

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND ETHICS**

Aurelia Corbett King,	)	
	)	
Challenger,	)	
	)	Administrative Hearing
v.	)	No. 00-019
	)	
Romaine Thomas,	)	Re: Challenge to Nomination Petition
	)	
Candidate.	)	
	)	

**MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER**

This matter came before the Board of Elections and Ethics on Monday, March 20, 2000 and involved a challenge to the candidacy of Romaine Thomas, candidate for the office of Ward Five Member of the Democratic State Committee. The challenge was brought by Aurelia Corbett King. The Board was represented by members Dr. Lenora Cole Alexander and Stephen Callas. The Challenger failed to appear at the hearing.<sup>1</sup> Harry Thomas, Jr. appeared on behalf of the Candidate.

According to the evidence presented to the Board, Candidate Thomas submitted a nominating petition containing a total of 121 signatures. The minimum signature requirement to qualify for the ballot for this office is 100 signatures of persons who are duly registered Democratic voters in Ward Five.

Challenger King filed a total of 37 challenges to signatures on the nominating petition. As required by the Board's regulations, Challenger King specified the alleged defects pursuant to

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<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that one of the parties to the proceeding failed to appear, the Board is granted the authority to proceed with the hearing *ex parte*, pursuant to 3 D.C.M.R. § 403.4.

3 D.C.M.R. § 1706.2.<sup>2</sup> Challenger Neal alleged that Candidate Block had failed to file the minimum 100 valid signatures of duly registered Democratic voters in ward Two for the following reason(s):

- 1) the signer is not a duly registered voter (3 D.C.M.R. § 1704.7(c));
- 2) the signature is not dated (3 D.C.M.R. § 1704.7(d));
- 3) the signer is not registered to vote in the same party as the candidate at the time the petition is signed (3 D.C.M.R. § 1704.7(e));
- 4) the signer is not duly registered in the ward from which the candidate seeks election at the time the petition is signed ( 3 D.C.M.R. § 1704.7(f)), and;
- 5) that the signature is a duplicate.

The review of the challenge conducted by the Registrar of Voters indicated that 20 of the challenges were found to be valid. This decreased the number of valid signatures obtained by Candidate Thomas to 101 registered qualified electors, which exceeds the minimum number required for ballot access.

Thus, the challenge fails to provide an adequate legal basis upon which to reduce the number of valid signatures obtained by Candidate Thomas below the legal minimum requirement. Accordingly, the candidate retains enough signatures to remain eligible for ballot access.

In view of the evidence presented, the Board finds that the challenge is insufficient to remove the candidate's name from the ballot. Therefore, the Board denies the challenge as specified herein and in accordance with the report of the Registrar of Voters. Accordingly, it is

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<sup>2</sup> Ms. King also alleged that several of the signatures on the nominating petition were fraudulent. This allegation will be taken up by the Board on another occasion.

hereby,

**ORDERED**, that Mrs. Thomas be granted access to the ballot in the May 2, 2000 Presidential Preference Primary as a candidate for Ward Five Member of the Democratic State Committee.

March 23, 2000  
Date

*Lenora Cole Alexander*  
Dr. Lenora Cole Alexander  
D.C. Board of Elections and Ethics

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing order was mailed this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 2000 to the following parties: Aurelia Corbett King, 2923 Yost Place, NE, Washington, DC 20018, and; Romaine Thomas, 4003 - 21<sup>st</sup> Street, NE, Washington, DC 20018.

*Karla D. Garcia*  
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