BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF CHICAGO AS A DULY CONSTITUTED ELECTORAL BOARD

Objections of: EMMA JEAN ROBINSON and KATHY DAVIS,	)	
To the Nomination Papers of: RHONDA SHERROD	)	No.: 24-EB-CON-003
Candidate for the nomination of the DEMOCRATIC Party for the office of Representative in Congress in the 7th Congressional District in the City of Chicago, of the State of Illinois	)	

FINDINGS AND DECISION

The duly constituted Electoral Board, consisting of the Board of the Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago, Commissioners Marisel A. Hernandez, William J. Kresse and June A. Brown, organized by law in response to a Call issued by Marisel A. Hernandez, Chair of said Electoral Board, for the purpose of hearing and passing upon objections ("Objections") of EMMA JEAN ROBINSON and KATHY DAVIS, ("Objectors") to the nomination papers ("Nomination Papers") of RHONDA SHERROD, Candidate for the nomination of the DEMOCRATIC Party for the office of Representative in Congress, 7th Congressional District in the City of Chicago, of the State of Illinois ("Candidate") at the General Primary Election to be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, having convened on December 18, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., in Room 800, 69 West Washington Street, Chicago Illinois, and having heard and determined the Objections to the Nomination Papers in the above-entitled matter, finds that:

1. Objections to the Nomination Papers of the Candidate were duly and timely filed.

2. The Electoral Board was constituted according to the laws of the State of Illinois.

3. A Call to the hearing on said Objections was duly issued by the Chair of the Electoral Board and served upon the members of the Electoral Board, the Objectors and the Candidate, by registered or certified mail and by Sheriff's service, as provided by statute or statutory service was waived and service by email was authorized.

4. A public hearing held on these Objections commenced on December 18, 2023 and was continued from time to time. The Electoral Board assigned this matter to Hearing Officer Mathias Delort for further hearings and proceedings.

5. The Objectors and the Candidate were directed by the Electoral Board's Call served upon them to appear before the Hearing Officer on the date and at the time designated in the Hearing Schedule. Appearances were filed by or on behalf of the following persons: the Objectors, EMMA JEAN ROBINSON and KATHY DAVIS, by Attorney ED MULLEN; and the Candidate, RHONDA SHERROD, who appeared pro se.

6. The Objections allege that the Candidate's nomination papers contain fewer than the statutorily required signatures on the face thereof, assuming that every signature is valid. The initial Board staff report found the nomination papers to contain 809 signatures. The statutorily required number of signatures for said office is 821. The Hearing Officer tendered the Board report to both parties requesting they file any objections to the Board staff's signature count. The matter reconvened December 26, 2023. No objections to the Board's count were filed nor was a motion to dismiss. The matter concluded.

7. The Hearing Officer has tendered to the Electoral Board a report and recommended decision. On January 3, 2024, the Candidate appealed the recommended decision and filed a Rule 20 motion. The Board conducted the hearing pursuant to the Rule 20 motion on January 5, 2024, at 10:00 am. The Candidate failed to present any evidence or argument

reflecting the statutory minimum number of signatures was met. The Illinois Supreme Court has ruled that candidate signature requirements must be strictly enforced. *Jackson-Hicks v. East St. Louis Board of Election Commissioners*, 2015 IL 118929 (Ill.Sup.Ct., 2015). Based upon the evidence presented, the Hearing Officer held the Candidate's Nomination Papers contained less than the minimum number of valid signatures required by law to be placed upon the official ballot as a candidate for nomination of the DEMOCRATIC Party for the office of Representative in Congress, 7th Congressional District in the City of Chicago, of the State of Illinois, and that the Candidate's Nomination Papers should be found invalid.

8. The Electoral Board, having considered the evidence and arguments tendered by the parties and the Hearing Officer's report of recommended findings and conclusions of law, hereby adopts the Hearing Officer's recommended findings and conclusions of law and incorporates them herein.

9. For the reasons stated above, the Electoral Board finds that the Candidate has an insufficient number of valid signatures required by law to be placed upon the official ballot as a candidate for the nomination of the DEMOCRATIC Party for the office of Representative in Congress of the 7th Congressional District, State of Illinois and that the Candidate's Nomination Papers should be found invalid.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Objections of EMMA JEAN ROBINSON and KATHY DAVIS, to the Nomination Papers of RHONDA SHERROD, candidate for the nomination of the DEMOCRATIC Party for election to the office of Representative in Congress of the 7th Congressional District, State of Illinois, are hereby SUSTAINED and said Nomination Papers are hereby declared INVALID and the name of RHONDA SHERROD, candidate for nomination of the DEMOCRATIC Party for the office of Representative in Congress of the 7th

Congressional District, in the City of Chicago, of the State of Illinois, SHALL NOT be printed on the official ballot for the General Primary Election to be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024.

Dated: January 5, 2024

Marisel A. Hernandez, Chair

William J. Kresse, Commissioner

June A. Brown, Commissioner

NOTICE: Pursuant to Section 10-10.1 of the Election Code (10 ILCS 5/10-10.1) a party aggrieved by this decision and seeking judicial review of this decision must file a petition for judicial review with the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County within 5 days after service of the decision of the Electoral Board.