



STATE OF MICHIGAN
BUREAU OF ELECTIONS
LANSING

June 30, 2014

Ms. Jacqueline Beaudry, Clerk
City of Ann Arbor
301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor MI 48107-8647

Dear Clerk Beaudry:

This letter serves to outline our discussions from earlier today regarding the tabulation of absent voter ballots for Ann Arbor's Ward 3 City Council candidates in the August 5, 2014 primary. The initial ballots you received from Washtenaw County omitted one candidate; upon discovery of the error, the county provided corrected replacement ballots, which are being re-issued today to the approximately 400 absent voters that had received the original ballot.

Regarding the impact of votes for Ward 3 City Council candidates when an absent voter returns only the original (incorrect) ballot and does not return the replacement ballot – those votes are valid and shall be counted. Voters who cast votes in Ward 3 and only return the original ballot cannot have their votes voided due to the ballot printing error. Each of the voters is being given an opportunity to cast a replacement ballot and every attempt should be made to encourage these voters to return the replacement ballot. However, there may be voters who would not change their vote in Ward 3 or will be out of town and unable to return the replacement ballot by Election Day. Neither situation can result in the disenfranchisement of these voters.

Regarding the Bureau of Elections' statement issued last Friday afternoon (June 27), indicating that votes would not be counted for any Ward 3 City Council candidate if a voter returned only the original (incorrect) ballot – this initial statement was based on a prior incident where replacement ballots were issued. Upon further review, the facts behind this prior case and the situation that has occurred with the primary ballots for Ann Arbor's Ward 3 ballot are distinguishable; the prior direction cannot be applied to this situation.

Please do not hesitate to contact this office if you have questions or need further clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Thomas".

Christopher M. Thomas
Director of Elections

c: Lawrence Kestenbaum, Washtenaw County Clerk
Ed Golembiewski, Washtenaw County Elections Director