

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

Craig Brownstein,	)	
Challenger,	)	Administrative
	)	Order #26-051
	)	
v.	)	Re: Challenge to Nominating
	)	Petition Submitted for
	)	ANC SMD 1B02
Ilsy Bu-Orellana,	)	
Candidate.	)	

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER

Introduction

This matter came before the District of Columbia Board of Elections (“the Board”) on August 31, 2026. It is a challenge to the nominating petition submitted by Ilsy Bu-Orellana (“the Candidate”) to run for the office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in Single Member District (“SMD”) 1B02 in the November 3, 2026 General Election (“the General Election”). The challenge was filed by Craig Brownstein (“the Challenger”) pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.08(o)(1). Board members Karyn Greenfield and Michael Wakefield presided over the hearing. The Candidate appeared at the hearing and the Board’s General Counsel, Terri Stroud, was also present.

Background

On August 5, 2026, the Candidate submitted a nominating petition to appear on the ballot as a candidate in the General Election contest for the office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in SMD 1B02. The Candidate needed to submit at least twenty-five valid voter signatures to obtain ballot access for this office. The petition contained forty signatures. Pursuant

to Title 3, District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (D.C.M.R.) § 1603.1, the Board of Elections' Registrar of Voters accepted forty signatures for review.

On August 8, 2026, the Board posted the petition for public inspection for ten days, as required by law. On August 13, 2026, the Challenger, a registered voter in the District of Columbia, challenged the petition.

The Challenger filed challenges to a total of twenty-six petition signatures. Specifically, the signatures were challenged pursuant to Title 3 D.C.M.R. § 1607.1 of the Board's regulations on the following grounds: the signer is not registered to vote at the address listed on the petition at the time it was signed; the petition does not include the address of the signer; and, at the time the petition was signed, the signer is not a registered voter in the SMD from which the candidate seeks nomination.

Assistant Registrar's Determination

The Assistant Registrar's review of the challenge indicated that twenty-five of the twenty-six signature challenges were valid. The Registrar found that ten challenges are valid because the signer is not a registered voter; one challenge was valid because the signer was not an active voter; seven challenges are valid because the signer was not registered to vote at the address listed on the petition at the time the petition was signed; one challenge is valid because no address information for the signer was entered on the petition; two challenges are valid because the signature and printed information are too illegible to determine the identity of the signer; and four challenges are valid because the signer is not a registered voter in the SMD from which the candidate seeks nomination. Accordingly, the Assistant Registrar preliminarily determined the Petition contained only fifteen valid signatures, which is ten signatures below the number required for ballot access.

August 28, 2026 Pre-Hearing Conference

Pursuant to title 3 D.C.M.R. § 415.1, the Office of the General Counsel (“OGC”) convened a prehearing conference with the parties on August 28, 2026. At the prehearing conference, the OGC attorney assigned to the matter went over the Assistant Registrar’s findings with the parties. She asked the Candidate about her response to the findings and what challenges the Candidate believed had been or might be cured. The Candidate did not contest the Assistant Registrar’s findings or offer any basis upon which a signature invalidity finding might be overturned. Instead, the Candidate stated that she wished to complete the administrative process, including a Board hearing, for review of challenges. The Challenger noted that the requirements for ballot access had not been satisfied by the Candidate.

Following the prehearing conference, the parties were duly notified that the Board would hear the matter on August 31, 2026.

August 31, 2026 Board Hearing

A representative of the Registrar’s Office was present at the hearing and presented the findings of the Assistant Registrar. The OGC attorney assigned to the matter explained that, while some of the invalid signatures might have been cured by the Candidate (for example, the Candidate might have been able to obtain address updates from voters to cure the seven signatures rejected for address mismatch reasons), there were not enough curable invalid signatures to bring the petition up to the twenty-five signature requirement.

The Assistant Registrar’s findings were not contested and, as before, the Candidate did not deny that she lacked the twenty-five valid signatures needed for ballot access. Rather, she objected to the process of allowing challenges to candidates for a variety of reasons, including that there were not enough candidates running to fill all the ANC vacancies at issue.

The General Counsel then made her recommendation that the Candidate be denied ballot access. Member Greenfield made a motion consistent with that recommendation. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Discussion

It is undisputed that the petition in this matter does not have the requisite twenty-five valid signatures. Instead of addressing the numerical sufficiency of her Petition, the Candidate questioned the process of allowing challenges. That challenge process, however, is first, not relevant to the Board's ballot access determination which concerns only whether a candidate's petition has a sufficient number of valid signatures and, second, statutorily mandated. Indeed, it is an entitlement granted to D.C. registered voters by law to challenge a candidate's access to the ballot; provided that the challenge is properly and timely filed in accordance with the Board's regulations. Under these circumstances, we cannot grant ballot access to the Candidate with an indisputably insufficient number of valid signatures on her petition.

Conclusion

As a result of this challenge, the Board finds that the Petition contains fifteen valid signatures – ten signatures below the number required for ballot access. It is hereby:

ORDERED that challenge to the nominating petition of Ilsy Bu-Orellana for the office of ANC SMD 1B02 in the General Election is hereby **UPHELD**.

The Board issues this written order today, which memorializes its oral ruling rendered on August 31, 2026.

Date: September 3, 2026



Karyn Greenfield
Presiding Board Member