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

Objections of: ANNETTE M. ALEXANDER and DOROTHY L. PRICE	)	
To the Nomination Papers of: PARIS WALKER THOMAS	)	No.: 26-EB-RGA-001
Candidate for the nomination of the Democratic Party for the office of Representative in the General Assembly in the 28th Representative 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 ANNETTE M. ALEXANDER and DOROTHY L. PRICE ("Objectors") to the nomination papers ("Nomination Papers") of PARIS WALKER THOMAS, candidate for the Democratic Party nomination for the office of Representative in the General Assembly, 28th Representative 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.

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

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 November 19, 2025 and was continued from time to time. The Electoral Board assigned this matter to Hearing Officer John Ashenden for further hearings and proceedings.

5. The Objectors and Candidate were directed by the Electoral Board's Call to appear before the Hearing Officer at the date and time designated in the Hearing Schedule. Appearances were filed by or on behalf of the Objectors, ANNETTE M. ALEXANDER and DOROTHY L. PRICE, by Attorneys BURTON S. ODELSON and PRISCILLA CENTENO; and the Candidate, PARIS WALKER THOMAS, *pro se.*

6. The Hearing Officer ordered that an examination of the voter registration records be conducted by clerks and agents under the Board's direction and supervision, in accordance with the laws of Illinois and the rules of the Board.

7. The Hearing Officer directed all parties to appear and be present, either personally and/or by their authorized representatives, during this records examination.

8. The Candidate and/or her duly authorized representative was present during the examination of the registration records or waived their right to do so. The Objectors and/or their duly authorized representative was present during the examination of the registration records or waived their right to do so.

9. The examination of the registration records was completed and the Electoral Board hereby adopts and incorporates by reference the results of the records examination conducted by its clerks and agents. The written report of the result of the registration records examination is contained in the Electoral Board's file in this case and a copy has been provided or made available to the parties.

10. The results of the records examination indicate that:

A. The minimum number of valid signatures required by law for placement on the ballot for the office in question is 500;

B. The number of purportedly valid signatures appearing on the nominating petition filed by the Candidate total 633;

C. The number of signatures deemed invalid because of objections sustained as a result of the records examination total 188;

D. The remaining number of signatures deemed valid as a result of the records examination total 445.

11. The Electoral Board finds that the number of valid signatures appearing on the Candidate's nominating petition following completion of the records examination was less than the minimum 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 the General Assembly of the 28th Representative District, State of Illinois.

12. The Electoral Board finds that the Candidate filed a Rule 8 motion seeking a hearing to allow the party an opportunity to present evidence in support of its Rule 8 motion objecting to the Board's clerk's findings during the records examination, and other matters. However, for reasons stated below, the Electoral Board finds that the Rule 8 motion is moot, as it

the Candidate's Nomination Papers contain an insufficient number of properly submitted original (and not photocopied) signatures to qualify her for the ballot.

13. The Hearing Officer has tendered to the Electoral Board a report and recommended decision. Based upon the evidence presented, the Hearing Officer found that the Candidate's Nomination Papers could possibly contain no more than 120 valid signatures, which is 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 the General Assembly, 28th Representative District of the State of Illinois, and that the Candidate's Nomination Papers should be found invalid.

14. 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.

15. Based upon the Hearing Officer's report, and the referenced report issued by the Electoral Board's retained forensic document analysis and handwriting expert, Kevin Kulbacki, and the evidence in the case file, the Electoral Board finds that 56 of the 68 petition sheets submitted by the Candidate as part of her Nomination Papers are photocopies, not originals, and those petition sheets and every signature contained upon them are legally invalid.

16. The Election Code expressly requires that candidates submit *original* nominating petition sheets, and photocopies are not acceptable: **"All petition sheets which are filed with the proper local election officials, election authorities or the State Board of Elections shall be the original sheets which have been signed by the voters and by the circulator thereof, and not photocopies or duplicates of such sheets."** 10 ILCS 5/7-10.

17. The Electoral Board further finds that the existence of photocopied petitions in the Candidate's Nomination Papers is obvious and observable even to the untrained eye, and that any judge or justice sitting on judicial review of this Electoral Board's Final Decision should be able to observe these facts for themselves. The Electoral Board appreciates that its forensic document analyst, Mr. Kulbacki, provided a professional and scientific opinion and report on this issue, which serves as a verification and confirmation of what even a non-professional document analyst can readily see among these Nomination Papers.

18. In accord with Mr. Kulbacki's professional report, and what is observable even to the untrained eye, the Electoral Board further finds evidence of document compositing, also known as "cutting-and-pasting," among several of the photocopied petition sheets. The Electoral Board also finds that the Candidate, herself, is identified as the circulator of every petition sheet contained within her Nomination Papers.

19. As required by Section 7-10 of the Election Code, the petition circulator is required to subscribe and swear to a circulator's oath and affirmation in which the circulator certifies that **"the signatures on this sheet were signed in my presence, and are genuine."** 10 ILCS 5/7-10 (emphasis added). The readily observable presence of several composited, photocopied petition sheets circulated by the Candidate greatly calls into question the truthfulness of her sworn oath as the circulator of those sheets.

20. The Electoral Board agrees with Mr. Kulbacki's report and finds that petition sheets numbered 1-3, 5, 9, 16, and 50-55 are the only original petitions within the Candidate's Nomination Papers. With 10 signature lines per sheet, those 12 original, non-photocopied petitions could contain no more than 120 valid signatures, which is 380 signatures *fewer* than the required minimum.

21. Additionally, the Electoral Board finds that the Candidate's motion to strike and dismiss the Objectors' Petition failed to state any claim for which the requested relief could be granted, as the Hearing Officer accurately explained on the record and in his final report and recommended decision. The Electoral Board also finds no sufficient basis for forcing the Objectors' attorney to withdraw himself from the case, over his and his clients' objection, as the Candidate had requested. While it does not officially reach the issue in this decision, the Electoral Board does question whether it even would have the lawful authority to forcefully sever an attorney-client relationship over the objection of the attorney and his clients.

22. For the reasons stated above, the Electoral Board finds that the Candidate has an insufficient number of valid signatures on her nominating petitions, that all other objections lodged and issues raised in this case are therefore moot, and that the Nomination Papers of PARIS WALKER THOMAS are, therefore, legally invalid.

[Continued on next page.]

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Objections of ANNETTE M. ALEXANDER and DOROTHY L PRICE to the Nomination Papers of PARIS WALKER THOMAS, candidate for the nomination of the Democratic Party for election to the office of Representative in the General Assembly of the 28th Representative District, State of Illinois, are hereby SUSTAINED, said Nomination Papers are hereby declared INVALID, and the name of PARIS WALKER THOMAS, candidate for nomination, SHALL NOT be printed on the official ballot for the General Primary Election to be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2026.

Dated: 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 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.

BEFORE THE CHICAGO BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

ANNETTE M. ALXANDER & DOROTHY L. PRICE,	)	
	)	No. 26-EB-RGA-001
Petitioner-Objectors,	)	
v.	)	John Ashenden
	)	Hearing Officer
PARIS WALKER THOMAS,	)	
Respondent-Candidate.	)	

HEARING OFFICER'S FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

This matter having come before the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners ("CBOE") on the Objectors' Petition of Annette M. Alexander and Dorothy L. Price ("Objectors") to the nomination papers of Paris Walker Thomas ("Candidate") for the position of State Representative for the 28th District with John Ashenden, serving as Hearing Officer, finds and recommends as follows:

1. At the first hearing on November 19, 2025, the Candidate appeared in person and was not represented by counsel. Objectors appeared through Attorneys Burt S. Odelson and Patrick Roberts. Candidate's Nomination Papers (A), Objector's Petition (B) and pro se Candidate and the Objector's Attorney's appearance (C) and the non-disclosure agreements (D) were reviewed. Exhibits A-D respectively. Pro se Candidate filed a motion to dismiss objectors petition "based on a violation of my civil rights..." and cites the Illinois Civil Practice Act.

2. Objector's response was due November 21st and the Candidate's Reply due by Monday November 24. Hearing on Candidate's motion to dismiss is set for November 25th.

3. Objectors' Petition alleges Candidate's Nomination Papers ("NP") contain the signatures where *"signer not registered voter at the address shown." (Obj. Par. 6) "Signatures not genuine." (Obj. Par. 7) "Signers reside out of district" (Obj. Par. 8). "Signer's address missing (Obj. Pet. Par. 9) "Signer signed Petition more than once at sheet/line" (Obj. Par. 10). The NP contain sheets where noted in the Appendix -Recapitulation ("A-R") stated as follows: Circulator did not sign the petition; Circulator does not reside at address shown; candidate's address is incomplete or missing; circulator affidavit not properly notarized; Circulator did not circulate sheet; Circulator's signature not genuine; dates of circulation not given; purported notary did not notarize sheet; Sheet not notarized by a Notary; Circulator did not appear before Notary; Circulator is under the legal age. (Obj. Par. 13). The NP contain sheets that "circulator did not sign petition as specifically made to Petition Sheet 64 (Obj. Par. 14); Objections and AR Sheet heading "Circulator does not reside at address shown (Obj. Par.15). Candidate's petition sheets demonstrate a pattern of fraud containing signatures that were not placed on the sheets by*

the voters but were signed by other individuals and numerous signatures on said circulator's sheets appear to be not genuine and appear forged. (Obj. Par 16) The Petition sheets were not witnessed by Candidate/Circulator; said signers not signing their names in the presence of the purported Circulator invalidates signatures. (Obj. Par. 17) Petition sheets 4,6,7,8,9,10,11,12 13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20-49,55,56,57,58,59 and 60-68 are photocopies, duplicate sheets should be stricken. (Obj. Par. 18). Petition sheets 10 and 25 are exactly the same, duplicated petition sheets are both photocopies. (Obj. Par. 19). Petition Sheets 12, 36,14, 27, 13, 39, 6, 47, 11 and 40 respectively are also identical, duplicative, photocopied pages. (Obj. Par. 20). Petition sheets 48 and 55 are incomplete with no office or heading and are invalid. (Obj. Par. 21). Sheet 64 is illegally notarized because the Circulator did not sign Sheet 64, which is blank as to the Circulator's signature and notary committed fraud under Section 6-104 (c). (Obj. Par. 22). Candidate was not at the time of signing the Statement of Candidacy, a resident at the address shown on the NPs and candidacy is false. The Statement of Candidacy is also invalid for failure to specify the office sought, "State of Illinois 28 Dist." is not an office. (Obj. Par. 23). The statement of Candidacy is further invalid because the Candidate is not "legally qualified to hold such office" because she has lied about her residence address and has not lived or resided in the 28th District for two years preceding the November 3, 2026, General Election. (Obj. Par. 24). The Candidate has not lived at the address stated in each petition sheet since being evicted in 2024. See Exhibit B. (Obj. Par. 25). Candidate previously lived at 16450 Cobblestone Court in Tinley Park, IL. although she was evicted from that location. See Exhibit C. (Obj. Par. 26) Upon information and belief, the Candidate lives or did live within the last two years at 3041 W. 113th Place, Merrionette Park, IL.,not in the 28th Rep. District. (Obj. Par. 27). Upon information and belief, the Candidate lived at 3041 W. 113th Place, Merrionette Park from approximately April 2024 to September 2025, Merrionette Park is not within the 28th Rep. District and therefore the residency requirements are not met rendering her Statement of Candidacy and the NPs illegal and void. (Obj. Par. 28). Further, Candidate originally registered to vote as "Paris Thomas," See attached Exhibit D and has now attempted to us a surname of "Walker", not her middle name. (Obj. Par. 29) The Candidate owes $1700.00 in fines to the State Board of Elections and can't be a candidate with outstanding fines. (Obj. Par. 30)

4. Pro se Candidate's motion to dismiss Objector's Petition argues that her civil rights were violated; that she is attacking the sufficiency of the pleadings but does not cite any specific paragraph in the objector's petition. Candidate alleges on Page 80 of 105 pages of her pending eviction case the objectors failed to redact her bank information. Candidate argues her eviction case is being sealed due to violations of IL. Sup. Court Rule 138, requiring redaction of personal identity information from court filings to prevent identity theft and 740 ILCS 195/1 et. seq. other statutes, 815 ILCS 530. Candidate alleges due to her information being made public, she alleges she will not have a fair chance to be heard on her objections after being called a "Liar" and "fraud." She claims to be disadvantaged in her records exam and that objector's allegations "will cause personal and civil liability to my own personal life and cause irreparable damage to my reputation if the objection isn't stricken." Candidate requests that Objectors' petition be stricken due to her personal bank information not being redacted when referencing her eviction case and that her candidacy papers be deemed valid.

5. Objector's response argues that Candidate's motion has no factual or legal basis for dismissing objectors' petition. Candidate's petition sheets contain a total of 634 signatures, and the office requires 500 valid signatures. Objectors objected to 405 signature lines due to: 1) signer not registered at address shown; 2) signature not genuine signature of registered voter; 3) signer resides outside political subdivision; 4) signer's address missing or incomplete and 5) signer signed more than once a sheet/line indicated. Candidate's motion to dismiss fails to respond to any signature objection. Also, Candidate's motion doesn't address Objections to the notary or circulators. Nor does the motion respond to the allegation that many of the petition sheets are photocopies. Candidate merely cites IL. Supreme Court Rule 138 requires the redaction of personal information to prevent identity theft and 740 ILCS 195/1 *et. seq* is the "Civil Liability for Doxing Act," Candidate's motion argues that circuit court filings from her eviction case should be redacted. Objectors attach a case summary of Candidate's most recent eviction case from her residence in Tinley Park and a copy of a felony complaint for deceptive practices/bad check, with an arrest warrant issued on 11/13/2025.

6. On November 22nd the Board emailed that it had redacted the Candidate's personal financial information to its PDF scan and that the Candidate's personal information is restricted to the original board file. Under a general reading of the Doxing Act a document filed with an election board as part of an election proceeding isn't similar to "publishing" under the Act.

7. On November 24th Candidate filed a motion to disqualify Attorney Burton S. Odelson from representing objectors "for disclosures of prior communications." Candidate alleges that starting on 9/5/2023 Attorney Burton S. Odelson "engaged in meetings at his office and text communications... concerning matters connected to my campaign and my political career in the general cycle." Candidate alleges "these communications created... a prospective-client relationship under the IL. Rules of Professional Conduct 1.18, Rule 1.9.

8. Objectors' filed a motion to admit supplemental evidence that Candidate does not live at the address stated on her nomination papers and has not lived there since January 2024 (Exhibit A to Objectors' motion) and separately asserted Candidate's nominating papers lack the required number of signatures. Exhibit A is an affidavit of Sarah Washington, the landlord and owner of 2446 Lewis Street, Unit #2, Blue Island. Affiant alleges that on December 5, 2023 the Court entered an order requiring that if Paris Walker Thomas did not timely vacate the premises by January 15, 2024 the Affiant would be entitled to an eviction order against Paris Walker Thomas "PWT" and if PWT did not pay the sum of $11,205.00 by January 15th landlord would be entitled to a money judgment. The eviction ordered Sarah Washington to be given possession of the premises; PWT was ordered to move out Instanter; the Sheriff was ordered to evict PWT from the premises; a money judgment for $11,889.00 was entered against PWT. The affiant further states none of the money owed by PWT was paid to affiant.

9. At the hearing it was recommended that the motion to disqualify be denied because it was not timely brought. Attorney Odelson was requested to file a response to the motion on or before December 2nd because of the 25 unmarked and mostly illegible exhibits.

10. It is recommended that the Candidate's motion to dismiss be denied. It does not seek to legally defeat any of the thirty (30) specific objections raised in the Objector's petition. Instead, the motion cites Supreme Court Rule 138 concerning redaction of financial information. Rule 138 governs the handling of confidential identifiers but does not provide a basis for dismissing an objection petition nor does it negate the merits of any objection. Candidate's motion to dismiss fails to cite any relevant statutes or case law, instead argues generally that her civil rights have been violated or pleadings are insufficient. When Objector attached a document containing unredacted financial information, the proper remedy under Rule 138 is redaction or sealing, not dismissal of the objection. The Candidate has not shown that such a redaction issue affects jurisdiction or the legal sufficiency of objections. The Objector raises substantive challenges *inter alia*: (a) the Candidate's residency at the address listed in the Statement of Candidacy; (b) duplicate copies of sheets in the nominating papers; (c) the pending deceptive-practices case. All are fact-intensive issues that require evidence and findings of fact. The Candidate's motion does not address the objectors' issues and provides no basis to avoid an evidentiary hearing.

11. On November 25, 2025, Objector's Counsel, the Pro se Candidate and the hearing officer examined the following sheets: 12, 36, 10, 25, 14, 27, 13, 39, 47, 64, 15, 46, 11, 40. These sheets were agreed by pro se Candidate and Objectors to be duplicates and not originals. Delilah Smith, the record exam assignment officer, visited the hearing. The hearing officer directive stated, "it is agreed by the pro se candidate and objectors' counsels that those 14 sheets listed above "shall not be considered by records examiner because there are duplicative." The Record Examination Directive was set for December 1, 2025.

12. On November 28 this hearing Officer began to receive voicemail messages and emails from the pro se Candidate. The messages were not responded to, and the Board was notified that the pro se candidate made several *ex parte* attempts. The Board notified the Candidate to stop.

13. Objector's Attorney filed a response to Candidate's motion to disqualify and the 25 unmarked exhibits. Attorney Odelson response stated he "has never represented Paris Walker Thomas." (Objectors' Response to motion to disqualify)

14. Objectors' filed a motion for the board's handwriting expert to provide an analysis for the following sheets are alleged photocopies: 4,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20-49, 55,56,57,58,59, and 60-68.

15. On December 2nd a preliminary Petition Summary Report was printed finding the Candidate has "61 fewer signatures than the required minimum."

16. On December 4th the hearing was reconvened. The Objector moved for the Board to provide expert for document analysis. It was recommended that at this time Objector's motion for handwriting expert analysis be denied. Objector's motion requested the sheets cited are photocopies of alleged voters' signatures and are not originals. Those sheets are 4,6,7,8,9,10, 11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20-49, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, and 60-68. The hearing officer used a magnifying glass and reviewed each objected to signature and found those signatures appeared to be photocopies and not signed by pen. It was recommended that the sheets not to be considered by the record examiner at the reconvened records exam. It is recommended that the 55 objected to photocopied signature sheets be sustained and that those photocopied signatures be stricken.

17. On December 5, 2025, Pro se Candidate filed a Rule 8 motion to "rehabilitate my signatures as I strongly object to the findings ...that I photocopied any of my nomination papers or petitions." Candidate alleges she was including "65 pages of affidavits of identity."

18. The Board issued an email that the Candidate's photograph attachments to the Rule 8 motion were not received by the board and that they were in an unacceptable format that could not be opened or viewed at the board.

19. On December 8, 2025, a directive was issued requesting the board's forensic document expert to review and confirm the accuracy of hearing officer's recommendations that many of the candidate's petition sheets were photocopies and were not original actual voters' signatures.

20. On December 8, 2025, Kevin Kulbacki the Board's forensic expert, performed a microscopic examination of all 68 sheets in the candidate's nominating papers and determined that 56 of the petition sheets are copies while just 12 sheets are written ink on paper. The forensic report made additional observations such as alignment issues in the signature block being at an irregular angle compared to the rest of the petition. (e.g. Sheet 10). Extraneous horizontal lines above the signature block (e.g. sheet 7). Irregular paper edge marks along the signature block. (i.e. Sheet 12) Remnants of the text not removed from the signature block. (i.e. Sheet 58) Removed portions of the black border above the signature block with the aforementioned text that was not fully removed. (i.e. Sheet 6) In the forensic expert's opinion these additional observations are consistent with a form of document alteration known as "cut and paste" or "composting". These terms refer to circumstances in which multiple documents are combined to create a new document. Based on the examination of the evidence it was concluded that it is highly probable that at least some of the petition sheets have been altered via cut and pasting of voter signature blocks from petitions from an unknown election. (See KDX Forensic Consulting Report dated Dec. 8, 2025).

21. The FINAL Petition Summary Report was completed on December 9, 2025. The Candidate had 55 Signatures fewer than the required minimum.

22. At the hearing on December 9, 2025, the Candidate appeared and acknowledged receipt of the Board's forensics consulting report finding that 56 of the petition sheets are copies while just 12 are written-ink-on-paper. Those 12 valid sheets could only possibly account for a maximum of

120 valid voters' signatures where a minimum of 500 valid signatures are required. It is recommended that the objections to the candidates nominating papers be sustained.

CONCLUSION

23. Accordingly, it is recommended that the objections to the nominating papers of Paris Walker Thompson be sustained and that the name of Paris Walker Thompson as a candidate for the office of representative in the General Assembly for the 28th Representative District State of Illinois **not be printed** upon the official ballot for the General Primary Election to be held on March 17th 2026.

John Ashenden, Hearing Officer
December 11, 2025