

September 1, 2016

Josephine Bahnke, Director, Division of Elections
PO Box 110017
Juneau, AK 99811
josie.bahnke@alaska.gov

Subject: HD 40 State House election

Dear Director Bahnke,

We understand from media reports that the Chairman of the Republican Party has requested that the Division of Elections disregard the August Democratic primary results and conduct a new election in November. A review of the facts indicates a costly, wholesale restructuring of the election is unwarranted. Every eligible voter was able to exercise their right to vote, and only registered voters were permitted to vote. Evidence and testimony also indicates that eligible voters were not permitted to vote for the same person more than once. Ultimately, there is no evidence to suggest that the outcome of any race was affected by any of the issues that occurred on the day of the Primary Election.

- It has been reported that voters in Shungnak were given both the closed Republican ballot and the open ADL ballot. While this is a breach of election protocol, there is no evidence that this impacted the outcome. The Democratic primary results from Shungnak show candidate Dean Westlake received 48 votes while Ben Nageak received two votes. This wide margin in Shungnak is consistent with the results of the 2014 Democratic Primary Election. In 2014, when Westlake ran against Nageak for the first time, he won 46 of the Shungnak votes compared to Nageak's 6.
- Speculative claims about the number of voters who would have selected the Republican ballot are debunked by simple statistical analysis. Voting records show there are 17 registered Republicans in Shungnak. We also see that in the 2014 primary, an election that had much higher Republican voter turnout than the 2016 primary, 11 people voted in the Shungnak Republican primary. These statistics debunk the supposition that there could have been as many as "25" votes for Westlake in Shungnak votes that should have been thrown out. Further, Nageak's heavy Republican backing would suggest that he would have been more likely to be disadvantaged had Republicans not been permitted to vote in the Democratic primary.

We are all frustrated by how aspects of this election were handled. But there is no need to further escalate the consequences of these errors by overreacting. The people of District 40 have spoken and we must respect that. If Mr. Babcock succeeds in undermining their voice, that would be the real failure of this election.

Thank you for considering this information.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Casey S". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C" and a stylized "S".

Casey Steinau, Chair
Alaska Democratic Party