

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

In the Matter of	)	
Clarence Douglas	)	Administrative
	)	Order #26-007

**MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER**

**Introduction**

This matter came before the District of Columbia Board of Elections (“the Board”) on March 4, 2026. It concerns a recommendation by the Board’s General Counsel that the Board take civil enforcement action against Clarence Douglas based on stipulated facts concerning his having erroneously voting a mail ballot issued to another voter. Chairman Gary Thompson and Board member Karyn Greenfield presided over the hearing. The Board’s General Counsel, Terri Stroud, was also present.

**Background**

As a result of a Voter Participation Project report issued by the Election Registration Information Center (“ERIC report”), the Board’s Office of General Counsel (“OGC”) became aware of evidence that ballots were cast in the same voter’s name in the D.C. 2024 General Election (“GE”) and in the 2024 GE in Maryland.<sup>1</sup> Based on the ERIC report findings, Board staff checked the ballot return envelope for the ballot that had been cast by mail in D.C. and saw that the signature on that envelope was reasonably decipherable as a name that was different from the printed name just below the signature of the voter to whom the ballot was issued.

---

<sup>1</sup> Such evidence of voting twice presented the prospect of, *inter alia*, violations of 52 (“Voting and Elections”) U.S. Code § 10307 (“Prohibited Acts”).

In response to this information, OGC launched an investigation into the 2024 D.C. GE ballot that was cast by someone other than the voter to whom it was issued. OGC was able to ascertain that the signature on the ballot return envelope was for Clarence Douglas and sent him notice of a pre-hearing conference in the matter. While Mr. Douglas was unable to access the pre-hearing conference, he reached out to OGC immediately following it by telephone. Mr. Douglas was, at that time, offered an opportunity to participate in another pre-hearing conference but he expressed a desire to simply move forward and resolve this matter promptly.

During the post-pre-hearing conference telephone call between OGC and Mr. Douglas, the OGC assigned attorney explained the events that prompted the investigation of Mr. Douglas and that a scan of a 2024 D.C. GE ballot return envelope showed Mr. Douglas' legible signature on the signature line for a mail ballot that was issued to another voter. Mr. Douglas did not dispute or deny this evidence against him. Instead, he provided an explanation as to why he very likely would not have focused on the fact that a ballot sent to his residence had a voter name under the signature line that was not his name.

Following this telephone discussion, Mr. Douglas was sent a stipulated agreement in the matter that included as an exhibit the scan of the 2024 GE ballot return envelope that was issued to another voter but had Mr. Douglas' signature. Mr. Douglas subsequently executed that agreement. By that stipulation, Mr. Douglas acknowledged that the signature on the signature line appearing above another person's pre-printed name on the D.C. 2024 GE ballot return envelope was his signature. Mr. Douglas agreed in the stipulation that he erroneously voted a D.C. 2024 GE ballot that was issued to another voter.<sup>2</sup> He admitted that he failed to exercise care and caution

---

<sup>2</sup> The General Counsel's investigation did not reveal any evidence that a D.C. 2024 General Election ballot that had been issued to Mr. Douglas had been voted. Accordingly, there is no evidence here of double voting in D.C.

in completing and returning the ballot to the Board. Mr. Douglas further stipulated that he did not intend to vote a ballot issued to another voter.

Mr. Douglas was duly notified that his case would be presented to the Board on March 4, 2026. At the respective March 4 Board hearing, the General Counsel requested that the OGC assigned attorney place on the record the facts of the case. The OGC attorney reiterated the facts described above and that, without delving into Mr. Douglas' personal situation, Mr. Douglas had credibly explained why he would have been distracted at the time he received in the mail the ballot at issue and why he cast that ballot without realizing that it was issued to another voter. The attorney asked that the stipulation and supporting documents be accepted into the record and the Board Chair granted that request. While Mr. Douglas did not appear at the hearing, the assigned attorney explained that the Board should not view that suggesting that Mr. Douglas did not take the matter seriously.

With this presentation of case and the evidence, the General Counsel made a recommendation that a civil fine of \$100.00 be imposed on Mr. Douglas for unintentionally voting another's ballot.

After hearing from the General Counsel and her staff, the Board Chair made a motion that a civil fine of \$100.00 be imposed on Mr. Douglas for his attempting to vote another person's ballot. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

### **Discussion**

The election laws provide that it is a crime to "make any false representations as to the person's qualifications for . . . voting" or to fraudulently cast a ballot.<sup>3</sup> The Board can, upon the

---

<sup>3</sup> See D.C. Code § 1-1001.14(a) and § 1-1001.14(a-1)(1)(D), respectively. The penalty for violating either of those provisions is a fine up to a \$10,000 and/or a term of incarceration of up to 5 years. In addition, D.C. Official Code §

General Counsel’s recommendation, initiate enforcement with respect to criminal matters by referral to the U.S. Department of Justice and/or to the Attorney General for the District of Columbia.<sup>4</sup> We may also impose civil fines of up to \$2,000 for each election law violation upon the recommendation of the General Counsel.<sup>5</sup> Our task, therefore, is to determine whether there is sufficient proof of an attempt to vote falsely or fraudulently in violation of the election laws and, if so, to determine the appropriate enforcement action.

In this matter, the facts are undisputed. Mr. Douglas has admitted that, contrary to the qualifications for voting specified in the instructions provided with the ballot, he signed a name on the ballot return envelope signature line that was not the “[s]ignature of voter to whom this ballot was sent[.]” He has acknowledged facts showing that he cast a ballot issued to another party.

That said, Mr. Douglas has stipulated that his conduct was erroneous and that he did not intend to vote a ballot that was issued to another voter. Mr. Douglas’s claim is supported by the fact that he did not sign the name of the intended recipient of the ballot or otherwise attempt to forge the name of the voter. Instead, the ballot return envelope evidence shows a hand-written signature that is reasonably decipherable as a name that differs considerably from the type-printed voter name appearing immediately below it, a fact which reasonably suggests Mr. Douglas attempted to vote another’s ballot by mistake. Because Mr. Douglas did not vote in his own name in the D.C. 2024 GE, Mr. Douglas’ actions did not result in his casting more than one ballot. Thus, there is no evidence of anything nefarious here. Rather, the evidence is that, because Mr. Douglas

---

22-2405(b) criminalizes willfully making false statements to D.C. government entities. The penalty for that violation is a fine of up to \$1,000 and imprisonment of not more than 180 days, or both.

<sup>4</sup> See D.C. Code § 1–1001.18(a)-(b). Civil penalties for voter fraud may be imposed in addition to criminal ones. See D.C. Code § 1–1001.14 (c) (“The provisions of this section shall be supplemental to, and not in derogation of, any penalties under other laws of the District of Columbia.”).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* (authorizing such civil penalty for a violation of “any provision” of the election laws). See also D.C. Code § 1–1001.05(a)(16) (authorizing the Board to “[p]erform such other duties as are imposed upon it by this subchapter”).

did not exercise care and caution in voting the ballot, he unintentionally completed and returned to the Board another voter's ballot.

Based on the record before us, we decline to find that Mr. Douglas had the level of intent required for a criminal conviction. That said, the General Counsel has recommended that a civil penalty be imposed. We concur that Mr. Douglas's conduct should have consequences. Under the circumstances, we believe that a fine of \$100.00 is appropriate.

**Conclusion**

For the reasons indicated above, it is hereby:

**ORDERED** that the recommendation of the General Counsel is **ACCEPTED**, and that Mr. Douglas is directed to pay a civil fine of \$100 by no later than April 30, 2026.<sup>6</sup>

Date: March 5, 2026



---

Gary Thompson  
Chairman  
Board of Elections

---

<sup>6</sup> Payment must be made by check or money order made out to the "D.C. Treasurer." It may be mailed to the attention of the General Counsel at the Board's offices (1015 Half Street, Suite 750, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003) or hand delivered at that address.