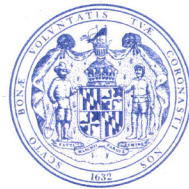


Armstead B. Crawley Jones, Sr.  
Election Director

Abigail Goldman  
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Vice President (R)



BALTIMORE CITY  
BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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Secretary (D)

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Member (R)

June 17, 2024

*Re: Presidential Primary Election in the City of Baltimore*

Dear Chairlady Tammy Stinnett,

As you know the Baltimore City Democratic State Central Committee (the BCDSCC) is comprised of 40 elected members from five legislative districts in Baltimore City. The Central Committee is responsible for building the Democratic Party at the city level, registering Democratic voters, and encouraging Election Day turnout among Democratic voters. Central Committee members are the grassroots- level elected volunteers of the Maryland Democratic Party.

On behalf of the BCDSC, we would like to thank the Baltimore City Board of Elections for their efforts to ensure that all voters have their voices heard in the 2024 Primary Election. That said, please accept this letter outlining specific concerns about the election. We hope you will review the list and give guidance on how these issues can be resolved moving forward to the 2024 general election.

List of concerns about the Primary Election:

**1. ENSURING ACCESSIBLE BUILDINGS FOR VOTERS**

**ISSUE:** On election day, people with disabilities were denied access to their assigned polling location at School #221 Mt Washington Upper School because the building did not have an accessible entrance to the polling location. School 221 Mt. Washington Upper School can be accessed through one entrance on the ground level; however, there is no elevator to the second floor, which is where the voting machines were located.

Furthermore, voters were advised to travel to the nearest location at School #247 Cross Country Elementary School, to submit a provisional ballot.

**Response:** The Deputy Director spoke with the City Council Members for the district. We will be returning to Mt. Washington Lower School.

Other locations to be relocated. See below

- **Pennsylvania Branch Library, 1531 W. North Avenue to move to Sandtown Winchester Academy 701 Gold Street. (Library is not handicapped accessible and can not be made so. It's a historical building so its grandfathered in) (4 miles)**

- James McHenry recreation Center to move into the James McHenry School just for election day. Early Voting will still be in the Recreation center for this year.
- Brookly Branch Library, 300 Patapsco St. move into the Maree Farring Elem School 300 Pontiac Street (temporary move due to renovations) (.4 miles)
- Herring Branch Library, 3801 Erdman Avenue move to Catholic High School, 2800 Edison Hwy. (temporary move due to renovations) (.4 miles)

## **2. MAKE CERTAIN THAT SAMPLE BALLOTS CANN NOT BE MISTAKEN FOR OFFICIAL BALLOTS**

*ISSUE:* During early voting, the Board of Elections received sample ballots in the mail and at some of the drop box locations from voters. In addition, it is also our understanding that not all voters were notified of the error and not given the opportunity to submit an official ballot.

**Due to pending litigation, we are unable to speak about it**

## **3. ENSURING THAT INDIVIDUALS RELEASED FROM A CORRECTIONAL FACILITY ARE INFORMED OF THEIR VOTING RIGHTS**

*ISSUE:* Effective as a law beginning June 2021, Senate Bill 224/House Bill 222 entitled Election Law-Correctional Facilities- Voter Registration and Voting requires the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to provide each individual who is released from a correctional facility with a voter registration application and documentation informing the individual that their voting rights have been restored.

In addition, the State Board of Elections is required to adopt regulations establishing a program to inform eligible voters of upcoming elections and how to exercise the right to vote and to report annually on the program and the implementation of the bill as a whole.

**Response: This is the responsibility of the SBE and Correctional Board. However, the BOE picks up weekly from the Correctional facilities any paperwork in their drop boxes.**

## **4. ENSURE ALL POLLING LOCATIONS ARE OPEN ON TIME AND THAT A BACK-UP SYSTEM IS IN PLACE**

*ISSUE:* Several polls opened late on Primary Day including Graceland Park/O'Donnell Heights Elementary/Middle School, Mergenthaler Vocational-Technical High School, Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School and Woodholme Recreation Center. Voters who arrived on time had to wait or were force to leave.



**Response:** Our goal is to ensure experienced chief judges, election judges, and designated staff members will be selected to work at these specific sites to make sure we do not have a repeat of the primary election.

**5. ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING SURE ALL ELECTION JUDGES ARE FULLY TRAINED AND CAN GET THE APPROPRIATE SUPPORT**

*ISSUE:* BCDSCC members reported several training issues with election judges ranging from issues concerning the issuance of provisional ballots to knowing the requirements to register voters to knowing how to provide election day counts.

**Response:** Although we only pay election judges for one specific training class of a specific judge type, all election judges are encouraged to attend as many training classes and open house as needed to prepare for election day. We will incorporate specific training for a specific judge type that will be fully trained and able to answer any provisional ballot issues and able to provide election day counts. Chief judge training and provisional same day judge type positions will be created to assist with the proper issuance of ballots, ballot counts, and voter counts from the electronic pollbook.

**6. IDENTIFY WAYS TO IMPROVE SIGNAGE AT POLLING LOCATIONS**

*ISSUE:* Some polling locations did not have clear and visible signs to direct voters to the appropriate location to vote. With such low voter turnout on Primary Day, some locations had mistakenly appeared to be closed or not open. It would be beneficial for voters to have clear concise signage at every polling location

**Response:** Signage is provided to hang on the outside of all polling locations. It is the same signage at all locations. All polling place that has been closed, a sign several sign (POST CLOSED). The notice CLOSED is post at the location the Sunday before the election and directing them to the new polling places. In addition, a new Voters Card and posting and posting on the Website and along with Social Media.

**7. RE-EVALUATE THE LOCATION OF BALLOT DROP BOXES TO ENSURE BOXES ARE ACCESSIBLE**

*ISSUE:* Many of the ballot drop boxes citywide are in an area requiring a voter to walk a distance, cross streets, access steps and/or curbs to drop off a ballot. In addition, the slot on the ballot box blends very easily causing some votes to not see where to insert their ballot.

**Response:** SBE is the supplier and designer for the DROP BOXES. the local board does not secure the vendor for the boxes. Locations are select based on safety first for the votes and security of the Drop Boxes. The best placement are well lighted areas.

**8. MAKING SURE THAT BOARD OF ELECTIONS HAS ENOUGH STAFF TO HANDLE PHONE CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE ON ELECTION DAY**

*ISSUE:* Some of our BCDSCC members reported that they had a long wait time on the phone to take with someone a the BOE on Primary Day and found it difficult to be helped efficiently.

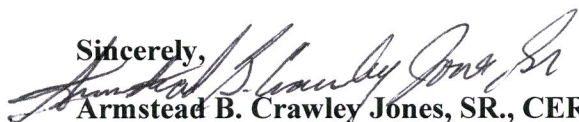
**Response:** We have thirty-six telephones in the main office at 417 East Fayette Street and ten at our warehouse. There is not additional space in our offices for additional people at this time

**9. INCREASE COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT THE NEWEST EARLY VOTING LOCATION IN SOUTH BALTIMORE**

*ISSUE:* the eight (8) day total for early voting at Farring-Baybrook Recreation Center in Brooklyn had a total of 166 voters, an average of 20 per day.

**Response:** Looking to moving to a location for the betterment of community.

Sincerely,

  
Armstead B. Crawley Jones, SR., CERA

Election Director

cc: Baltimore City Board