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

Objections of: MARLO PAYNE	)	
	)	
	)	
To the Nomination	)	No.: 26-EB-CON-001
Papers of: ANTHONY DRIVER, JR.	)	
	)	
Candidate for the nomination of the	)	
Democratic Party for the office of	)	
Representative in Congress, 7th Congressional	)	
District 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, June A. Brown, and Laura Kotelman[1], 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 MARLO PAYNE ("Objector") to the nomination papers ("Nomination Papers") of ANTHONY DRIVER, JR., candidate for the nomination of the Democratic Party for the office of Representative in Congress, 7th Congressional District in the State of Illinois ("Candidate") at the General Primary Election to be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, having convened on November 19, 2025, 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.

[1] Commissioner Kotelman was sworn into office and joined the Board on November 26, 2025.

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 Objector, 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 November 19, 2025, and was continued from time to time. The Electoral Board assigned this matter to Hearing Officer Mary Celeste Meehan for further hearings and proceedings.

5. The Objector 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 Objector, MARLO PAYNE, *pro se*; and the Candidate, ANTHONY DRIVER, JR., by Attorney ED MULLEN.

6. The Hearing Officer has tendered to the Electoral Board her report and recommended decision. The Hearing Officer recommends that the Candidate's Motion to Dismiss be granted as the Objector's address as contained on the Objector's Petition is outside the 7th Congressional district and, therefore, the Objector lacks standing. 10 ILCS 5/10-8.

7. 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.

8. For the reasons stated above, the Electoral Board dismisses the Objections to the Candidate's Nomination Papers and finds that the Candidate's Nomination Papers are valid.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Objections of MARLO PAYNE to the Nomination Papers of ANTHONY DRIVER, JR., candidate for the nomination of the Democratic Party for the office of Representative in Congress, 7th Congressional District of the State of Illinois, are hereby DISMISSED, said Nomination Papers are hereby declared VALID, and the name of ANTHONY DRIVER, JR. SHALL be printed on the official ballot for the General Primary Election to be held on March 17, 2026.

Dated: Chicago, Illinois, on December 17, 2025.

Marisel A. Hernandez, Chair

June A. Brown, Commissioner

Laura Kotelman, Commissioner

NOTICE: Pursuant to Section 10-10.1 of the Election Code (10 ILCS 5/10-10.1) a party aggrieved of 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.