BEFORE THE AUDITOR IN AND FOR CLARK COUNTY WASHINGTON

IN RE THE VOTER REGISTRATION CHALLENGE AGAINST JOHN LEY FILED BY GEOFFREY MUNSON

JOHN LEY'S RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGE AND MOTION TO DISMISS

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INTRODUCTION

COMES NOW Mr. John Ley, represented by the Angus Lee Law Firm, moves to dismiss the challenge against his voter registration, filed by Democratic Precinct Committee Officer Geoffrey Munson. This motion is grounded in legal arguments and factual declarations presented herein. Mr. Munson bears the high burden of proving his claim by clear and convincing evidence, a standard he has failed to meet.

The evidence he has submitted does not provide the necessary proof needed to invalidate Mr. Ley's registration. Mr. Ley should not be disenfranchised based on an unconvincing, politically motivated accusation. The challenger has not demonstrated that Mr. Ley's residence at Hazel Dell is anything but his true home.

This challenge appears to be less about verifying a single voter's details and more an attempt to disenfranchise the sixteen thousand voters who voted for Mr. Ley in the primary election. The Washington State Supreme Court has repeatedly held

that "eligibility to an office in the state is to be presumed rather than to be denied,
[and] any doubt as to the eligibility of any person to hold an office must be resolved
against the doubt." Parker v. Wyman, 176 Wn.2d 212, 222 (2012), citing Dumas v.
Gagner, 137 Wn.2d 268, 285 (1999). "A strong public policy exists in favor of eligibility
for public office, and the constitution, where the language and context allows, should
be construed so as to preserve this eligibility." Dumas, at 284.

Statutes establishing qualifications for office are to be construed to "unfetter the process of election" rather than "curtail the freedom" to stand for office. *Id.* This interpretation follows the "fundamental principle in our democracy is 'the people should choose whom they please to govern them' and 'this principle is undermined as much by limiting whom the people can select as by limiting the franchise itself." *Id.* (internal citations omitted).

FACTS1

Mr. Ley moved to and registered to vote at 8500 NE Hazel Dell Ave. Apt. H4, Vancouver, WA. He considers this location his home, treating it as his abode, and plans to remain there indefinitely. Residing in Vancouver, Washington, this address serves as his permanent residence, and his commitment to staying there does not depend on the outcomes of his ongoing campaign for the 18th Legislative District.

Upon moving to his current residence, Mr. Ley completed all necessary legal steps to officially change his domicile. He signed a lease agreement for his residence at 8500 NE Hazel Dell Ave. Apt. H4, where he consistently pays monthly rent. His

¹ See Declaration of John Ley and Declaration of D. Angus Lee.

credit card and driver's license are registered at the same address. Additionally, his
car and car insurance are also registered there. Mr. Ley has registered a business,
specifically Oriskany Financial, LLC, at this residential address in May. He regularly
receives mail and credit card statements at this address, affirming it as his primary
and permanent residence.

The donations mentioned by Munson were made by Mr. Lev using his credit card, which is registered at his Hazel Dell address. Claims that these donations came from the 444 Fremont address or different payment cards are inaccurate. The credit card statements clearly show these transactions were made from Mr. Ley's card registered at his current residence.

Like many individuals, Mr. Ley resides in Hazel Dell and also owns property elsewhere. Currently he owns properties in North Carolina and Camas. Given the current market conditions affected by rising home loan interest rates under the Biden-Harris administration, selling these properties would be financially imprudent. The real estate market has slowed considerably, making it unwise to sell until the market recovers. Both the North Carolina and Camas properties are currently occupied by renters.

In addition to owning multiple properties, Mr. Ley operates several small businesses. One of these businesses is already registered at his Hazel Dell residence. He is in the process of updating the registrations for his other two businesses to reflect his Hazel Dell address, but this update has not been a priority because those businesses receive minimal mail and primarily operate electronically.

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The allegations against Mr. Ley are entirely without merit. Mr. Munson's visits
to Mr. Ley's residence at 8500 NE Hazel Dell Ave, have only occurred when Mr. Ley
was intensely engaged in campaign activities, limiting his presence at home. This
rigorous campaigning involves extensive travel throughout the district to manage
signs and meet with voters, naturally reducing the time Mr. Ley spends at home.

It is unequivocally clear that Mr. Ley's Hazel Dell residence is furnished, contradicting Mr. Munson's baseless assertions. The location of Mr. Ley's apartment on the second floor, coupled with his consistent practice of keeping his blinds closed, makes it impossible for Mr. Munson to have any legitimate knowledge of the interior conditions of the residence.

Moreover, Mr. Munson's claims regarding the accumulation of mail and flyers are demonstrably false and misleading. The observed accumulation pertains to a neighboring apartment that has been vacant for some time, not Mr. Ley's. This alleged observation by Mr. Munson underscores the frivolous nature of his claims and highlights a deliberate attempt to misrepresent the situation at Mr. Ley's residence.

It's important to note that Mr. Ley's building has centralized mailboxes, and certified mail is generally not delivered to individual doors but to the group mailboxes. When Mr. Munson sent a letter to Mr. Ley's Hazel Dell address, Mr. Ley received the notice at his residence and promptly collected the letter from the post office a few days later as part of his regular activities. Mr. Ley's timely collection of mail is consistent with Mr. Ley's regular presence and activities at his residence.

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ARGUMENT

The Washington State Legislature sought to protect voters' right to vote from frivolous challenges such as this one by placing the burden of proof on challengers and requiring them to "prove by clear and convincing evidence that the challenged voter's registration is improper." RCW 29A.08.840(4). In other words, the evidence must be "clear, positive, and unequivocal in their implication." See Colonial Imps. v. Carlton N.W., 121 Wn.2d 726 (1993) (discussing standard for clear, cogent, and convincing evidence).

Because the Challenger's evidence cannot meet the clear and convincing standard, in light of applicable presumptions and the evidence submitted herewith, the Auditor must dismiss the challenge. RCW 29A.08.840(6) ("If the challenger fails to prove by clear and convincing evidence that the registration is improper, the challenge must be dismissed..."). No reasonable auditor could evaluate this evidence and conclude that the challenger has met his burden of proof. Only one biased against Mr. Ley could find against Mr. Ley in this matter.

A. Mr. Ley benefits from a statutory presumption

Mr. Ley is entitled to a strong statutory presumption that he lives at his registered address. RCW 29A.08.810(1)("Registration of a person as a voter is presumptive evidence of his or her right to vote."). Mr. Ley took out a lease at his present address, 8500 NE Hazel Dell Ave. Apt. H4, Vancouver, WA 98665, and promptly updated his voter registration to his new address. He is presumed a valid voter at that address.

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B. Munson's Partisan Motivations and Electoral Manipulation

Mr. Munson's credibility is deeply compromised by his overt political motivations aimed at securing the election of John Zingale. In this year's primary for the 18th Legislative District, Mr. Ley overwhelmingly defeated his Republican opponent by a 3 to 1 margin, securing his position as the Republican candidate for the upcoming general election with 16,590 votes from district voters.²

Mr. Munson, serving as a precinct committee officer for the local Democratic Party, is actively attempting to remove Mr. Ley from the voter rolls—and consequently from the ballot—ensuring that his Democratic rival, John Zingale, is the sole candidate. This maneuver is a blatant attempt to manipulate the outcome of the election through procedural trickery rather than a fair contest, reflecting the desperation of a party that secured less than 48% of the primary vote compared to the 52% garnered by Republicans.

As an officer and coordinator for the "18th Legislative District Democrats," their website blatantly states their mission to "work hard to elect Democratic candidates to the Washington State Legislature." This is a nakedly partisan attack by a partisan operative, transparent in his agenda. Any factual claims made by Munson should be viewed with profound skepticism as he is manifestly biased against Mr. Ley and blatantly aims to disenfranchise Republican voters of the 18th Legislative District of their democratically selected representative for the general election.

² See exhibits to Declaration of D. Angus Lee.

C. Deficiency in Affidavit and Lack of Perjury Declaration Invalidate Munson's Challenge

"The challenger must provide the factual basis for the challenge, including any information required by subsection (1)(c) of this section, <u>in</u> the signed affidavit." RCW 29A.08.810(c) (emphasis added). Here, Munson only signed the basic challenge form and did not include any detailed information within the signed affidavit form itself.

All other material provided by Munson is not signed under penalty of perjury, nor is it incorporated into the signed challenge form by any reference in the form.

There is a document purported to be from Munson titled "Declaration" on page one, but this declaration was never signed, especially not under penalty of perjury as required by RCW 29A.08.810. Accordingly, the unsigned "declaration" and the accompanying exhibits must be disregarded. As these materials must be disregarded, there is nothing substantive left to the voter challenge but a bare accusation, which is insufficient to meet the high burden placed on Munson. Therefore, his challenge must be denied and dismissed.

D. Munson's Violation of Prohibitions Against Anonymous Allegations

RCW 29A.08.810 also prohibits challenges "based on unsupported allegations or allegations by anonymous third parties." (emphasis added). Munson's challenge violates this statute as it relies on factual assertions purportedly from an anonymous "private investigator" whom Munson did not hire himself. The inclusion of accusations from an unidentified source demonstrates that this challenge is based on "anonymous third parties," which is expressly forbidden by law. Therefore, the challenge should be dismissed.



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E. There is no "CamUs" Washington

Munson has asserted that Mr. Ley resides in "Camus," Washington. (Emphasis added). There is no such place as "Camus" Washington. This primary factual claim is not only incorrect but highlights the unreliability and frivolous nature of the challenge. While this could be argued as a mere spelling error, it underscores the lack of seriousness in the allegations. Munson swore under penalty of perjury that Mr. Ley lives in a non-existent city. Consequently, he cannot substantiate that Mr. Ley resides in "Camus," which is the core factual assertion made under oath. Therefore, his challenge should be dismissed, as Mr. Lev obviously does not live in "Camus."

F. Exclusion of Hearsay and Assertion of Confrontation Rights

The unsigned and unsworn "declaration" is full of inadmissible claims that must be ignored. Hearsay is generally less reliable than sworn testimony and is typically inadmissible in except under specific exceptions as outlined in ER 802, which prohibits hearsay unless it qualifies for an exception. The hearsay present here is unreliable and there is no applicable exception.

Additionally, RCW 34.05.452 mandates the exclusion of evidence, including hearsay, if it is "excludable on constitutional or statutory grounds." In this case, Mr. Munson's reliance on accusations from previously dismissed claims by Ms. Crain and Mr. Bowman—who are not parties to this current matter—raises significant issues. The Constitution guarantees Mr. Ley the right to confront his accusers, meaning that any reliance on statements from these non-parties without providing Mr. Ley an opportunity for cross-examination violates his constitutional rights.

Furthermore, one of these past challenges includes information from an

anonymous source, which does not meet the standard of reliability that "reasonably prudent persons are accustomed to rely on in the conduct of their affairs." as required by RCW 34.05.452. Therefore, these accusations should be excluded from consideration in this challenge.

Further, there is no indication that Munson has any firsthand basis to believe that the previously dismissed allegations of Crain and Bowman are valid. Indeed, these allegations have been conclusively dismissed. Additionally, Munson failed to recognize that the allegations from Crain and Bowman challenged an address at which Mr. Ley did not reside at the time they made their challenges. Their claims concerning an address from which Mr. Ley had already moved are entirely irrelevant. That Munson has compiled these as part of a long list of baseless and irrelevant claims in hopes of prevailing through the sheer volume of allegations underscores the lack of substance in his challenge.

G. Objection Prosecutorial Involvement to and Motion for Disqualification

Mr. Ley objects to any involvement of the Clark County Prosecuting Attorney's Office in this matter under RCW 34.05.425. In past hearings, a member of the prosecutor's office has de facto co-presided and secretly co-authored at least one ruling on a voter challenge. RCW 34.05.425 clearly prohibits any member of the prosecutor's office from presiding in any capacity in such a hearing.

Furthermore, should the prosecutor's office attempt to involve itself in this matter, Mr. Ley moves to disqualify the prosecutor's office, as it is actively seeking to prosecute him based on charges it previously bootstrapped. See Clark County

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Superior Court case number 23-1-02135-06. In that case, Mr. Ley's counsel is actively seeking to, and will, depose a member of the prosecutor's office in relation to communications with Auditor Kimsey. The necessity to exclude the prosecutor's office from this matter is abundantly clear.

H. Exhibit 1: Normal Mail Retrieval by Ley

Exhibit 1 shows that a certified mail delivery was attempted at Mr. Ley's Hazel Dell residence at 1:45 PM on August 21, when he was likely out campaigning. Despite his busy schedule, Mr. Ley picked up the letter at the post office just three business days later. This timeline is entirely consistent with that of a resident who, upon receiving notification, retrieves their mail from the post office during regular activities. Thus, Exhibit 1 does not support Munson's claims but rather demonstrates Mr. Ley's normal resident behavior.

I. Exhibit 2: Munson's Erroneous Delivery Claims Unrelated to Ley

Exhibit 2 documents a delivery signed for at a Camas address on August 19 during daytime hours. However, it fails to specify who received the package. The absence of Mr. Ley's involvement in this receipt only reinforces his stated residency at the Hazel Dell address, making it clear that the Fremont St. address has no bearing on his actual living situation. This exhibit, therefore, does not substantiate any claims against Mr. Ley's residency and highlights the weakness of the challenge.

J. Exhibit 3: Munson's Irrelevant Address Allegations

Exhibit 3 features a letter mailed to 8415 NE Hazel Dell Ave, an address at which Mr. Ley is not now registered and was not registered at the time the letter was sent. This exhibit is irrelevant to the current challenge.

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K. Exhibit 4: Munson's Frivolous Claims from SearchPeopleFree.com

Munson's online directory search underscores the frivolity of his challenge. His primary piece of "evidence" comes from the website www.searchpeoplefree.com, which he included as Exhibit 4 in his unsworn declaration.

He should have examined it more closely. The website explicitly states that Mr. Ley's "current" address is the one at which he is now registered.

John Patrick Ley in Vancouver, WA also Johnjeff Ley

Age 69 (1955 or 1954)

Horse address, vacation, business, restal and apartment property addresses for John 8500 NE Hazel Dell Ave, APT H4, Vancouver, 1913 Stephens St, Goldsboro, NC 27530 WA 98665 - Current

444 NW Fremont St, Camas, WA 98607

16728 NE Halsey St, Portland, OR 97230

3141 NE 38th Ave, Portland, OR 97212

Home telephone number and mobile/wireless/cell phone numbers for John

(360) 254-6225 -Current

(360) 834-2672

(503) 254-6225

(206) 254-6225

Additionally, it lists a phone number identified as "current": 360-254-6225. This number is John Ley's mobile phone number and features a Clark County area code. Munson's declaration references two other phone numbers. Both are invalid and do not connect to any person. Clearly, he did not attempt to verify these numbers to obtain firsthand information about their association with anyone, let alone Mr. Ley. These claims are clearly frivolous, unresearched, and the evidence in Exhibit 4 further corroborates Mr. Ley's actual residence in Hazel Dell.

Munson also attempts to discredit Mr. Ley by noting the absence of a landline

at the residence, as if that carries any weight in 2024.3 The implication that a landline is necessary for valid residency is outdated and irrelevant. Today, the vast majority of people rely solely on mobile phones. According to recent data from the National Center for Health Statistics, around 73% of American adults in 2022 lived in households with only wireless phones, bypassing landlines altogether.⁴ This modern trend clearly shows that Munson's point about the lack of a landline is baseless and does not reflect any serious concern about Mr. Ley's residency.

L. Exhibit 5: Ley's Financial Prudence Does Not Negate Residency

That Mr. Ley owns properties in both Noth Carolina and Camas, which are occupied by renters, should not be misconstrued as evidence supporting Mr. Munson's challenge. Instead, this fact demonstrates financial prudence on Mr. Ley's part. Given the current real estate market conditions, exacerbated by high interest rates that have dampened buyer activity, it would be economically unwise to sell these properties now. Exhibit 5 underscores Mr. Ley's savvy financial management and nothing more.

M. Exhibit 6: The PDC's Record Keeping Error is Irrelevant

Munson incorrectly asserts that Mr. Ley made political donations from an address at 444 NW Fremont St., basing this claim on PDC records whose accuracy or origin remains uncertain. In fact, Mr. Ley executed these two donations using his

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³ Ring ring... Hey Munson, it's 1964 on the line. They're wondering if you've upgraded to a smart phone yet—or are you still waiting for rotary phones to come back in style? https://www.klove.com/news/tech-science/who-has-landlines-anymore-in-themidst-of-cell-phone-outages-some-miss-them-49107 (Last viewed on September 30, 2024).

credit card registered at his Hazel Dell residence. Enclosed is Mr. Ley's credit card statement for these transactions, confirming the Hazel Dell address. The incorrect address listing by the PDC or the political organization that received the donation likely resulted from an outdated autofill in their input system, not a mistake by Mr. Ley. This oversight by the PDC, or the receiving organization, in updating their records is not evidence against Mr. Ley's residency in Hazel Dell.

N. Exhibit 7: Ley's Long-Term Residency in the 18th District

Exhibit 7 asserts that John Ley has been a long-term resident of the 18th Legislative District, consistent with his current registration. This exhibit, like others presented without discernible relevance, clearly demonstrates Mr. Ley's longstanding ties to the district. Having been a resident since 2014, this document reinforces Mr. Ley's intent to maintain permanent residency within the 18th Legislative District. This evidence directly contradicts Mr. Munson's politically motivated challenge, further affirming Mr. Ley's eligibility and commitment to his community.

O. Exhibit 8: Business Registration at Hazel Dell Address

Exhibit 8 highlights a significant oversight in Mr. Munson's challenge: it fails to acknowledge that Mr. Ley has a business registered at his Hazel Dell residence. Mr. Ley is in the process of updating the registration for his other small businesses to reflect this address as well. The businesses in question receive minimal mail and are mostly electronic, making the change of address a low priority. This oversight in the challenge is indicative of its incomplete and biased presentation of allegations.

P. Exhibit 9: Misleading Media Coverage and Editorial Bias

Exhibit 9 features an article that fails to relate substantively to Mr. Ley's

residency and is riddled with hearsay and other irrelevant assertions. Notably, the article concludes with an admission that the author never sought Mr. Ley's input, demonstrating a lack of journalistic thoroughness and balance.

The Columbian newspaper, from which this article originates, notably endorsed both a Republican and a Democrat in this year's three-candidate primary race for the 18th Legislative District, effectively supporting every candidate except Mr. Ley. This unusual editorial choice underscores the newspaper's apparent agenda to exclude Mr. Ley from office. Mr. Munson's reliance on such a biased source highlights the insubstantial nature of his claims and the absence of real evidence.

Q. Unpacking Munson's Flawed Assertions at 444 Fremont

Not only is it evident that Mr. Munson's exhibits are either irrelevant or actually support Mr. Ley's residency in the 18th district, but his own alleged investigations also fail to provide clear and convincing evidence to challenge the presumptively valid voter registration of Mr. Ley. Instead, they inadvertently support Mr. Ley's residency.

For instance, Mr. Munson claims to have visited 444 Fremont on several occasions, observing different cars in the driveway and various positions on the property, as well as packages on the porch and political signs in the yard. However, he fails to specify any details about these cars—such as color, make, model, or license plate—and does not link them to Mr. Ley. The mere presence of these cars doesn't support Mr. Munson's claims; it only indicates that someone, not necessarily Mr. Ley, was there.

Moreover, while Mr. Munson notes the delivery of packages, he does not

disclose the addressees' names on the packages. Had these packages been addressed
to Mr. Ley, it is reasonable to assume Mr. Munson would have mentioned this. His
omission suggests that someone other than Mr. Ley was receiving packages at that
address, consistent with a renter's presence rather than Mr. Ley's.

Furthermore, Mr. Munson claims he observed campaign signs but doesn't specify which candidate they support. Presumably, if Mr. Ley resided there, his own campaign sign would be prominent; Mr. Munson's failure to report a John Ley sign in that yard suggests none was present, further discrediting Munson's assertions.

Notably, the challenge lacks any assertion that Mr. Ley was ever observed at 444 Fremont. In fact, none of the three challengers or the private investigator ever witnessed Mr. Ley at that location, affirming that he does not reside there.

R. Unpacking Munson's Flawed Assertions at Hazel Dell Residence

Like his alleged observations of 444 Fremont, Munson's observations of Mr. Ley's Hazel Dell residence are either inconsequential or further affirm Mr. Ley's bona fides as a resident of Hazel Dell. Munson fails to specify when he visited Ley's residence at 8500 NE Hazel Dell Ave, leaving crucial details like the time of day or frequency of his visits ambiguous. This lack of detail undermines the credibility of his claims, given his burden to prove his assertions by clear and convincing evidence.

Munson noted that none of the cars previously seen at Ley's alleged permanent residence in Camas were observed in the parking lot of Ley's Hazel Dell residence. However, this observation actually supports the fact that different locations are associated with different individuals, consistent with Mr. Ley being a resident of Hazel Dell, **not 444 Fremont**.

Furthermore, Munson asserts that the apartment appears unfurnished, a
claim directly contradicted by photos provided by Mr. Ley showing a furnished living
space. If Munson, under the penalty of perjury, claims the apartment is unfurnished,
he risks perjury charges, highlighting his willingness to manipulate facts to support
his biased accusations. His inability to have observed the apartment's interior—he
never entered the apartment, and it is located on the second floor with no ground-
level windows to permit such observation—further discredits his statement. Mr. Ley,
like many, keeps his blinds closed, making Munson's alleged external observation
impossible. Given these considerations, Munson's challenge lacks substantiation and
should be dismissed based on his biased and unreliable accusations alone.

Munson criticizes the lack of items on Mr. Ley's balcony, insinuating this reflects negatively on his residency. However, this observation is meaningless and reflects a misunderstanding of common residential etiquette. Balconies are not storage areas; they are meant to enhance the aesthetic of a living space. Treating them as storage detracts from the community's appearance. This complaint only underscores Munson's tendency to base his challenge on trivial and misguided observations.

Moreover, Munson alleges that mail and flyers accumulate at Mr. Ley's door for weeks, suggesting neglect. This claim is demonstrably false, and if it was true he would have taken a picture to prove it. As previously noted, the only piece of mail sent by Munson was retrieved promptly by Mr. Ley.

It appears Munson has confused Mr. Ley's apartment with a neighboring unit, which has been vacant for months and has accumulated flyers. This mix-up suggests that Munson either lacks detailed knowledge of the actual residence in question or is deliberately misrepresenting the situation. Such careless or willful errors call into question the validity of his challenge.

Furthermore, Munson claims the certified letter sent to Mr. Ley's residence was undeliverable directly to the door and instead had to be picked up at the apartment complex office, insinuating this as a sign of non-residence. This assertion is misguided and irrelevant for several reasons. Firstly, within the apartment complex where Mr. Ley resides, the postal protocol is to deliver certified mail to the complex mailbox center, not directly to individual apartment doors. This standard procedure is typical in many residential complexes and is not suggestive of whether a resident is resides at the address.

Secondly, the fact that the item was not delivered directly to the door but was subsequently picked up aligns perfectly with the behavior of a resident who is actively engaged in daily activities. Mr. Ley, busy managing a demanding campaign schedule, demonstrated responsible behavior by retrieving his mail from the designated pickup location at his earliest convenience. Munson's attempt to cast doubt on Mr. Ley's residency by criticizing his method of mail retrieval is baseless. Contrary to Munson's claim of neglected mail at the doorstep, this instance clearly illustrates that Mr. Ley actively manages his correspondence, further substantiating his established residency at the Hazel Dell address.

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Finally, the complete absence of photographic evidence from Munson starkly undermines Munson's credibility. If his claimed observations were genuine, capturing evidence with a smartphone would have been trivial. The fact that not a single photo was taken suggests these observations were never made.

CONCLUSION

In light of the lack evidence presented by Munson, and the legal standards that protect the rights of registered voters, it is abundantly clear that Mr. Munson's challenge against Mr. John Ley's voter registration does not meet the requisite threshold of clear and convincing evidence. This challenge is not a genuine query into the validity of a voter's registration, but a transparent attempt to manipulate electoral outcomes through partisan procedural tactics.

Furthermore, the nature of the evidence — rife with inaccuracies, irrelevant details, and unsupported by substantive legal or factual basis — only underscores the political motivation behind this challenge. It seeks not to uphold the law but to disenfranchise thousands of voters who have voiced their choice through the democratic process in the 2024 primary election.

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Therefore, it is imperative that this challenge be dismissed outright to uphold not only the legal standards that govern voter registration challenges but also to protect the sanctity of our electoral system from overtly partisan abuses. This dismissal will affirm that in our democracy, it is the electorate and not partisan maneuvering that should determine electoral outcomes.

DATED this Tuesday, October 1, 24.

D. Angus Lee, **Y**SBA# 36473 Attorneys for hn Ley

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