4. My husband and I are both retired. When my children were growing up, I was a homemaker. I was also very active on the board of our local civic association—the North Wayne Protective Association—and we successfully applied to have North Wayne declared a national historic district.
- 5. I vote in nearly every general and primary election. There were always important local races and politicians that I cared about, particularly because of my involvement with the civic association. I have voted for both Republican and Democratic candidates. I was a registered Republican until the 2008 election, when I switched parties.

- 6. Voting is very important to me. It is the only meaningful way I can let the government know what I think. I could call these elected officials on the phone every day of the week and it would not have the same result. Voting speaks louder than anything else that I do.
- 7. I started voting by mail-in ballot a few years ago when it became available in Pennsylvania. At that time, my husband was getting chemotherapy at a rehabilitation center and could not physically go to the polls. This was during the COVID-19 pandemic, and I needed to be very careful because I was his caregiver. I also have bad knees and it is difficult for me to stand for long periods. Given all these health concerns, voting by mail was a very reasonable and easy option.
- 8. I requested my mail-in ballot application online before the May 16th primary election. I submitted my mail-in ballot application within the time required by the Board of Elections and received my mail-in ballot packet prior to the primary election date. When I received the packet, I marked the ballot, put it in the secrecy envelope, and filled out the outer envelope. I thought I had followed all the instructions correctly.
- 9. On May 8th, 2023, I received an email from the state that my ballot had been received by Delaware County. A true and correct copy of the email I received is attached as Exhibit 1. The email stated: "Your ballot status has been updated to reflect your official ballot has been received timely and recorded. Please note: You are no longer

permitted to vote at your polling place location now that you have returned your ballot timely."

- 10. On May 10, 2023, I received a second email from the state: "Your ballot status has been updated to cancelled because you did not correctly date the declaration on your ballot envelope." A true and correct copy of the email dated May 10, 2023, is attached as Exhibit 2.
- of Elections in Media. I was informed that I had written the wrong date on the envelope and that I needed to cure it. When I asked how I could do that, I was told that I needed to come to Media and fill out a new ballot. I told the person on the phone that we could not get to Media because of the health and mobility concerns. She said they could send us new ballots, but did not think that it would get to us in time. She then told me we could vote a provisional ballot.
- 12. On Election Day, my husband and I went to our local polling place. We explained what had happened with our mail-in ballots. The poll workers gave us a provisional ballot and told us what we needed to fill out. Before we left, they gave us an identification number for our ballot so that I could check online to see whether the ballot had been counted. I checked 5 or 6 times, but there wasn't any information.
- 13. On or around May 18th, I spoke with an attorney named Shelley who I believe was from the Democratic Party. She informed me that Delaware

County was going to reject my provisional ballot.

- 14. On or around May 19th, I called the Delaware County Bureau of Elections to ask them to explain how I had gotten the date wrong, because the envelope does not specify the dating convention.
- 15. On May 19th, I received an email from Jim Warner of the Delaware County Bureau of Elections. A true and correct copy of the email dated May 19, 2023, is attached as Exhibit 3. It includes an attached image of my mail ballot envelope, which shows that my husband and I had accidentally signed each other's envelopes. We had also written the wrong date—4/4/23 instead of 5/4/23. On the day that we were dropping our mail ballots, my husband and I had been in a hurry to get to a doctor's appointment, and we made an honest mistake.
- 16. On the Department of State website, I found a page called "Voting by Provisional Ballot." It lists many reasons for which a person can be issued a provisional ballot, including: "You returned a completed absentee or mailin ballot that was rejected by the county board of elections and you believe you are eligible to vote." https://www.vote.pa.gov/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Voting-by-Provisional-Ballot.aspx
- 17. On or around May 22, I spoke with Jim Warner at the Bureau of Elections. I explained that on the Department of State website there was a bulleted list of reasons for which people can vote a provisional ballot, including having voted a mail ballot that was rejected.

18. On May 22nd, Mr. Warner sent me an email that said the following:

After speaking with you today I was advised by our Director of Elections that, despite what the DOS website might suggest, we must follow a decision by the Court of the Commonwealth. This is why we sent out specific instructions for "Curing" a ballot package with "Legal Flaws".

A true and correct copy of the May 22, 2023 email from Mr. Warner is attached as Exhibit 4.

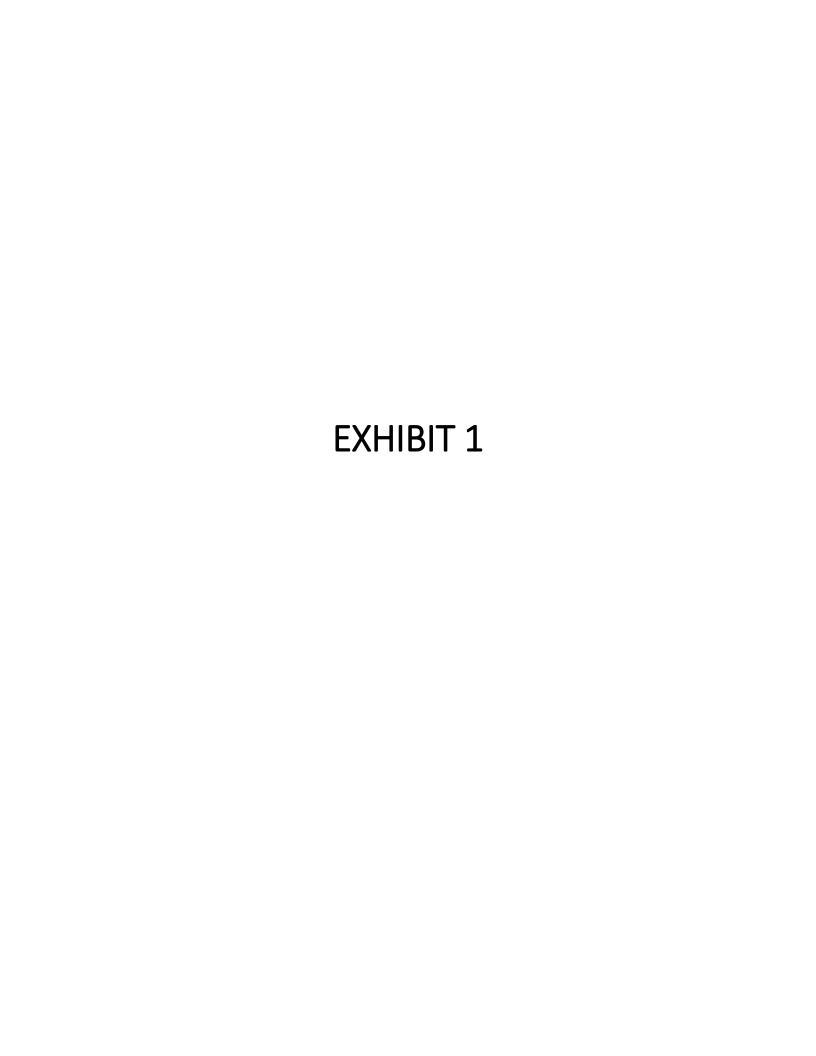
- 19. I later learned that, on May 23, 2023, the Delaware County Board of Elections voted to reject the provisional ballot that I cast on Election Day of the May 16th primary election.
- 20. I believe that it is my right to have my ballot counted. I read on the state website that I could vote a provisional ballot in this circumstance, and I went to the polls and was permitted to vote a provisional ballot. I feel that I am being taken advantage of by people who don't want me to vote.
- 21. I decided to be part of this lawsuit on behalf of all the people who are not able to challenge a ruling like this. I am doing this for myself and all the people who don't know they can challenge, aren't self-assured enough to challenge, or don't have the time to challenge it. I have the time and ability to fight this, and I believe that my vote should count.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 25 of May, 2023 in Wayne, Pennsylvania.

Sonja K Kechane

Sonja K. Keohane





Kate Steiker-Ginzberg <ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org>

Fwd: Your Ballot Has Been Received

Sonja Keohane < To: ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org

Mon, May 22, 2023 at 8:24 PM

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: RA-voterregstatcert@state.pa.us Date: May 8, 2023 at 2:47:18 PM EDT

Subject: Your Ballot Has Been Received

Dear SONJA K KEOHANE,

Your ballot has been received by DELAWARE County on 05/08/2023.

Your ballot status has been updated to reflect your official ballot has been received timely and recorded.

Please note: You are no longer permitted to vote at your polling place location now that you have returned your ballot timely.

If you have questions about your ballot, please contact DELAWARE County at 610-891-4659.

Thank you

****Please do not reply to this email.****





Kate Steiker-Ginzberg <ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org>

Fwd: Your Ballot Has Been Received

Sonja Keohane < To: ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org Mon, May 22, 2023 at 8:23 PM

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: RA-voterregstatcert@state.pa.us Date: May 10, 2023 at 1:49:46 PM EDT

Subject: Your Ballot Has Been Received

Dear SONJA K KEOHANE,

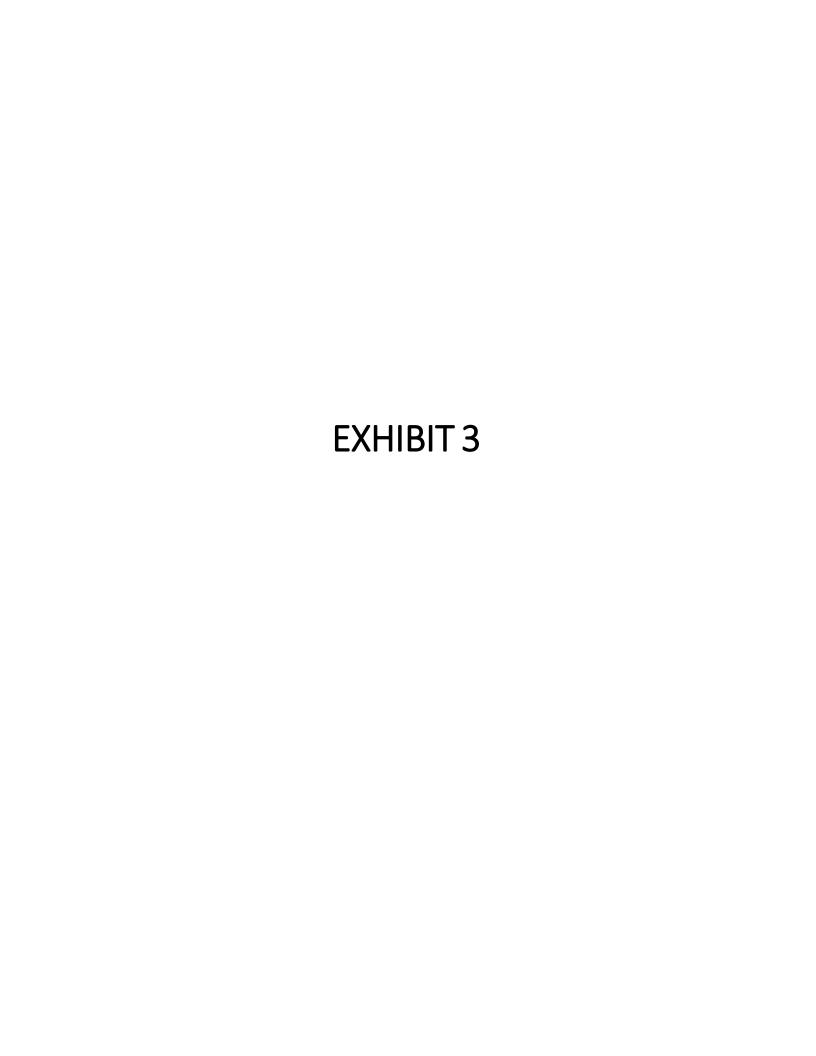
Your ballot has been received by DELAWARE County on 05/10/2023.

Your ballot status has been updated to cancelled because you did not correctly date the declaration on your ballot envelope.

If you have questions about your ballot, please contact DELAWARE County at 610-891-4659.

Thank you

****Please do not reply to this email.****





Kate Steiker-Ginzberg <ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org>

Fwd: Return Envelope Image

Sonja Keohane To: Kate Steiker-Ginzberg <ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org> Tue, May 23, 2023 at 4:13 PM

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Warner, James" < WarnerJ@co.delaware.pa.us>

Date: May 19, 2023 at 6:49:56 PM EDT

Subject: Return Envelope Image

Dear Ms Keohane,

Following up on our phone call today, I've attached an image of your return ballot-envelope. As the image shows, the signature is the name of another voter, and the date is incorrect because ballots had not been mailed out by April 4, 2023. Under orders issued by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, we are forbidden from processing envelopes with incorrect dates or signatures.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to reply to this email or call us at the number below.

Thank you,

Jim Warner

Bureau of Elections

Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Main: 610 891-4673

S.K.K Image.pdf



Voter's declaration

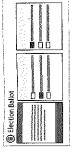
- I hereby declare that
 - I am qualified to vote in this election;
 - I have not already voted in this election;
 - I marked my ballot in secret; and,
 - o I am qualified to vote the enclosed ballot.
- I understand I am no longer eligible to vote at my polling place after I return my voted ballot.
- However, if my ballot is not received by the county, I understand I may only vote by provisional ballot at my polling place, unless I surrender my balloting materials, to be voided, to the Judge of Elections at my polling place.



Official Election Ballot

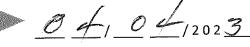
Place ballot in Official Election Ballot Envelope. Seal it.



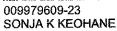


V	oter, sign here (requi	red)
	Rued	3	Kurhon
			A Company of the Comp

Today's Date Required







36001001-1_D_MBLL RADNOR 1W 1P

Declaration for Voter who cannot sign

I hereby declare that I am unable to sign my declaration (above) for voting my ballot without assistance because I am **unable to write by reason of my illness or physical disability**. I have made or received assistance in making my mark in lieu of my signature.

Voter, make mark here (required)

Today's Date Required

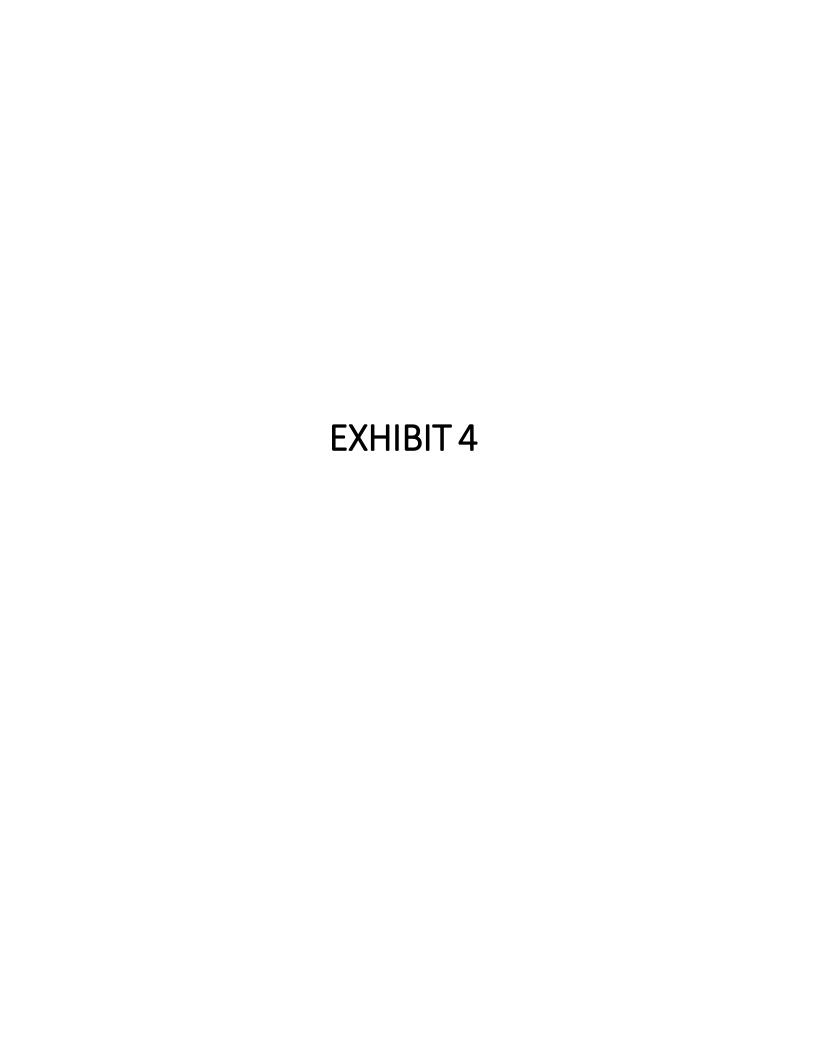






Witness street address	•	
Witness city, state, ZIP code		
Witness, sign here		







Kate Steiker-Ginzberg <ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org>

Fwd: (EXTERNAL) Re: Return Envelope Image

Sonja Keohane < To: ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org Mon, May 22, 2023 at 8:22 PM

This one is from today, I'll send the others shortly Sonja

Begin forwarded message:

Sent from my iPad

From: "Warner, James" < WarnerJ@co.delaware.pa.us>

Date: May 22, 2023 at 4:21:16 PM EDT

To: Sonja Keohane

Subject: RE: (EXTERNAL) Re: Return Envelope Image

Hello Ms Keohane,

After speaking with you today I was advised by our Director of Elections that, despite what the DOS website might suggest, we must follow a decision by the Court of the Commonwealth. This is why we sent out specific instructions for "Curing" a ballot package with "Legal Flaws".

I hope this answers your question.

Best Regards,

Jim Warner

Bureau of Elections

Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Main: 610 891-4673

From: Sonja Keohane <

Sent: Friday, May 19, 2023 7:40 PM

To: Warner, James < WarnerJ@co.delaware.pa.us> Subject: (EXTERNAL) Re: Return Envelope Image

Caution: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. When in doubt, contact your IT Department

Thank you Jim, I appreciate your help.

Sonja Keohane

Sent from my iPad

On May 19, 2023, at 6:49 PM, Warner, James < WarnerJ@co.delaware.pa.us> wrote:

Dear Ms Keohane,

Following up on our phone call today, I've attached an image of your return ballot-envelope. As the image shows, the signature is the name of another voter, and the date is incorrect because ballots had not been mailed out by April 4, 2023. Under orders issued by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, we are forbidden from processing envelopes with incorrect dates or signatures.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to reply to this email or call us at the number below.

Thank you,

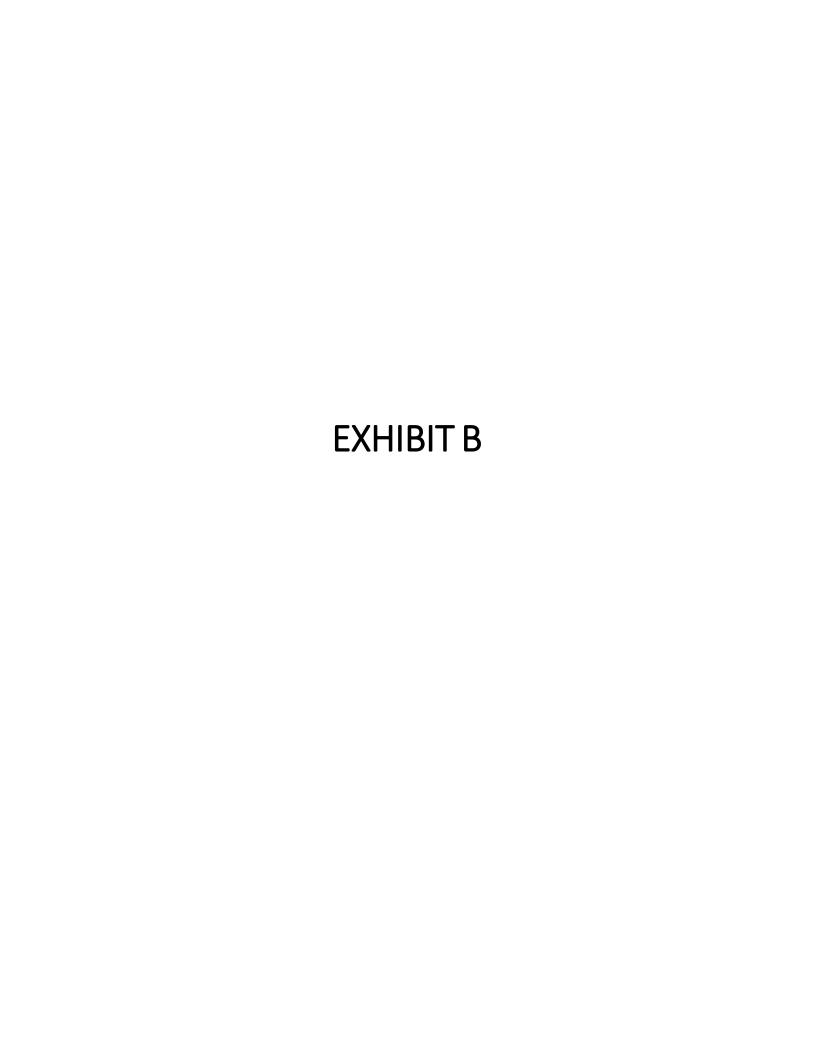
Jim Warner

Bureau of Elections

Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Main: 610 891-4673

<S.K.K Image.pdf>



DECLARATION OF RICHARD B. KEOHANE

Pursuant to 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904, I, Richard B. Keohane hereby declare as follows:

- 1. I have personal knowledge of the matters in this declaration and this is what I would testify to if called as a witness in Court.
 - 2. I am 81 years old and am otherwise competent to testify.
- 3. I am a resident of Delaware County and have lived at the same address in Wayne, Pennsylvania since 1975. I have been registered to vote in Delaware County since moving here in 1975.
- 4. I am currently retired. During my career, I was a radiologist at Pennsylvania Hospital.
- 5. My wife and I have voted in nearly every primary and general election. Voting is very important to me, because I was in the Navy and believe that it's part of our civic duty. Having served my country, I have felt compelled to vote ever since leaving the service.
- 6. I started voting by mail a few years ago. At that time, I was in a rehabilitation center undergoing chemotherapy and couldn't leave to go to the polls. We continued voting by mail because of the convenience, and to avoid being around other people during the pandemic.
 - 7. I requested my mail ballot application online before the May 16th

primary election. I submitted my mail-in ballot application within the time required by the Board of Elections and received my mail-in ballot packet prior to the primary election date. When I received the ballot, I marked it, put it in the secrecy envelope, and filled out the outer envelope. I thought I had followed all the instructions correctly.

- 8. Before the election, I received an email that my ballot had been canceled because I had not correctly dated the outer envelope. I do not save the emails that I receive, but I believe that it was on the same date that my wife received similar emails.
- 9. When my wife called the Bureau of Elections to get information about how we could cure our ballots, I was listening on speaker phone. She was told to come down to Media to fix the problem. That wasn't possible for us because of my health issues; I use a walker and have a catheter. It would have been difficult for my wife and I to get to Media, find parking, and then walk to the proper building. The person on the phone told us that we could cast a provisional ballot at our local polling place.
- 10. On Election Day, my wife and I went to our local polling place because we thought we would be able to vote a provisional ballot. The people at our polling place were very nice, and after we explained that we had put our mail ballots in the drop box and they had been canceled, the pollworkers seemed to know exactly what we needed to do. We were provided with a provisional ballot, filled it out, and thought the situation had been resolved.

11. My wife and I called the election office to request additional information about the problem with our mail ballots, and we were informed that we had accidentally signed each other's envelopes. We were told we had also written the wrong date -4/4/23 instead of 5/4/23. A true and correct copy of the email dated May 19, 2023, is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

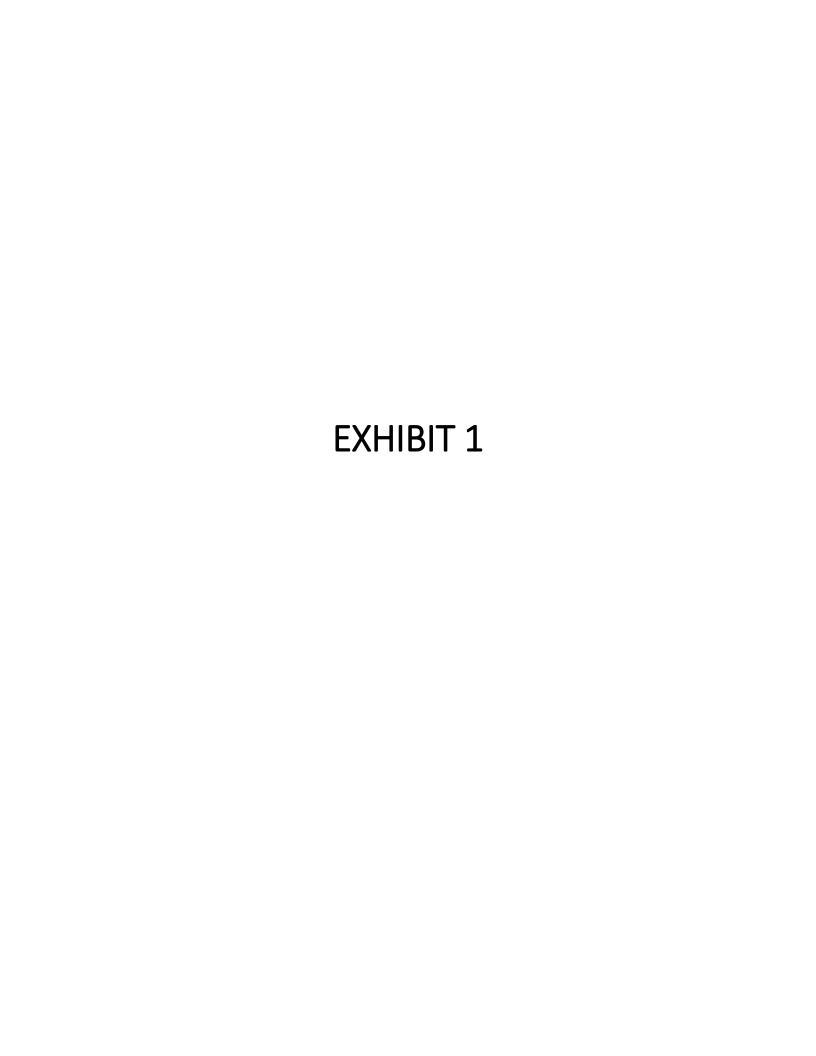
12. I later learned that, on May 23, 2023, the Delaware County Board of Elections voted to reject the provisional ballot that I cast in the May 16th primary election.

13. I am very frustrated that my vote will not count. We went through all that trouble of voting by mail, then going down to cast a provisional ballot, which was very difficult for me. It really irritates me that I went to all the trouble to do this and then somebody can simply throw out my vote.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 5 of May, 2023 in Wayne, Pennsylvania.

Richard B. Keohane





Kate Steiker-Ginzberg <ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org>

Fwd: Return Envelope Image

Richard Keohane < To: Kate Steiker-Ginzberg <ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org> Tue, May 23, 2023 at 5:21 PM

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Warner, James" < WarnerJ@co.delaware.pa.us>

Date: May 19, 2023 at 6:50:32 PM EDT

To:

Subject: Return Envelope Image

Dear Mr Keohane,

Following up on my phone call today with Mrs Keohane, I've attached an image of your return ballot-envelope. As the image shows, the signature was the name of another voter, and the date is incorrect because ballots had not been mailed out by April 4, 2023. Under orders issued by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, we are forbidden from processing envelopes with incorrect dates or signatures.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to reply to this email or call us at the number below.

Thank you,

Jim Warner

Bureau of Elections

Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Main: 610 891-4673



Voter's declaration

- I hereby declare that
 - I am qualified to vote in this election;
 - o I have not already voted in this election;
 - I marked my ballot in secret; and,
 - I am qualified to vote the enclosed ballot.
- I understand I am no longer eligible to vote at my polling place after I return my voted ballot.
- However, if my ballot is not received by the county, I understand I may only vote by provisional ballot at my polling place, unless I surrender my balloting materials, to be voided, to the Judge of Elections at my polling place.

Voter, sign here (required)



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Tonja K Kechano

Today's Date Required







009979608-23 RICHARD B KEOHANE



36001001-1_D_MBLL RADNOR 1W 1P

I hereby declare that I am unable to sign my declaration (above) for voting my ballot without assistance because I am **unable to write by reason of my illness or physical disability.** I have made or received assistance in making my mark in lieu of my signature.

Voter, make mark here (required)

Declaration for Voter who cannot sign

.AA.	
38W.	

	ı

Today's Date Required



____/202___





Witness street address		
Witness city, state, ZIP code		
Witness, sign here	 	

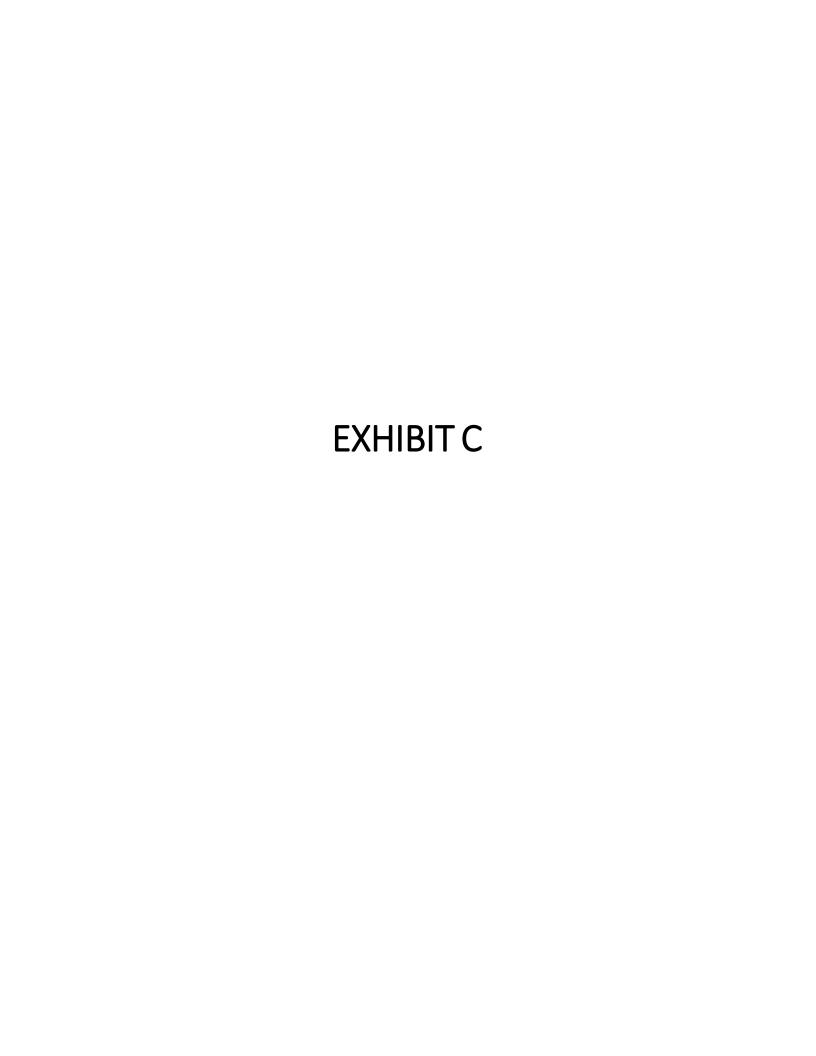


3. Place Official Feddon Ballot Envelope in this Return
Envelope. Sign, date and seal this Return Envelope.

Return Env

Place ballot in Official Election Ballot Envelope.
Seal it.
Official Election Ballot

Mark ballot.



DECLARATION OF BARBARA W. WELSH

Pursuant to 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904, I, Barbara W. Welsh hereby declare as follows:

- 1. I have personal knowledge of the matters in this declaration and this is what I would testify to if called as a witness in Court.
 - 2. I am 79 years old and am otherwise competent to testify.
- 3. I have been a resident and registered voter in Delaware County for 50 years. In that time, I have voted in nearly every general and primary election.
- 4. I moved to Pennsylvania in 1973 because my late husband was hired as a professor at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1982, I received a master's degree in Library Science from Drexel University. I then worked at Drexel in the College for Information from 1987 to 2003. I have been retired for the past 20 years.
- 5. Voting—and anything having to do with elections—has always been important to me. I was a political science major at Northwestern University, and was passionate about politics and government. I like to be informed before I vote, and always read the local and national newspapers, as well as information from the Bar Association to learn about judicial elections. I understand how important democracy is, and how important the

act of voting is to democracy. I believe it is essential to protect the right to vote, both ensuring that there are not impediments on the voter's ability to cast a ballot and ensuring that the ballot is counted.

- 6. I have been a member of the League of Women Voters for approximately a decade. I have become more active in recent years since my husband passed away. In the last three years, I have done special projects for the Radnor League, which include maintaining the publicly available government directory of Radnor Township officeholders and keeping voter information updated at the Radnor public library.
- 7. I have also started working at the polls as a clerk. I did this for the November 2022 election and May 2023 election. For that role, I attended trainings in Media and had to pass an exam, which included learning about the provisional ballot procedure.
- 8. I began voting by mail a short time after the Pennsylvania legislature made that option available. Voting is so important to me, that I decided to vote by mail in case anything ever came up on Election Day and I couldn't make it to the polls in person. Around that time, my husband was sick with leukemia and the COVID-10 pandemic was at its peak, so it was better for us to vote by mail and avoid being around people. We also liked the reliability of being able to track when the mail ballot was received by the county. In prior elections when I voted by mail, I never had a problem with my envelope.

- 9. I requested my mail-in ballot application before the May 16th primary election. I submitted my mail-in ballot application within the time required by the Board of Elections and received my mail-in ballot packet prior to the primary election date. When I received the ballot, I marked it, put it in the secrecy envelope, and filled out the outer envelope. I thought I had followed all the instructions correctly. I brought my ballot to the drop box at the Radnor township administration building.
- of Elections shortly before the primary election date. A true and correct copy of the email dated May 11, 2023, is attached hereto as Exhibit 1. When I received the email on the Thursday before the primary election, I was in San Antonio for a family funeral. I returned on Saturday, May 13. I did not receive the letter until Monday, May 15th because my mail was on hold. A true and correct copy of the letter I received the day before the primary election is attached hereto as Exhibit 2.
- 11. On Monday, May 15th, I was unable to go to Media to fix the mail ballot. I was familiar with the provisional ballot process and thought it would not be a problem to account for any issues with my mail ballot by voting a provisional ballot on Election Day.
- 12. On Election Day, I worked as a clerk at the Radnor 5-2 precinct from 6am to 1pm. In the afternoon, I walked to my own precinct (Radnor 7-1) and cast a provisional ballot.

13. Several days after the election, I received a phone call from an

attorney for the Democratic Party, who informed me that my provisional

ballot would not be counted.

14. I later learned that, on May 23rd, 2023, the Delaware County

Board of Elections voted to reject my provisional ballot. I learned about the

outcome of that meeting when I received a phone call from Olivia Thorne of

the Delaware County League.

15. I was very disappointed to learn that my provisional ballot would

not count, and was shocked to be disenfranchised despite taking these steps

to vote. I don't understand how this could have happened. I have read in the

news about people being denied the right to vote, but never imagined that it

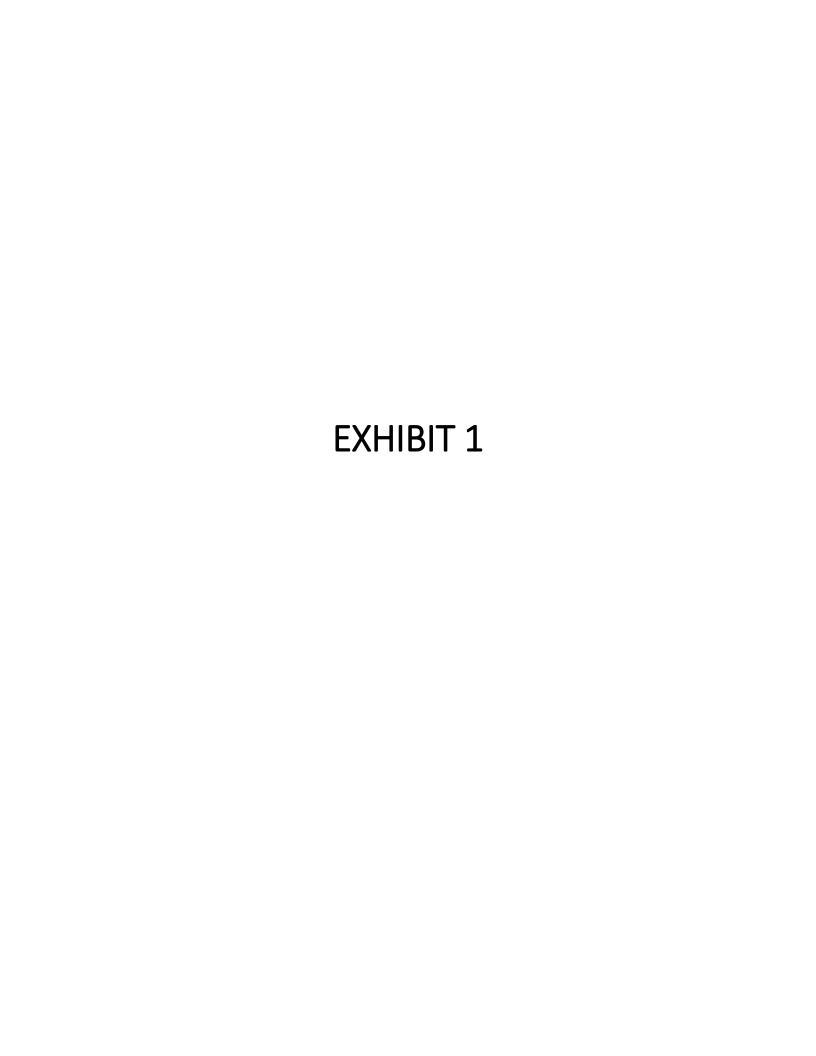
would happen to me.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Barbara gh. Nelsh

Executed this 24 of May, 2023 in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.

Barbara W. Welsh





Kate Steiker-Ginzberg <ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org>

Fwd: Primary Ballot Received Need Resolution

Barbara Welsh <

Tue, May 23, 2023 at 7:05 PM

To: "ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org" <ksteiker-ginzberg@aclupa.org>

Hello, Kate,

I am forwarding the email message I received and am attaching a photo of the physical letter I received. Barbara

----- Forwarded message ------

From: **DelcoBallots** < DelcoBallots@co.delaware.pa.us>

Date: Thu, May 11, 2023 at 3:45 PM

Subject: Primary Ballot Received Need Resolution

To:

Barbara Welsh

1444 County Line Road

Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

5/11/2023

Dear Barbara Welsh,

The Mail-in or Absentee ballot envelope that the Board of Elections received from you has a legal flaw: Improper Date. By law, this legal flaw prevents us from counting any ballot inside.

You may correct this issue.

Visit the Voter Service Center at the Delaware County Government Center, 201 W Front St, Media, PA, as soon as possible to obtain a replacement ballot and envelopes. You may mark the replacement ballot and submit it during that same visit. The Voter Service Center is open:

Mon-Tues – 8:30 am-4:30 pm

Wed – 8:30 am – 8 pm

Thu-Fri – 8:30 am-4:30 pm

Sat - 9 am-Noon

Election Day - Tues., May 16, 2023 - 7 am-8 pm

OR

If time still permits, call us at 610-891-8683 to ask for a replacement ballot to be mailed to you.

Per the Election Code, if you do not take action, the original ballot cannot be counted.

Sincerely,



Director of Election Operations



2 attachments



image002.png 23K



IMG_2654.jpeg 2704K





Delaware County Bureau of Elections Government Center Building 201 West Front Street, Media, PA 19063 DelcoElection@co.delaware.pa.us



Barbara Welsh

5/11/2023

Dear Barbara Welsh,

The Mail-in or Absentee ballot envelope that the Board of Elections received from you has a legal flaw: Improper Date. By law, this legal flaw prevents us from counting any ballot inside.

You may correct this issue.

Visit the Voter Service Center at the Delaware County Government Center,
 201 W Front St, Media, PA, as soon as possible to obtain a replacement ballot and envelopes.
 You may mark the replacement ballot and submit it during that same visit. The Voter Service Center is open:

Mon-Tues – <u>8:30 am – 8 pm</u>
Wed – <u>8:30 am – 8 pm</u>
Thu-Fri – <u>8:30 am – 4:30 pm</u>
Sat – <u>9 am-Noon</u>
Election Day – Tues., May 16, 2023 – <u>7 am-8 pm</u>

OR

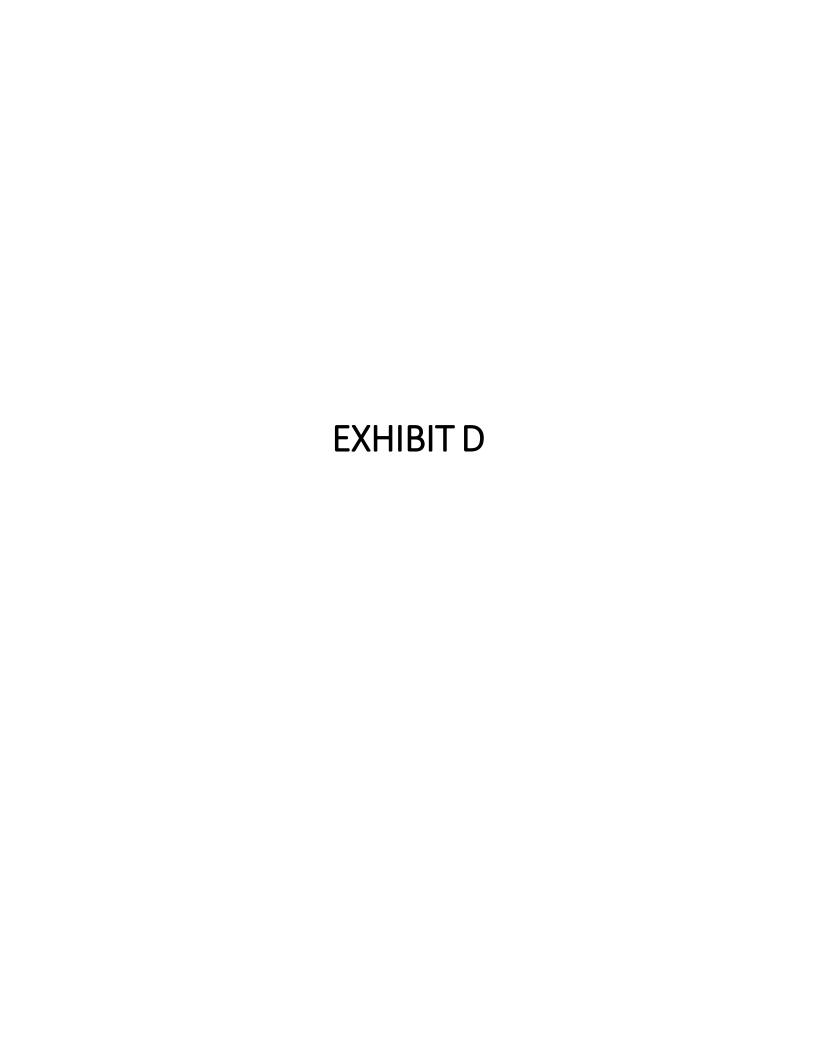
If time still permits, call us at 610-891-8683 to ask for a replacement ballot to be mailed to you.

Per the Election Code, if you do not take action, the original ballot cannot be counted.

Sincerely,

James P. Allen

Director of Election Operations



DOS Voting & Election Information











DOS Voting & Election Information > Voting in PA > Voting by Provisional Ballot

Voting by Provisional Ballot

If you are a registered voter but your eligibility to vote at your polling place is uncertain, you have the right to vote a provisional ballot.

What is a provisional ballot?

Sometimes county elections officials need more time to determine a voter's eligibility to vote. Election officials may ask that voter to vote a provisional ballot. A provisional ballot records your vote while the county board of elections determines whether it can be counted.

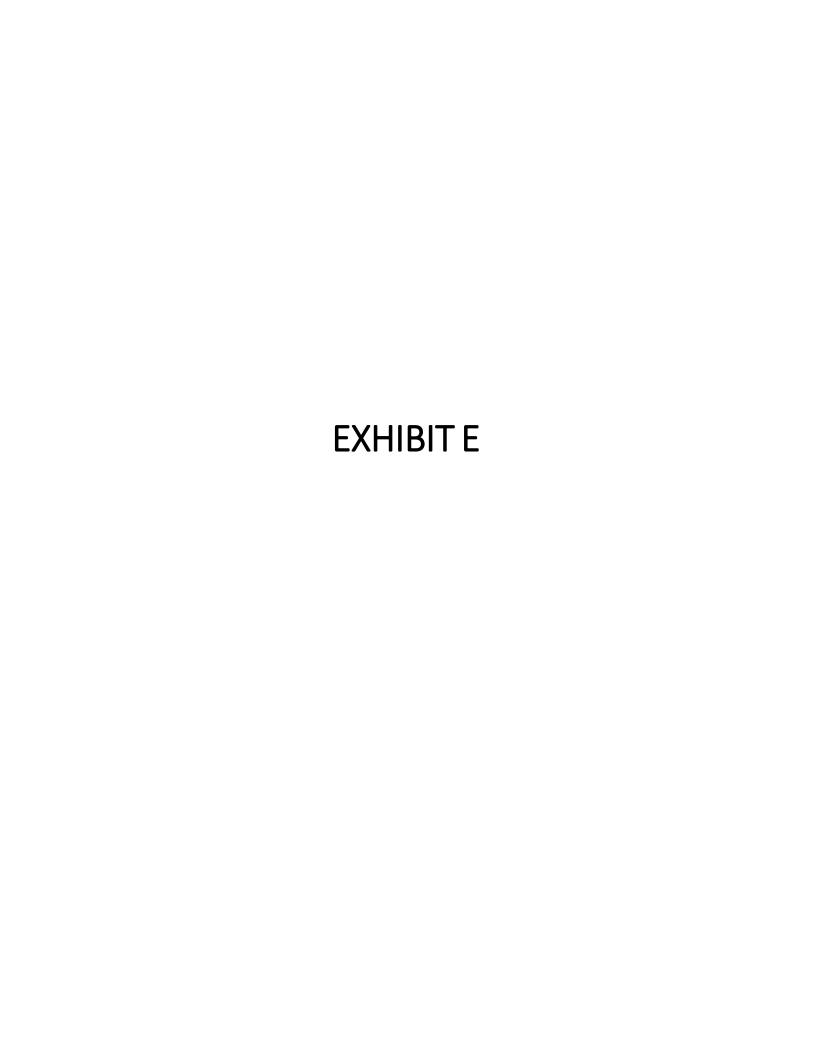
You may be issued a provisional ballot for the reasons below:

- Your name was not in the poll book or supplemental poll book.
 - · For example, you reported to the wrong precinct; or
 - You did not report a recent change in residence to the county election office.
- . You are required to show ID, but cannot show ID.
- · Your eligibility was challenged by an election official.
- You were issued but did not successfully vote an absentee or mail-in ballot and you do not surrender your ballot at the
 polling place to be spoiled.
- You returned a completed absentee or mail-in ballot that was rejected by the county board of elections and you believe
 you are eligible to vote.
- There is a special court order with respect to your registration status.
- There is a special court order related to extending the hours of voting.
- You believe that you are registered in a political party, but your voter record indicates otherwise (for primary elections only).

How do I vote a provisional ballot?

If you vote by provisional ballot, you will be asked to follow these instructions:

- Complete the sections on the provisional envelope labeled Voter Information, Voter Affidavit for Provisional Ballot, and Current Address in front of election officials.
- 2. Mark your provisional hallot in an accessible and private area of the polling place



1	DELAWARE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
2	PROVISIONAL BALLOT CHALLENGE HEARING
3	
4	May 23, 2023
5	
6	Provisional Ballot Challenge Board Hearing
7	taken at COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, County Council Room,
8	201 West Front Street, Media, Pennsylvania 19063,
9	commencing at approximately 9:15 a.m., before Kori
10	Skinner, RPR and Notary Public, there being present:
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1	APPEARANCES:
2	
3	
4	DUANE MORRIS, LLP
5	BY: J. MANLY PARKS, ESQUIRE 30 South 17th Street
6	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-4196 (215) 979-1000
7	JMParks@duanemorris.com
8	
9	AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
10	MARIAN K. SCHNEIDER, ESQUIRE P.O. Box 60173
11	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102 (215) 592-1513
12	mschneider@aclupa.org Senior Voting Rights Policy Counsel
13	
14	
15	DELAWARE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS PANEL MEMBERS:
16	ASHLEY LUNKENHEIMER, CHAIR
17	JOHN P. MCBLAIN SCOTT J. ALBERTS (VIA ZOOM)
18	
19	JAMES P. ALLEN, DIRECTOR OF ELECTIONS
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	

THE CHAIRPERSON: Good morning. Thank you for your patience. I call to order the Delaware County Board of Elections Board meeting for May 23rd, 2 2023, and well start with the Pledge of Allegiance, Please stand. Our first item will be the consideration of the agenda. Mr. McBlain or Mr. Alberts Mr. Alberts, can you hear us clearly? MR. ALBERTS: Yeah. It's a little quiet, but I can hear you speak if you speak into the II can hear you speak if you speak into the MR. ALBERTS: Thank, you. MR. MCBLAIN: I move to approve the ugenda us presented. MR. MCBLAIN: I move to approve the ugenda us presented. MR. ALBERTS: Ill second that. THE CHAIRPERSON: With no comment then, all those in favor say aye. MR. ALBERTS: Aye. MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? MR. MCBLAIN: In move to approve the minutes of the April meeting. MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? Aye. MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? MR. ALBERTS: Aye. MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? MR. ALBERTS: Aye. MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? MR. ALBERTS: Was that a m	$\overline{}$		П	
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4 2023, and we'll start with the Pedge of 5 Allegiance. Please stand. Our first item will be the consideration of 7 the agenda. Mr. McBlain or Mr. Alberts - Mr. Alberts, can 8 you hear us clearly? MR. ALBERTS: Yeah. It's a little quiet, but 1 can hear you speak if you speak into the 1 microphone. 12 microphone. 13 MR. ALBERTS: Yeah. It's a little quiet, but 1 can hear you speak if you speak into the 1 microphone. 14 MR. ALBERTS: Thank you. 15 MR. ALBERTS: Thank you. 16 MR. ALBERTS: Thank you. 17 MR. ALBERTS: Thank you. 18 MR. ALBERTS: Thank you. 29 MR. ACBLAIN. Aye. 20 MR. ALBERTS: Aye. 21 MR. ALBERTS: Aye. 22 MR. ALBERTS: Aye. 23 THE CHAIRPERSON: The motion is approved. 24 Similarly, we have the minutes that were presented to us. I think there were a couple of minor 25 two first names in his name, so we fixed that as well as a few other additions. 26 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 27 MR. MCBLAIN: I move to approve the minutes of the April meeting. 28 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 29 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 20 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 21 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 22 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 23 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 24 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 25 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 26 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 27 MR. MCBLAIN: I move to approve the minutes of the April meeting. 28 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 29 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 20 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 21 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 22 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 23 MR. MCBLAIN: I move to approve the minutes of the April meeting. 24 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 25 MR. MCBLAIN: I move to approve the minutes of the April meeting. 26 MR. ALBERTS: Was that a motion? 1 couldn't hear. 27 MR. MCBLAIN: A condition hear. 28 MR.	2	your patience. I call to order the Delaware County	2	provisional ballots.
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Transcript of Hearing 5.23.2023 Page 1 believe we had any of those for the partial counts, 2 that they were all different precincts. I'll have 3 to look back over the notes, but I don't think we did. But if there were a third-party voter that 5 voted in a precinct part of one of the special 6 elections, and it would be determined that that office, just for that third-party if they weren't 8 registered and the other one, would be a partial 9 count. 10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Of course. Then they would 10 11 11 be eligible to vote in that election. 12 12 MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Yes. And then we did have. 13 13 I believe, two that were just third-parties and 14 14 just third-party ballots that were then considered 15 15 a full count. So, yes. 16 16 And then the no counts, there's quite a few 17 17 different reasons. It could be the affidavit of 18 18 the provisional ballot was not complete, whether it 19 19 wasn't signed or filled out. The secrecy envelope 20 20 could have been unsealed. That would be an 21 21 incomplete also. If they were registered a 22 22 different party and asked for a different party 23 23 ballot, that would be a no count. Not registered, 24 registered in a different county. I think that's 24 Page 8 1 1 the majority of the no counts that we have. 2 MR. ALLEN: Just to be clear for the record. 3 In the 48 precincts where the special election 4 occurred for the 163rd state house district as well 5 as the two precincts in Radnor that had a special 6 election for commissioner, there were third-party

provisional ballots supplied to the precincts. And those were the only precincts that had third-party provision.

MR. MCBLAIN: There were no votes at a provisional.

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MS. WINTERBOTTOM: For just third-party? MR. MCBLAIN: Right.

MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Yes. No, there were a couple. Yes. And they would be considered a full count if it was just that third-party and there was no other -- if they were registered in that

precinct, yes, there were a couple. 19 THE CHAIRPERSON: So just going back to what 20 you said a moment ago, there were several that, you 21 know, categorically you could say that the voter is 22 the impetus for perhaps the no count vote. I say 23 I'm one party and I'm really registered another or 24 I'm not registered. But there are a couple that

you discussed that has secrecy ballot issues or affidavit issues. Is there any -- were those significant in number?

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MS. WINTERBOTTOM: I would say not the no secrecy. We had a few that had no secrecy and just the ballot placed in there. I would say majority of no counts would be the different political party that they were registered.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Another reason I say that is obviously there's the potential for the Judge of Elections to assist and making sure that the ones that are missing a secrecy envelope or the affidavit is incompletely filled out, they could help assist to make sure that that isn't an issue.

MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Yeah.

THE CHAIRPERSON: In principle. So I do think that if, to the extent, Mr. Allen, that we're reviewing training and other things to see who in the Judges of Election we have concerns about. I think any Judges of Election that allowed a provisional ballot inadequately maintained and should be retrained.

MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Correct, yes. THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr. McBlain, do you have any

questions?

MR. MCBLAIN: No.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Albert's, do you have any questions?

MR. ALBERTS: Yes, I do.

Ms. Winterbottom, how many provisional ballots were cast by voters who had sent in a vote by mail ballot that was in some way defective and needed to be cured? Was there a significant number of provisional ballots voted in these situations?

MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Out of these 457, there were six.

MR. ALBERTS: Six. Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: And just to be clear, we followed the latest court ruling is from the Commonwealth Court and it's very clear and explicit. It was a split decision, but nonetheless, the majority opinion directed election authorities, election agencies to count -- or to not count provisional ballots that were cast in the precinct by individuals who had cast -- who had returned a vote by mail ballot that had a fatal flaw. So if it had a fatal flaw, such as not being signed, not being dated, not having a secrecy envelope, we have the

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ability and exercise the ability to notify the voter that they had the opportunity to cure that, but it required coming into our office or calling our office to have another vote by mail or absentee ballot issued to them.

We explicitly did not tell voters to go to the polling place and try to vote provisional ballot because of that Commonwealth Court ruling. Because we feel under the current situation that provisional ballot would be in peril. So our recommendations are consistent with the Commonwealth Court ruling on this matter.

MR. ALBERTS: And I do say and will say I think that is the appropriate course of action given the current legal status based on that ruling. I do think that, in the real world, it poses an unreasonable burden on folks where casting provisional ballot should be as good as coming into Media and curing a ballot. And so I do hope the courts have an opportunity to reconsider this question in the future.

MR. ALLEN: I agree with you wholeheartedly, but we don't get to pick and choose what we follow and in order --

MR. ALBERTS: Absolutely not, no.

MR. ALLEN: -- from people in black robes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, and the question was squarely before us at the last election. Today it's it not squarely before us.

And that's because, Ms. Winterbottom, were there any challenges, and if there were any, were they withdrawn?

MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Yes. They were those six. MR. ALLEN: And they were withdrawn?

MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Yes. Correct.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And that was a challenge of the Democratic Party?

MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Yes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: But to the extent that this -- we're commenting on the idea of it, which we can during this vote, I agree with you,

Mr. Alberts, wholeheartedly. I do think that a voter that comes in and cast a provisional ballot, that that court opinion should be reconsidered.

And while we're here as a Board to follow the election law, which usually in most cases favors the voter. I think that this one is also an undue

burden. I agree to the voter under the

circumstances and it would require a level of sort of legal sophistication to figure out that on the voter's level. When they don't follow the directions, I understand Mr. Allen, we do a really good job of trying to direct voters to do the right thing so that their vote can count. But in this case, a provisional ballot is something that should be considered, but it cannot under the law, so unfortunately we have no challenge to vote on it. But if we did have a vote that would present a legal obstacle in counting those ballots.

MS. WINTERBOTTOM: We did have one more that was -- that they didn't have IDs at the polling place. That voter, we contacted them three different times. At 3:30 yesterday, they were able to get us that ID, so that changed from a no count to full count. And that was the only one with no ID.

THE CHAIRPERSON: What a great example of how great our team is and trying to make sure people are able to vote. So I really appreciate that.

MR. ALBERTS: And it is within the statutory deadline. It has to be proved up in this case by the Monday after election day.

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MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Correct.

MR. MCBLAIN: Just curious, what was the most common reason that a provisional ballot was cast and it was a full count? I mean, was it that they were not listed in the Registry of Voters at the polling places and they turned out to be actually registered or --

MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Not usually. So a lot of the calls that we see on election day in voter registration, but we have the ability to view the poll book that was printed and that we gave out at supplies, but they couldn't find the name. So we were able to tell them what page that it was. And then they would find them. Sometimes if they got busy and maybe they didn't call us, that they could have given a provisional ballot. So we do see instances that they didn't need a provisional, they were fine in the book, and that they could have voted. That wasn't the majority of the reason.

I do believe a lot of them were that if they never got their mail-in ballot or they never returned their mail-in ballot, they're marked in the poll book as they have to vote provisionally if they're not able to surrender it.

Page 15 1 1 MR. ALLEN: Additionally, you can have a full 2 2 count if, let's say, there are two precincts that 3 3 vote in the same school gymnasium, for example, and 4 they were both entirely in the same jurisdiction. 5 5 So two precincts in Upper Darby, even though you're 6 6 voting in the wrong precinct, you're entitled to 7 vote on all the contents on that ballot if you're 8 8 registered with that party as well. 9 9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr. McBlain, any additional 10 10 auestions? 11 11 MR. MCBLAIN: No. But before we move on to 12 12 any sort of vote, Madam Chair, I guess just to 13 13 point order, I guess looking at our agenda, the 14 14 public comments are listed as number nine. 15 15 THE CHAIRPERSON: I know. I talked to Mr. 16 16 Allen about that. They're not normally. And, you 17 17 know, I do think on reflection, we're going to have 18 18 to -- if we're going to take the vote now, we're 19 19 going to have to move the public comment up. 20 20 MR. MCBLAIN: Yeah, that's what I mean. I 21 21 believe we should receive public comment before we 22 22 vote on a matter of substance here. 23 23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, I agree. And we 2.4 should -- we have -- do you have any campaign final 24 Page 16 1 1 advance waiver? 2 2 MR. ALLEN: Yes. 3 3 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Then let's go 4 4 back and in consideration of the agenda, I would 5 5 move to have the public comment moved after the 6 6 number 4 before or as part of number 5, but before 7 number 5. I would move to have the agenda amended 8 8 to take that opportunity so that we can vote on the 9 9 action items after public comment. 10 10 MR. MCBLAIN: Without objection. 11 11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. I consider that a 12 12 second. All those in favor, say aye. 13 13 MR. MCBLAIN: Aye. 14 14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Aye. 15 15 That motion mass passes. All right. Let's 16 16 just make sure we completed our conversation for 17 17 the Board. 18 18 Mr. Alberts, any other comments on the 19 consideration of the recommendation of 19 20 20 Ms. Winterbottom? 21 21 MR. ALBERTS: Not at this time. 22 22 MS. WINTERBOTTOM: Thank you, Your Honor. 23 23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Ms. Winterbottom. 24 With that, it has been our tradition over the 24 year to move public comment up to the top of the items. This was a little bit of a different hearing or sort of Board meeting, so we did not do that. But I do think that there may be people who would like to be heard on this issue. And, regardless, it is required by us to have public comment before we vote on an action item.

So those two stars aligning, I would like to open up the forum for public comment on the consideration of the recommendations of Ms. Winterbottom. Or any other public comment that anyone should wish to make. I also want to note for anybody who's not familiar, Ms. Schwartz is familiar and she's already standing up. So I'm guessing she may want to be first and that would be fine. She's familiar with the procedures.

You do need to state your name and where you're from. If you're in the district, your address. And if you're not in the district, who you represent. And then you will have three minutes, the three minutes will be timed on the clock for your comments, after which if the Board has any other comments or the Solicitor or the Director, they will make theirs.

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So, Ms. Schwartz, would you like to go first?
MS. SCHWARTZ: Go ahead, that's fine.
MS. SCHNEIDER: Thank you. I appreciate that.
Good morning, Chair Lunkenheimer, Member
McBlain and Member Alberts. My name is Marian
Schneider. And I'm an attorney with the ACLU of
Pennsylvania. And I'm here today on behalf of
three voters, namely, Richard Cohain, Sonya Cohain
and Lee Constegan. And I also represent the League
of Women Voters of Pennsylvania, who, one of those
members are Barbara Welsh. All four of those
voters are in the category of the six ballots that
are recommended as not count.

They previously submitted a mail-in ballot. They were notified that their ballot was canceled and would not count. And they voted a provisional ballot so that they would not lose their fundamental right to vote.

I'm going to make a couple points hopefully within three minutes. We appeared, my colleague Kate who is in the audience, appeared on Thursday to go to the exhibition of the provisional ballot, so that we can learn what the universe of voters were who were in this category. We were not

permitted to attend because we were not a representative of a candidate or a party.

I understand that there was a challenge to these ballots, but the party withdrew them and that's a perfect example of where the party's interest and the voter's interest diverge. So there was no opportunity to raise a challenge for you to consider at this meeting and I believe that's a denial of due process.

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The provisional ballots should be counted. I understand there's a Commonwealth Court decision. It is a 3 Judge panel decision that is unpublished, which means it has no Presidential authority. It also only considered one aspect -- there's only one paragraph on these provisional ballots. There was not a full analysis. There is a conflict in the election code that the court did not wrestle with, and that conflict has to do with a pre -- so the provision about mail and absentee ballots was added by Act 77. Previously, in 2002, when this section of the election code was enacted, they said except as provided, if it is determined that an individual was registered and entitled to vote at the election district where the ballot was cast, the County

Board of Elections shall compare the signature on the provisional ballot envelope with the signature on the elector's registration form. And if the signatures are determined to be genuine, shall count the ballot if the County Board of Election confirms that the individual did not cast any other ballot, including an absentee ballot in the election. Where the mail ballot has been canceled, there's no chance of double voting.

Now, I understand that's the only decision out there. The request for replacement ballot in writing is an undue burden on the fundamental right to vote, but there are decades of authority from the Pennsylvania Supreme Court that says the election code must be construed in favor of enfranchising voters and not disenfranchising voters. And we urge you to reconsider the recommendation and count those six ballots.

We believe we have a right of appeal should you decide not to count those ballots, but that's going to result in litigation.

But we believe that --

MR. ALLEN: Time's expired.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah, no, but, I mean, given | 24

that she represents four voters, please finish your comments.

MR. ALLEN: Okay, thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You're right, Mr. Allen. You do represent four different individuals I understand is what you said.

MS. SCHNEIDER: And I understand -- yes, we represent one organization and three individuals at this moment. We hope to be more individuals. But the point is that the provisional ballot was created by the Help America Vote Act in 2002. Section 3050 -- 25PS Section 3050 is Pennsylvania's implementation of the Help America Vote Act. The provisional ballot process is to safeguard the right to vote. The whole purpose of it is that no voters will not be disenfranchised. By not counting these ballots, it defeats the purpose of having professional ballots in the law at all. Now, I firm -- I let -- you can decide, based on the fact that the Commonwealth Court decision is not Presidential to count those ballots and there may or may not be litigation. But I assure you, if the ballots are not counted, we will be challenging that decision in court. Thank you for your time.

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THE CHAIRPERSON: I do have some questions for you and it looks like the Solicitor would like to speak as well.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Sure.

THE CHAIRPERSON: But I just want to start by saying that I don't think Mr. Alberts and I, in principle, disagree with you. There is a question of -- and we'll get to Mr. Solicitor -- of whether or not we even need a standing to vote on it under the circumstances. And I do want to ask you some questions about the circumstances that led you to not have standing before us. Because -- and, Mr. Solicitor, you can correct me if I'm wrong. But this Board had the opportunity to balance the provision that you're talking about, the favors in franchising the voter, against the provision that the court ruled on that does not allow that vote to be casted at the last election. And, in fact, this Board, all three members unanimously voted in favor of counting the ballots. And the reason for that was that there was explicit guidance that went to those voters from the State Department that was in contradiction to the court ruling. And so under those circumstances, it wasn't a partisan issue for

any of us. It was an enfranchisement issue.
MS. SCHNEIDER: Of course.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That we believe that the voter had directly been improperly misled, potentially. And therefore, we voted in favor. At least that's why -- I don't want to speak for why the other Board members voted that way.

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So when properly presented with this question, we were given the opportunity to balance the different legal opportunities under the law to either consider whether enfranchisement controls or an unpublished decision controls.

Under these circumstances, I think even if we had the opportunity, we wanted to consider that. I don't think that there's proper standing here and that is because we do not have the objection that we had before us. So I will like just to -- and bear with me, you may want to comment on that. But I would like the Solicitor to speak to that point because I think that does lead you with a litigation route only and that we're not the proper forum for that objection. But, please, Mr. Solicitor.

MR. SOLICITOR: I think your analysis is

correct I believe that the issue to be presented here today and as contemplated by the election code is the adjudication of challenges to provisional ballot adjudications or recommended adjudications, and there is no challenge pending before this Board as to those ballots.

So I think that that -- and, frankly, as I read the code, no challenge could be brought by anyone other than the representative of a party or a campaign because that's the way the code is written. So that is a distinguishing characteristic between the time the Board considered this in the last election or the general election of 2022 and now. So procedurally we have a different scenario.

The other distinguishing point is that there
was evidence presented to the Board that the
Department of State notices or auto-gen
communications to the voter contained misleading
information. This time I'm not aware one way or
the other no information has been presented to this
Board about that.

I would note that there is a Department of State guidance about this point from 2020, but the Commonwealth Court decision that seems to control this question postdates that Department of State guidance. And I think that's important.

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And finally I will note that although the decision we've been referencing was originally not published, it was subsequently published.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Thank you for your question. I really appreciate it.

So two points are the pa.gov guidance is still on the Pennsylvania Department of State website and we did not get notice of the identities of these voters until 4:11 p.m. yesterday, but one of our clients said that she found that guidance and relied on it and voted a provisional ballot because of that.

And, secondly, others of our clients called --called voter services -- actually, that's what we called it in Chester County, but Bureau of Elections and was told to go vote for provisional ballot on election day. So I think that there is some evidence of reliance again in the same way in 2022. And I'll doublecheck that, but when I looked at that case on Westlaw the other day, there was no citation. It was reported as unreported on

Westlaw. So the -- so I think that there is an element of reliance here on, and there -- because there was little analysis, there were other provisional ballots in that case that the court spent most of their time talking about. And there was -- this was only a single paragraph and they did not reconcile the conflicting language of the election code, which they should have.

So I agree. I hear what you're saying. All I've got is a legal argument.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And you may have a second legal argument, so let's talk about that so clearly, Mr. Solicitor, it is not possible for the ACLU to directly or the voter itself make a challenge to the provisional ballot?

MR. SOLICITOR: That's correct. The code does not contemplate a voter appearing at the provisional ballot exhibition and lodging challenges. That is only for campaigns or parties.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And if he wants me to, I want to ask you a question. You mentioned the due process challenge.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Yes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: But due process challenge

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would be if the voter has no avenue to challenge those. And it may not be that forum, right, but there's opportunity for the voters to bring -MS. SCHNEIDER: Well, I -THE CHAIRPERSON: Sorry, let me just finish with my Solicitor. Please.

MR. SOLICITOR: I think that you are correct with respect to the fact that what the code contemplates, the event the code contemplates does not seem to provide the opportunity for voters to participate. But that does not mean that voters don't have other avenues available to them. That's the distinction. I think that, you know, if a candidate or a party appeared here today at this hearing and wanted to raise challenges to adjudications and did not previously raise them during, you know, the exhibition of the provisional ballots, then they would basically have a fundamentally -- you know, a fundamental procedural defect to that. And I don't think they have the right to raise a challenge at this point.

There is nothing in the code that says that a voter would be similarly procedurally constrained. They don't have to go to the provisional. They

don't even have the opportunity to go to the exhibition of the provisional ballot, so you certainly couldn't fault the voter for not having initiated a challenge at a proceeding that they're not contemplated to participate in and the code doesn't even say they can even raise challenges in.

MS. SCHNEIDER: May I respond to that? THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MS. SCHNEIDER: The code is silent as it says you shall -- that candidates, representatives of candidates and parties shall be permitted to attend the exhibition and be in the room. It has nothing -- says nothing about prohibiting anyone else from attending. So it is with -- it's the strict construction of the code that prohibits -- that prohibited us from going up on Thursday when we showed up and attempted to do so.

So I don't think that there is a prohibition in the code. There could have been a challenge lodged if we had been permitted to go in and lodge it.

Having said that, I -- you know, I believe that that's a floor not a ceiling and that that Board could have allowed process that all challenges could have been presented to you at this time so that you could have ruled on them. And the interest of the parties and the interest of the voters are not identical, especially in this case, where the voters are harmed because they will have been denied their fundamental right to vote if their ballot is not counted. And there's no risk of double voting here. So while there may not be -- I mean, we can argue about this at a later time, but so maybe --

THE CHAIRPERSON: I don't want to argue about it. I want to be able to support you, personally.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Right. No, I understand that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I just am struggling with the ability to do so. Please finish your comments, because I think Mr. Solicitor is going to respond and then there may be other questions as well.

MS. SCHNEIDER: The only reason that you don't have a challenge before you is because we were not permitted to lodge it last Thursday. We would have lodged the challenge had we been permitted to go to the meeting and lodge such a challenge.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. MR. SOLICITOR: Just so the record is clear,

and folks following along at home or the Board members have the language fresh in their mind, here's the code section language: One authorized representative of each candidate in an election and one representative from each political party shall be permitted to remain in the room in which the determination is being made. And, by the way, the determination here references back to a pry sentence. It says: Within seven calendar days of the election, the County Board of Elections shall examine each provisional ballot envelope that is received to determine if the individual voting that ballot is entitled to vote at the election district in the election.

So that's the determination that's being referred to in this sentence I just read.

The code goes on. Representatives, in other words, referring back to the representatives of each candidate or of each political party, representatives shall be permitted to keep a list of those persons who cast a provisional ballot. By the way, there's no obligation for the Board to create such a list. I think the 4:12 yesterday reference was a reference to the fact the Board did

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create and provide such a list upon request, which is the courtesy, because the Board has no obligations of code contemplates, and the party's representatives have to go to the provisional ballot exhibition and make such a list but we didn't insist on that.

Representatives shall be permitted to keep a list of those persons who cast a provisional ballot and shall be entitled to challenge any determination of the County Board of Elections with respect to the counting or partial counting of the ballot under this section. Upon challenge of any provisional ballot under this clause, the ballot envelope shall be marked challenged, together with the reason for the challenge, and the provisional ballot shall be set aside pending final determination of the challenge according to the following procedure. And it goes on to describe what ultimately brings us here today.

So it's very clear from this language, at least to me, that what is contemplated by this process is representatives of the candidate and the party will attend the exhibition of the provisional ballots, that those representatives shall be

entitled to raise challenges and those challenges would be adjudicated at a hearing like this. It does not -- it's totally silent as to an individual voter having any role in this challenge process that brings us here today.

THE CHAIRPERSON: But what you said, Mr. Solicitor, and what she said, what if the voter came here today?

MR. ALLEN: The only instance where we would notify the voter would be if we determined that the vote should count and there was an objection filed by a political party or a candidate that tried to deny that voter's full count or partial count of their ballot. Then we would notify the voter and invite them to come and defend or argue with our --you know, in tandem with our staff's recommendation.

MR. SOLICITOR: Yeah, there would be no such challenges, there's no notification process.

MS. SCHNEIDER: I would suggest that the portion of the election code that Mr. Parks read is a floor, not a ceiling. Those are the ones you must -- you would be violating the election code if you prohibited any of the candidate representatives

or party representatives from going to the exhibition of ballots, as you call.

That doesn't -- because the -- if the legislature wanted to prohibit everybody, they could easily have said that no one else shall be permitted to attend, but they didn't say that. So if the Board could, by its own policy, allow people like me, who are here as representatives of those voters who couldn't attend today, to attend on Thursday. I mean, I understand everybody is trying to do their level best to count as many ballots as possible. And I don't want you to think I don't understand that. I do.

I just believe that you have the ability as the Board to consider the points that were made and to count those ballots and another party aggrieved by that decision could file suit as well. But by not counting them, then the voters whose ballots who have been disenfranchised will need to pursue their rights in court.

MR. MCBLAIN: First of all, none of the six people that you say you represent are here today, right? None of the voters who claim to be disenfranchised appeared today for this hearing?

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MS. SCHNEIDER: We have three individuals and one organization and no representatives on this issue are here. I mean, there's -- people from the league are here, but they're not here on this issue.

MR. MCBLAIN: And you indicated that these are individuals who have defect in their mail-in ballot, and I'll turn you to Mr. Allen.

When we receive a defective mail-in ballot, do we send notice to the voter indicating that the -- what they returned to us was defective and giving them instructions as to what to do?

MR. ALLEN: Yes, we do.

MR. MCBLAIN: What are the instructions that we give to them?

MR. ALLEN: Our explicit instructions, whether it's by email or letter, are that the voter has two options, both involved obtaining a new vote by mail or absentee ballot, either by visiting the voters service center or by contacting us, even by phone, and requesting that we cancel the original and that we mail out a new ballot.

We explicitly do not mention the option of going to the polling place on election day out of

Page 35 1 1 concern that that ballot is in legal peril based on 2 2 the current published decision. 3 3 MR. MCBLAIN: So, I'm sorry, just for at least 4 4 one of the individuals you state that your 5 5 organization represents indicated -- you indicated 6 6 that that voter took it upon themselves to go to 7 the Chester County --8 8 MS. SCHNEIDER: No, no. 9 9 MR. MCBLAIN: I'm sorry, looked at the State 10 10 website --11 11 MS. SCHNEIDER: Yes. 12 12 MR. MCBLAIN: -- where they looked at 13 13 different advice? 14 14 MS. SCHNEIDER: They looked at the guidance 15 15 that the Pennsylvania Department of State has 16 16 published regarding provisional ballots and curing 17 17 mail -- defects in mail ballots. They saw that 18 18 guidance and then went to voter provisional ballot. 19 19 MR. MCBLAIN: But they didn't follow the 20 20 explicit advice that was provided to them by the 21 21 Delaware County Board of Elections. 22 22 MS. SCHNEIDER: Well. I -- the -- I think 23 23 that's correct. I do want to -- there's -- I took 2.4 a screenshot of the notice. 24 Page 36 1 1 MR. MCBLAIN: And it's correct that in 2 2 Pennsylvania, there is no statutory requirement or 3 3 court requirement that Boards of election allow 4 4 voters to cure defective mail-in ballots. 5 5 MS. SCHNEIDER: That's correct. The election 6 6 code is silent, but there's -- several courts have 7 ruled that counties may implement a notice in cure 8 8 process if they so choose. But the provisional 9 9 ballot process is available, does exist. 10 10 I do want to mention that --11 MR. MCBLAIN: And, in fact, Delaware County 11 12 12 has -- and I think we unanimously voted to allow 13 13 voters --14 14 MS. SCHNEIDER: Yes. 15 15 MR. MCBLAIN: -- to cure their ballot. So we 16 16 gave them -- we gave these voters an opportunity 17 17 that they did not -- they don't have by law or in 18 18 many counties in the Commonwealth. 19 19 And just, lastly, my question is -- I'm not 20 20 familiar with the case that you're speaking about, 21 21 I just learned of this issue when I walked in this 22 22 morning. 23 23 But if Mr. Parks is correct that the 24 24 Commonwealth Court has now published the decision

that you indicated was unpublished, you would agree that our Board, lower courts, court of common pleas are bound by that. As an attorney, you're -- as an officer of the court --

MS. SCHNEIDER: Of course.

MR. MCBLAIN: -- you're not able to advocate that we take action in -- adverse to what a court requires us to do?

MS. SCHNEIDER: Well -- and I'm sure Mr. Parks will appreciate this, but some clients continue to advocate for a change in the law until the highest court in the state rules on that, and that would be the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, and they have not ruled on this issue, so I would still continue to advocate for you to count the ballots until the Supreme Court says, no, don't count them.

But I just want to point out that two of our clients are husband and wife and they're in their 80s, and it would have been incredibly burdensome for them to come to Media. They don't live nearby. But they were able to go to their polling place, with some difficulty, which is why they voted by mail in the first place.

So it does -- you do have a cure process. I'm

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not saying don't have the cure process. It should coexist with the provisional ballot process, which is there for precisely this type of thing.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I've already told you I agree with you in principle. But, Mr. Allen, you did say that one of the opportunities would be to call and have a new ballot sent; is that correct?

MR. ALLEN: Yes.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Right, if there was enough time for it to get there and then to be returned right?

MR. ALLEN: Again, what -- what's being suggested here, even though I agree with the idea behind it in that we should not -- if we received a mail-in ballot that has a fatal flaw, it only makes sense that they should be able to cast a provisional ballot. However, we have this Commonwealth Court ruling that says you shall not do that. We don't have any liberty to just make our own rules.

So I fully agree with you that, yeah, it needs to be reconsidered or perhaps it will be reconsidered or perhaps it can be taken all the way up to the Supreme Court. But that has not been

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Transcript of Hearing 5.23.2023 Page 39 1 done. 2 And in the interim, as an election 3 administrator, I would be remiss -- I would be extremely wrong to take a ballot that a court has 5 told me I should not count, mix that egg into the 6 omelette so it could never be withdrawn, and then be told, no. 8 Again, we told you already you cannot count 9 this ballot. I mean, that's -- I feel for these 10 voters, I agree with them in principal, but I'm 11 limited by what the court has instructed us to do, 12 and I hope you can appreciate that. 13 And until or unless, you know, a new person in 14 a black robe gives me a new order, this is what I 15 have to do. 16 MS. SCHNEIDER: Well, I certainly appreciate 17 that, and I will continue to advocate on behalf of 18 all Pennsylvania voters. 19 THE CHAIRPERSON: I don't know if Mr. Alberts, 20 he hasn't had a chance to speak, and you've been 21 very patient. I hope you've been able to hear the 22

20 21 22 dialogue, Mr. Alberts. But did you have any 23 comments that might solicit a response from 24 Ms. Schneider? Page 40 1 MR. ALBERTS: Well, one of the advantages of

remoting in is that I have access to my laptop here, and I can clearly say that the provisional ballot guidance is still up on the Department of State web page, and I do think that that's to the voters, and I sympathize completely with the -that this represents a travesty of justice.

Structurally, I think the -- I mean, the best way to pursue that is to take it to the highest court because I do think that, you know, asking election officials to violate a court order that they've been given is sort of a dicey proposition. I think advocating for the fundamental rights of voters and winning that decision will have a far greater impact for more voters for a longer time than us, I don't know, making a wildcat decision.

As much as I'm inclined to -- you know, if this was put up for a vote before me, I would say yes, count them, right? I mean, that would be my instinct, my impulse, my feeling, that it's -- it's not up for a vote before me today, so it's -because of perhaps a process that we need to improve on.

But I do think that the best remedy for this,

Page 41 given the confusion, you know, put out there by the Department of State, can't seem to figure out how to scrub their website of misleading information, I do think that the voters are put at a disadvantage at several stages in this process.

So I think that, you know, we're not able to change the law, we're not legislatures. But I do hope that -- again, I do hope the Courts get an opportunity to reconsider these questions, because I do think that there is a miscarriage of justice happening here.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. MS. SCHNEIDER: Thank you for your time. THE CHAIRPERSON: Ms. Schwartz. MS. SCHWARTZ: Good morning, Board of Elections. Can you hear me?

Yes, my name is Joy Schwartz, 514 Lombardy Road in Drexel Hill. Thank you to everyone who has worked on the election -- on the primary election this year. For all your hard work, appreciate it.

I have some questions also somewhat related to Ms. Schneider's questions concerning the role of political bodies as opposed to political parties.

I know that there has been an update on the

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Secretary of State's website concerning guidance for poll watchers and authorized representatives.

In the past, it was -- you know, I believe that the authorized representatives that represented political bodies would be permitted to watch various election procedures, and they have been in the past. This year apparently that was not the case. So I would love some clarification on that issue.

I understand that the guidance from the Secretary of State says that a political body should have a candidate in the race if they are to allow observers or, as they're now called, authorized representatives, to watch various election procedures. I don't believe that that was the case last year or, you know, prior to last November. So I would love some clarification on that.

Also, I wondered, has the Board of elections decided to go with the electronic poll pads from No Ink. I wondered if that was a decision that has been made or not.

And also, I have a question as to how many ballots that were made on demand --

Page 43 1 1 ballot-on-demand votes, early votes that were 2 2 brought to the government center bureau of 3 3 elections office, how many of those votes were cast 4 4 early? 5 5 MR. ALLEN: I'm sorry, I didn't --6 6 MS. SCHWARTZ: So those are my few questions. 7 7 MR. ALLEN: Could you repeat that last 8 8 question? 9 9 MS. SCHWARTZ: Certainly, yes. Just how --10 10 what is the number of votes that were cast early 11 11 through the voting center here in the government 12 12 center for the primary election. 13 13 MR. ALLEN: I don't have that number 14 14 available. We can definitely try to pull that data 15 15 both from the touch writers to see if there were --16 16 if we can give you an idea of how many of the 17 records came through the voter service center. 17 18 18 MS. SCHWARTZ: All right. Thank you. 19 19 THE CHAIRPERSON: And as to your question 20 20 about the electronic poll pads, that would be --21 21 there was a pilot project, which was very 22 22 successful in my view, but we'll talk about that in 23 23 a little bit. 24 But, ultimately, the decision whether or not 24 Page 44 1 1 to fund the electronic poll pads will be made by 2 2 the county council and surely, with consideration 3 3 before that of the Board, I'm sure they would -- I 4 4 expect that they would want our view of that. 5 5 MS. SCHWARTZ: Okay. 6 6 THE CHAIRPERSON: So that has not been made. 7 I -- just as to your other two questions, I'm 8 8 not quite sure I understood the political body 9 9 question. And I'm not familiar with the observer 10 10 issue being new. 11 11 But, Mr. Solicitor, is there anything that you 12 12 can say to clarify that for, Ms. Schwartz? 13 13 MR. SOLICITOR: There have been extensive 14 14 communications between Ms. Schwartz and Mr. Allen 15 15 about this issue, including, you know, that have 16 16 been informed by my legal research and my guidance 17 17 to Mr. Allen, and I don't think this is even a 18 18 remotely close question. I don't think the 19 19 Department of State got this one wrong or was on a 20 20 lark. The code is very clear as to who's permitted 21 21 to be part of different procedures and, you know, I 22 noticed Ms. Schwartz said that observers are now 22 23 23 called representative. They're not. These are all 24 24 different categories in the election. A poll

watcher is different that an observer at the canvas than an authorized representative at the provisional ballot exhibition. And it's important to understand that these things are not co-equal or interchangeable. Each one is governed by its own provision of the code and the rules about that.

MS. SCHWARTZ: If I just may make one comment following that up. There's nothing in the most recent October 2022 guidance from the Secretary of State regarding observers. The only guidance that's provided is regarding poll watchers and regarding authorized representative. I'm not an attorney, but I have haven't found anything in the election code about observers.

MR. ALLEN: Well, we tend to use the words authorized representatives with the word observer, but it's clear -- you have the guidance, correct? You sent it to me.

MS. SCHWARTZ: Yes, of course.

MR. ALLEN: So I think you've answered your own question. The guidance is clear. There is a distinction between a political body and a political party.

MS. SCHWARTZ: I understand that, Mr. Allen.

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My question is basically related to Ms. Schneider's questions concerning political bodies.

Now, as I would understand it, the League of Woman Voters is a political body, not a political party. And they were excluded from watching a part of the processes in the election, correct?

MR. ALLEN: Correct.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm not going to open this up into a Q&A. I -- if this really goes to the heart of whether or not a political candidate can come into a poll place and ask questions, that answer is so clearly established, I think you were informed of that correctly by a member of this Board. And you were not the only candidate who was informed of that issue during the election.

So if that's what we're dancing around and I'm just missing the lyrics, I understand it now, and I do think that there's been clear guidance on this issue. I don't want to continue with a Q&A on this point.

But, Mr. McBlain, if you do have a comment, of course you can make it.

MR. MCBLAIN: Well, I mean, again, you reference political body and I was about to ask

Page 47 1 1 you, which political body was excluded? I mean, 2 2 political body I believe is defined under the 3 3 election code as a political party that hasn't 4 obtained a certain level of support in the state. 5 5 MS. SCHWARTZ: Correct. 6 6 MR. MCBLAIN: As far as I understand, there's 7 7 only three political parties --8 8 MS. SCHWARTZ: Right. 9 9 MR. MCBLAIN: -- that right now are recognized 10 10 by the state, there's democratic, republican and 11 11 the libertarian. 12 12 MS. SCHWARTZ: Yes. 13 13 MR. MCBLAIN: And then there are political 14 14 bodies, such as the Green Party, the People before 15 15 Profit, whatever, I mean, you know, the different 16 16 ones are. 17 17 So, I mean, that's different than a group that 18 18 is interested in political matters, such as League 19 19 of Woman Voters. 20 20 I mean, so I don't -- when you say political 21 21 bodies, the legal -- in my beliefs, the League of 22 22 Women Voters is not a political body. They say 23 23 that they're nonpartisan. They don't support, you 24 24 know, any particular party or candidate. Page 48 1 1 MS. SCHWARTZ: Correct. 2 2 MR. MCBLAIN: I mean, but just so we're 3 3 4 4 MS. SCHWARTZ: So political -- by political --5 5 MR. MCBLAIN: -- bodies --6 6 MS. SCHWARTZ: Right. By political bodies, so 7 right now -- so I think what you're saying is 8 8 you're making a distinction between a political 9 9 group and a political body. And the reason I 10 10 brought the question up is that in -- back in 11 October of 2022, I had made a request on behalf of 11 12 12 a political group, if you would like to call it 13 13 that, to do some observation of L&A testing. And I 14 14 was permitted to do that by Mr. Allen, very 15 15 grateful for that. However, I'm confused about the 16 16 interpretation. 17 17 So thank you for the clarification. And 18 18 that's all. Thank you so much. 19 19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. 20 20 Is there any other public comment? 21 21 Please. 22 22 MS. WILSON: Yes. Marguerite Wilson, 23 23 824 Drexel Avenue. I'm also known as Peggy. 24 I had an emergency appointment to be the judge 24

of elections for the Upper Darby 75. The Upper Darby 75 is co-located with two other precincts in Bywood Elementary. We all got there before 6:00 so that we could have everything up and running by 7:00. There was nobody there to let us in. We started calling the warehouse. We were told repeatedly that, oh, we're working on it, we're working on it.

At one point somebody -- the guy I was talking to said, oh, I can hear my co-worker talking to somebody about it, and it turned out to be one of the other JOEs who was also calling.

Finally, at 6:45, the local Upper Darby councilman called somebody that he knows on the school Board who had the personal phone number of the superintendent and that's how we finally got in at 6:55.

There was a line of people who were there so that they could vote before they went to work. We got in there, and we were like little ants crawling all over everything. We got everything up and running by 7:30.

The councilman stayed outside and tried to keep everybody really calm.

My issue is that I feel like we were totally unsupported by the people at the warehouse. Nobody there had an emergency phone number. We were using the online directory for the Upper Darby school district and getting voicemail, but it wasn't until we found somebody who had the superintendent's personal phone number that we actually got the support we needed to get in that building.

And it concerns me that nobody had a provision in case of an emergency like this. I mean, what if we had walked in and it was a roof leak. We just need -- we needed support, and we did not get it.

And I'm not going to -- I think from now -- from this point on, you need to have some kind of process in place. And it would have been great if any of the JOEs had had that number, because we were the first on the scene and saw the problem.

But from 5:45 to 6:55, we were standing outside twiddling our thumbs because we could not get in to set up the equipment.

MR. ALLEN: I share your sentiments on this. This was extremely frustrating for us. The warehouse does, by the way, have multiple contacts for each location. In this case, the principal and

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Page 51 I believe the custodian or someone in that capacity, so that when we make a delivery and need to make a pickup, we have people we can call.

This was not a problem across Upper Darby schools. This was exclusively at Bywood and it was extremely frustrating for us too. We want you to get inside there at 6:00 a.m. We did not have problems with this at other places. They were making calls to everyone that they had. You know, they did not have a personal phone number for the superintendent.

But we regret that situation, but we were powerless short of, you know, sending a fire brigade and a battering ram --

MS. WILSON: It would have been nice to have some updates. All we were told is that we're working on it, we're working on it, we're working on it.

And also, you may not need the superintendent's personal phone number, but you need somebody's personal phone number, because the numbers you guys were calling were apparently the same ones we were finding on the online directory and calling.

Page 52 MR. ALLEN: I don't know what numbers you were calling versus what -- I'll look into that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: No. I just want to say, first of all, thank you for your service. Thank you for your diligence in favor of the voter. That's a tremendous effort obviously that you put forward. Clearly it sounds like -- we intend in every way to have that process. There are numbers and people and contacts made and arrangements made well in advance to make sure that that doesn't happen. And I'm really saddened and disappointed to hear that it did. It happens in human error, obviously something went wrong, we've got to get to the root cause of that and solve for that.

15 But I really appreciate you bringing it to 16 this Board's attention. It sounds like 17 Mr. Allen -- I had heard about this, that they were 18 aware of it. 19

Anyway, but it's important to acknowledge that -- that that was an imperfect moment and it could have had great affect and I appreciate that the voters --

MS. WILSON: I'm sure there were some disenfranchised voters, because they were there at

7:00 to vote and then get off to work and we weren't even open until 7:30.

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THE CHAIRPERSON: Let's hope not. And that isn't a common -- it is not a common problem that we have here. I think we've done an excellent job, but it happened, and we'll acknowledge it, and that needs to be remedied. And I'm sure it will be. We really do have a great team. And if part of it's just communication to say, hey, we're not just working on it but we're trying this and we're -you know, whatever it is to make that also feel, when you're in that moment -- because I worked at the polls many, many, many years, that moment where you've got voters outside, you're trying to do what's right, you're under pressure, and no one's telling you what's actually -- when it's going to be solved, that's very frustrating as well.

MS. WILSON: We solved it ourselves, so... THE CHAIRPERSON: You did. Thank you. Thank

MR. ALBERTS: Madam Chair, I just want to add a comment to this if I may.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, please.

MR. ALBERTS: So I was actually in Upper Darby

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7th District at the time and received phone calls from several of the poll workers and the 7th District Councilperson in question, Mr. Hafiz Tunis. And I just want to say that the poll workers in that polling place behaved admirably and impressively in terms of very quickly setting up their machines and getting voters processed and allowing them to vote as quickly as humanly possible due in no small part to the training that they received that enabled them to prioritize appropriately in a crisis. And I think all of them should be commanded.

I also would like to commend that their councilperson, to alleviate the concerns expressed by Ms. Wilson, it was communicated to me that this councilperson stayed at that line and kept every single voter in that line in that they did not, in fact, leave to go -- you know, to not cast a vote.

I will say, however, that that location, this is not the first time we've had this problem. We had this problem during a presidential election before I was on the Board and I was the person in that -- trying to keep people in that line. And I can tell you, that line was snaking around the

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building and quite a few people did have to leave for work. So I want to make sure that we have a very frank and robust conversation with the school district about that location to ensure that that does not happen again.

I know that, you know, inevitably, there's always some location, somewhere in the county, where one of our hosts, you know, oversleeps, drops the ball, doesn't adequately communicate internally with their staff and it does happen from time to time. The fact that this is the second time I'm aware of that it's happened at this location is certainly cause for concern.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And, Mr. Alberts, is that the root caused, to your understanding, having been present and nearby?

MR. ALBERTS: My understanding is that there is just a breakdown in communication between the staff who's charged with opening the facility. I don't know where that breakdown happened, whether it's between the superintendent and the principal or between the principal and the custodian or two custodians, you know, one delegates it to the other. I have no idea about that internal

discussion.

But I do know that this is the second time it's happened and both times there was just no one -- I believe in this case, I -- well, it was reported to me was that the way the building was opened was a custodian showing up to work the regular shift. You know, with the efforts that were being made by superintendent McGarry and Board members were happening, but then someone just happened to show up to open the building as they normally would.

So I think, clearly, there's an issue with that location that needs to be discussed with the school Board and the school district administration to figure out a solution that we can count on, because it's -- it is a crucial location. We have three polling places that are in that -- three precincts that vote in there. There's not a lot of public buildings in that neighborhood, and I do know it becomes quite the scene at a Presidential election.

MS. WILSON: And later on in the day -MR. MCBLAIN: If you could please. Thank you.
MS. WILSON: Later on in the day, maybe about

5 o'clock, the guard left her -- her shift was over and she went home and she locked the door. And the only reason we knew about it was because one of the poll watchers outside kind of ran in the door before it closed and told us. And we had to go find one of the administrators who said, oh, she shouldn't have done that, you know. So there is -- there is a problem there.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you.

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THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Is there any other public comment?

Okay. Then that comment includes comments on any issue, not just the item that's right before us that we've been discussing, originally discussing, the recommendations on the provisional ballot.

Now, are you trying to give additional public comment.

MS. SCHNEIDER: I just wanted to correct the record on the unpublished nature of the decision.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I think that that would be welcomed. Go ahead.

MS. SCHNEIDER: Thank you, Madam Chair, for allowing me to speak.

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The opinion that Mr. Parks is relying on, we just looked it up on Westlaw. The opinion is not reported. The A second citation we put in our letter was to a table of disposition of the case. The petition for allowance of appeal was denied by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, so it's not a reported decision. And the A second citation is just to a table of the summary disposition.

So I just wanted to clear the record that it is not -- it's not a presidential opinion. And because it's a three-judge panel, it does not -- it is not binding for the future. It's only binding in that case.

MR. MCBLAIN: The Supreme Court has looked at whether or not they want to consider the question and they decided not to consider the question and --

MS. SCHNEIDER: In that case, they --

MR. MCBLAIN: -- just kept the Commonwealth Court case in place.

MR. SOLICITOR: Yeah, so there was a petition for allowance of appeal that was denied. And the table citation, which is what I was referring to, is A 241 -- I'm sorry, 241 A 3rd 695.

Page 59 1 1 MS. SCHNEIDER: But it was a discretionary 2 2 appeal, not appeal as of right? 3 3 MR. SOLICITOR: On this context, most 4 4 decisions --5 5 THE CHAIRPERSON: I would think it would be. 6 6 MR. SOLICITOR: -- would be. 7 7 MS. SCHNEIDER: Right. No, right. So I 8 8 mean --9 9 THE CHAIRPERSON: I thought you were going to 10 10 clear it all up. All right. We're good. 11 11 MS. SCHNEIDER: I still think -- I mean, I 12 12 think it is persuasive --13 13 THE CHAIRPERSON: As we say, the thing stands 14 14 for itself here. Whatever it is, it is, but it's 15 15 not going to change how we proceed today. 16 But I understand you're going to appeal, and I 16 17 17 wish you luck. 18 18 MS. SCHNEIDER: Thank you. 19 19 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. With that, then, 20 20 do we have a motion to accept the recommendations 21 21 on provisional ballots made by Ms. Winterbottom? 22 22 MR. MCBLAIN: So moved. 23 23 THE CHAIRPERSON: And I will second that. 24 Any further discussion? 24 Page 60 1 1 No? 2 2 Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. 3 3 MR. MCBLAIN: Aye. 4 4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Aye. 5 5 All those opposed. 6 6 I couldn't hear you, Mr. Alberts, but did 7 8 8 MR. ALBERTS: I did say aye, yes. 9 9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you. 10 10 All right. Then the motion passes. 11 11 Mr. Allen, it's the director of elections 12 12 report. 13 13 MR. ALLEN: Madam chair, I'll try to keep 14 14 these as short as I can, but it's got a lot to 15 15 cover. 16 16 A few announcements first. 17 17 I want to congratulate the new full-time 18 18 teammates, some of whom who worked with us as 19 19 nearly year-round or essentially year-round temps 20 20 previously. Lisa Jackson Is now officially 21 21 Campaign Finance Supervisor. James Warner has --22 22 I'm so glad to report -- taken the vacant role of 23 23 Deputy Chief Clerk for mail/absentee applications. 24 24 Also, Pam Lairson is our new poll worker

coordinator, but not new, she also has served as a poll worker for many years and has worked with us in the past prior to taking this very mission critical role.

And I want to tell you all three of these individuals did a great job. The training, we received compliments on it for the poll workers. We received praise for the team's work to streamline the drop-off process. We already had the pickup process nailed down by our voter registration team and now the drop-off process went really, really well.

And I also want to recognize Shantel James who has joined as a balloting systems specialist.

And now --

THE CHAIRPERSON: Wait.

Thank you for that. So excited for all of you. It got to meet Pam and see Lisa in action. On election day, Pam, I think, turned to me and said who are you, like what are you doing here talking to Crystal about election stuff.

But, no, we have a great team, and we're really glad Mr. Allen advocated very strongly for all of you and rightfully so.

So thank you.

MR. ALLEN: I'm also please to announce -- you know, we look to cultivate within our staff, and there's one person who has really stood head and shoulders, you know, in terms of performance and dedication and I'm very pleased to announce that Amanda Wallace, who's now serving as our chief administrative officer, which include various financial budgeting and long-term planning and contingency plan supervisory functions. And she's had a long career already with us, and I'm very delighted that she's agreed to pursue and take that position with us.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's also excellent. And you were always in action at the Wharf on election day and every other day. Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: On a much sadder note, we are grieving the very recent loss of a colleague in front -- excuse me -- Jeanette Walsh, who was working with us at the Wharf nearly until election day. She went on medical leave in early May, and just the next week, right before election day, we received word that Jeanette had passed.

One of my first and fondest memories here in

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Delco was observing Jeanette lead a poll worker training session when we were doing those at the Media Borough Community Center.

Jeanette was witty. She was brusque. But she was also very caring. She was one of our best call takers at the Bureau of Elections, often walking voters step-by-step with however much patience and care was needed through whatever process that individual voter needed to complete. And just one aside of her kindness, Jeanette, at Christmastime, gifted her coworkers with beautiful hand-made items always. It was no trip to Wawa for Jeanette. It was -- she made things.

So I'd just like us to take a moment.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Mr. Allen.

If there's an opportunity for the Board to send something on our behalf to her family, please let us know, and I'm sure we would all --

MR. ALLEN: Absolutely.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: We had enormous success at this election. I am so grateful, and I hope the voters and the poll workers are too, to the efforts of our team

Our staff managers, Jackie Dunn at the warehouse, Crystal Winterbottom at the voter registration, Laureen Hagan heading up the massive operation at the Bureau, especially at the Wharf. Amanda Wallace. Jim Warner, who worked out the smooth -- out the process of opening the envelopes at the Wharf. We got done earlier than ever. Chavon Flores, who helped work out a smoother than ever before return of the drop-box contents, all at the Wharf by 8:45 p.m.

Karen Brooks, who worked out more effective outreach to voters who needed to verify ID or to address in many, many -- I just want to emphasize, many, many voters -- dozens of voters were able to successfully cure their ballot issues. And it was due to the outreach of Karen Brooks and all of our staff making phone calls out there.

Jean Fleschute, a temp, who focused on the successful revamp of the poll worker drop-offs at the Government Center. And then at the other end of the process, Rob Wright, who built up the team that uploaded the precinct results at the Wharf.

Tim Boyd, Director Tim Boyd, and Inder Bains of Emergency Services helped so much. Chief Diehl

and Lieutenant Cahall and the Park Police Team.

Christine Keck and her team in personnel. Chief

Michelle Conte and Captain Rick Bailey of the

Sheriff's department and their teammates.

John Becht and the information technology team. Adrienne Marovsky in public relations. And many, many others.

So we had smoother than ever drop-off for judges to keep the line moving quickly. We came up with a solution where persons who did not have their materials in order were pulled out of line so they didn't delay the orderly process of the others who did come with their materials in order so that, you know, problems didn't grow and fester.

And here's what the Delco teams achieved. For the first time ever, even if you look back to the old Danher equipment and before that, the lever machines, we had results from each and every precinct at the central count by midnight. I want to emphasize again -- John Barton, who's been doing this for decades, said they've never, ever, ever had that before.

We had super smooth drop-off for the JOEs. Even during the peak period, most were in and out

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in ten minutes. The exceptions were these who did not have their materials in order. But even those at the peak period were in and out in 22 minutes.

All mail and absentee ballots were out of the envelopes by 2:00 p.m. on election day. They were scanned by 7:00 p.m., with results beginning to post at 8:10 p.m.

The only exceptions, of course, were the ones that arrived on election day, and the last pickups from the drop boxes, which were shut down at 8:00 p.m.

Those items, along with the mail, were loaded into SURE, sorted and processed and scanned by 12:45 a.m.

We had results reporting starting at 8:10 p.m. and then through the night. We performed a pilot program in Middletown, Brookhaven in Upper Darby with electronic poll books that overall won rave reviews from our poll workers. Faster voter check-ins, clear and consistent instructions for every voter situation. And a list of acceptable ID that shows up right on the screen for those who are required to show ID. So no one had to rely on what they think they remembered from a class two and a

half weeks earlier.

So the E-poll books have information that's more up-to-date than the paper poll books. As Crystal referenced earlier, there was no problem finding a voter by typing in the first three letters of the last name and the first three letters of their first name. Or if that didn't work, the date of birth.

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It's simply things you cannot do easily with giant New York City phone books that are the paper poll books.

Fifth, we could not have done all this without our poll workers. Ahead of election day, we were getting great feedback on the manual they work from. What we call the election day guide. And the poll workers were hoping that we could get rid of the speed bumps in the drop-off process, and we did.

Sixth, we had fewer than ever provisional ballots and our Voter Registration Department did an excellent job of getting through them efficiently and accurately.

Seventh, we recruited, on a pilot program, high school students who had the day off in all but

two high schools in Delco. But, you know, we only got some from certain high schools. We want to expand this. They were seniors, ages -- seniors aged 17 and 18. And they were paid a good wage, they worked solid six-hour or more shifts, and we look forward to expanding that project with civic-minded students from high schools in the fall. We think it's probably one of the best lessons in how this electorial system works, whether you want to call it a democracy or a republic. They really get to see where the rubber meets the road.

Eighth, if all works out like we planned out ahead of time with the controller's office, our next change will be trying to get the poll workers checks out to them sooner. And I'll gladly take any questions from the Board.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr. McBlain.

MR. MCBLAIN: I just want to say thank you to
Mr. Allen and all the staff. I was able to be at
the Wharf for a good amount of time on the day of
election and during the day moved around from place
to place. I was able to watch the -- observe the
poll books in action at Upper Darby, and it seemed

to be going well, and the poll workers all seemed to like it.

And so, you know, we'll, you know, I guess, hear more about that in the future.

And I got to see Chairwoman Monica Taylor outside the polling place there, and I joked that I was happy that it's not no longer my job to figure out where to get the money to buy the poll books. So she laughed.

But, you know, everything went smoothly that day. And like I said, I think by the time I arrived down at the Wharf at about 7:00, I was amazed, and happily amazed to find that everything had been scanned in and was ready to go at 8:00.

And we posted the results right away and continued to update those during the night. So I thought that was fantastic.

The one question I do -- and I've asked Mr. Allen privately, but we could probably say this, is just that I've gotten several inquiries -- because it's a local municipal election this year, you have people writing in for different offices, what's the process -- when do they find out when -- where can people look to see, you know, whether

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they got 10 write-in votes somewhere, and if they need to cumulate, what's the process for doing that

MR. ALLEN: So Ms. Hagan and her team completed yesterday going through all the write-in votes. We're posting that to the web. If it's not done already, it should be done this morning. So if you just simply searched Delco votes, and you want to go to candidate resources.

We also have the petition at candidate resources already posted to the web where say a candidate's name is John F. Jones, Jr., and he gets some votes for John Jones, some for Johnny Jones, some for John Jones, Jr. and all kinds of different variations. We have a petition form on the candidate resources page where the candidate in this case could file all the different variations that show up on that report with one vote, two votes, whatever, to get them across the threshold, whether that's to meet the minimum required of ten. Or if they think they've got enough to beat someone who's on the ballot to cumulate all the different variations of John F. Jones, Jr., or whatever the name may be. And they need to file that petition

with us with all the variations that they want us to cumulate by Thursday, this Thursday, the 25th, by noon.

MR. MCBLAIN: By noon on Thursday?
MR. ALLEN: We'll certainly extend that if -you know, if we get to some late ones, but we want
to get those organized as much as possible ahead of
the certification next week.

MR. MCBLAIN: Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Alberts.

MR. ALBERTS: Yes, I -- I also had the opportunity to witness the electronic poll book pilot in action at Upper Darby high school. And, yeah, universally every poll worker I spoke with in that building was raving about it. I personally observed that some of the chaos that happens inevitably in these kind of multiprecinct polling places where people walk in, they look around confused, they go to like three tables before they find the right one. That was all eliminated. People were being very efficiently checked in.

I think probably some lessons were learned about, you know, where new bottlenecks might happen and how to more efficiently manage that, which is

why we do these projects -- these pilot projects in the field. But they were all enthusiastically embracing of new technology, which is not always the case. So it was it's encouraging to see, and I was very pleased with what I was able to observe.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

Well, we all did our supervisory duties of going and observing the poll books in action at the pilot program, and I also had the same opportunity to observe a location that had four precincts in a long hallway in Chester High School where the poll books were not piloted and could immediately see the benefits to all the voters of having an efficient understanding of which precinct that they should walk to. And, unfortunately, you know, there were some that had to walk much farther than they needed to, which is a stressor on our elderly voters.

So I agree with you. Everybody who worked with the poll books was very pleased with how well they were received, and I think probably surprised that people who are less familiar with styluses. I think the biggest question I was told that the poll book workers were getting was which side of the

stylus is the side I use. So if that's the biggest question we're having, I think that's a pretty good one. So I look forward to advocating for that program and understanding more from Mr. Allen about the cost, and I think the benefits are obvious.

I think also it will be important to understand how this project of the piloting, promoting it as a -- potentially a general county-wide program will fit into the consolidation and expansion analysis of our precinct site and which ones could be consolidated and which ones have grown too big for their britches and need to be expanded. And I think the e-poll books will greatly play into that analysis on how to make sure that we have, and continue to have, very few hiccups the most -- I think the best run elections in Pennsylvania. And I'm really proud of everybody.

Thank you all for your hard work and we really appreciate it. Everyone I talk to, just in the general public, raved about how this election went, and every poll worker I talked to said, literally, they couldn't imagine the poll worker book continuing to get better every year, but they loved

the checklist, they loved certain things about it.

It just made their job so much easier. And I hope, in a pinch, made it easier to set up the polls more efficiently.

So thank you all. It was really wonderful to see and I'm really proud of our county. And once again, the eyes of the state and the country were upon us, because we had an election that had a major ripple effect on the Commonwealth and as well as national news, so you all performed amazingly. I don't think you need the scrutiny of the national news to perform amazingly, but it's even better that perhaps there are people out there outside of our county who understand how well run our elections are.

So I really appreciate it.

MR. ALLEN: I would like to advise the Board, though, that we do have some work to do still. We're going to be processing these provisional ballots this afternoon.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Are you saying you want us to move forward so we can get to those ballots, because if you are, I think we're done our comments.

Page 75 1 MR. ALLEN: But -- and I also want to advise 2 the Board that, you know, we hear often about 3 veterans who sacrificed everything to make sure that we have the right to vote, and I wish more 5 people would honor their dedication and service. 6 The turnout was not exactly high by any stretch of the imagination. And any doubts that every single 8 vote counts can pretty much be wiped away at this 9 election. 10 We have one contest that's currently tied, and 11 that may or may not be decided by these provisional 12 ballots. We have another one that's separated 13 right now by one vote. We have another one that's 14 separated by three votes. 15 So to all the people who say, ah, somebody 16 else will decide it, well that somebody else is 17 you. Register to vote. Show up. 18 That's all I have to add. 19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. 20 Ms. Jackson. 21 MS. JACKSON: Good morning. Lisa Jackson, 22 campaign finance supervisor. 23 THE CHAIRPERSON: If you could speaker louder 24 for the court reporter. Page 76 1 MS. JACKSON: Lisa Jackson, campaign finance 2 supervisor. 3 So cycle two deadline was May the 5th, and 4 since then we've received five petitions to waive 5 campaign finance fees. One is from a committee and 6 five are from candidates. The first committee we received was Upper 8 Darby democratic committee. They cite that there 9 was an emergency -- a personal emergency was the 10 reason why their form came in late. And they have 11 a \$60 fee. Their first-time offense. 12 We have candidate Monai Riley who cites that 13 she didn't need to sign the waiver. Her petition 14 says she was unaware of her filing requirements --15 16 (Whereupon, a brief discussion was held 17 off the record.) 18 19 (Whereupon, the hearing concluded at 20 approximately 10:38 a.m.) 21 22 23 24

1	CERTIFICATION
2	
3	I hereby certify that the proceedings and
4	evidence are contained fully and accurately in the
5	stenographic notes taken by me upon the foregoing matter
6	and that this is a correct transcript of the same.
7	
8	
9	
10	Kori Skinner
11	
12	Kori Skinner, RPR and Notary Public
13	
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Lombardy (1) **long** (2) longer (2) long-term (1)**look** (8) looked (6) looking (1)looks (1)lose (1)loss (1) **lot** (4) louder (1)**love** (2) loved (2)lower (1)luck (1)**LUNKENHEIMER** (2) lyrics (1)< M >machines (2) Madam (4)mail (12) mail/absentee (1) mail-in (7)maintained (1)major (1)majority (4) making (5)manage (1)managers (1) $\mathbf{MANLY} \quad (1)$ manual (1)Marguerite (1) MARIAN (2) marked (2) Marovsky (1) mass (1)massive (1)materials (3) matter (3)matters (1) MCBLAIN (44) McGarry (1) mean (19) means (1)Media (4) medical (1)

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says (9)	shows (1)	spoke (1)	supp
scanned (3)	shows (1)	squarely (2)	Supr
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Senior (1)	snaking (1)	stretch (1)	team
seniors (2)	solicit (1)	strict (1)	team
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well (24)
Welsh (1)
went (10)
we're (25)
West (1)
Westlaw (3)
we've (6)
Wharf (8)
wholeheartedly (2)
wife (1)
wildcat (1)
WILSON (8)
winning (1)
Winterbottom (29)
wiped (1)
wish (3)
withdrawn (3)
withdrew (1)
witness (1)
witty (1)
Woman (2)
Women (2)
won (1)

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work (11)
worked (8)
worker (7)
workers (10)
working (7)
works (2)
world (1)
wrestle (1)
Wright (1)
write-in (2)
writers (1)
writing (2)
written (1)
wrong (5)
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< Y >
Yeah (9)
year (6)
year-round (2)
years (2)
yesterday (4)
York (1)

 $\langle \mathbf{Z} \rangle$ **ZOOM** (1)

wondered (2) wonderful (1)

word (2)

words (2)

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

SONJA KEOHANE, RICHARD KEOHANE, and BARBARA WELSH,	CIVIL DIVISION
Petitioners,	No
DELAWARE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS, Respondent.	ELECTION APPEAL

[PROPOSED] ORDER

THIS MATTER having come before the Court upon Petitioners' Petition for Review in the Nature of a Statutory Appeal pursuant to 25 P.S. § 3157 (the "Petition"), and the Court having reviewed the Petition, the papers in support thereof, and any response thereto;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AND DECREED that the Petition is GRANTED; and it is further

ORDERED that the May 23, 2023 decision of the Delaware County Board of Elections (the "Board") to not count Petitioners' provisional ballots cast in the May 16, 2023 primary election is REVERSED; and it is further

ORDERED that the Board must, as a matter of law, count otherwise valid provisional ballots timely cast by eligible voters whose previously submitted mail-in ballot submissions were rejected and/or canceled due to purported defects in the mail-in ballot submission.

	BY THE COURT	
Dated: May, 2023		