

June 2, 2018

Michael Bennet
Chair, DC Board of Elections
1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20003

Re: Request to Make ANC Petitions Available Beginning June 15, 2018

Dear Mr. Bennet,

The 39 undersigned Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners are concerned about the schedule for picking up petitions for the November general election, and we ask the Board to expand the petition period for ANC candidates. Unlike all other candidates who can pick up petitions beginning on June 15, the current schedule provides that those seeking to become ANC commissioners may not pick up their petitions until July 9. All petitions for all offices must be returned by August 8. Of course, that gives ANC candidates only one month to pick up and return petitions while all other candidates have almost two months.

This schedule presents a particular burden for ANC candidates. Unlike other candidates in the District, ANC candidates represent only about 2000 residents, including children and other non-voters. Consequently, they must gather the required 25 signatures of registered voters from a much smaller pool. That one month for obtaining signatures is prime vacation time, when school is out and many of our constituents are away. Indeed, many potential ANC candidates are themselves traveling outside the District during this shortened petition period. As the Board is undoubtedly aware, it is often difficult to find committed candidates willing to take on this volunteer, often thankless job. This onerous petition schedule compounds the obstacles that will discourage people from running for ANC positions.

No statute or regulation requires the Board to give ANC candidates a shorter petition period than other candidates. DC Code Section 1-309.05(b)(2) does specify the latest date for making petitions available for ANC candidates — 120 days before the general election, which is July 9 this year. There is no prohibition, however, on making petitions available earlier. Thus, it is within the Board's discretion to set an earlier date, and the Board may permit ANC candidates to pick up petitions beginning on June 15, like all other candidates. That would put ANC candidates on a par with other District offices.

We have confirmed this interpretation of the statute with the Board's General Counsel, Kenneth McGhie, who suggested that we ask the Board to revise the petition period for ANCs to coincide with the period for all other candidates. No one will be disadvantaged by this change since it simply expands the announced petition period. It will give prospective commissioners a better opportunity to satisfy the petition requirements and will facilitate greater participation by

potential candidates. We would like to make a presentation to the Board at its June 6, 2018 meeting and will urge the Board to act promptly to open the ANC petition period on June 15.

Sincerely,

Randy Speck, ANC 3/4G03
Christopher Fromboluti, ANC 3/4G07
Jerry Malitz, ANC 3/4G05
Michael Halpren, ANC 4C04
Justin Lini, ANC 7D07
Angelica Castañon, ANC 1A06
Amy Johnson ANC 2B01
Chuck Elkins, ANC 3D01
Gail Fast, ANC 6D01
Amy Hemingway, ANC 4D06
Amber Gove, ANC 6A04
Dan Bradfield, ANC 3/4G06
Gale Black, ANC 4A08
Ellen Goldstein, ANC 2D02
Gail Brevard, ANC 5C01
Anthony Muhammad, ANC 8E02
David Bender, ANC 2D01
Jonathan Bender, ANC 3E03
Anita Norman, ANC 1B01
Edward Garnett, ANC 5E01
Denise Krepp, ANC 6B10
Alma Gates, ANC 3D05
Jonathan McHugh, ANC 3E05
Angela Bradbery, ANC 3C06
Taylor Berlin, ANC 3D07
Theresa Harrison, ANC 2C02

James Harnett ANC 2A08
Jessica Smith ANC 1B07
Hannah Powell ANC 5E03
Jonah Goodman ANC 4C10
Bennett Hilley ANC 4C06
Bernice Blacknell ANC 5D04
Andre R. Carley ANC 4B01
Taylor Berlin ANC 3D07
Patricia Williams ANC 5E02
Christine Healey ANC 6C01
Greg Ehrhardt ANC 3E01
Angela Bradbery ANC 3C06
Lisa Palmer ANC 2E05
Pat Jakopchek, ANC 3F07
David Dickinson, ANC 3F01
Shirley Adelstein, ANC 3F02
Naomi Rutenberg, ANC 3F03
Andrea Molod, ANC 3F05
William Sittig, ANC 3F06

cc: Donna Maria Lewis, Board Member
Mike Gill, Board Member
Kenneth J. McGhie, General Counsel