

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA**

EQUAL GROUND EDUCATION FUND, INC.,
et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

Case No. 2026-CA-000914

CORD BYRD, in his official capacity as
Florida Secretary of State, *et al.*,

Defendants.

**DEFENDANT SECRETARY OF STATE'S NOTICE OF FILING SUPPELEMENTAL EX-
HIBIT IN SUPPORT OF THE SECRETARY'S RESPONSE IN OPPOSITION TO
PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR TEMPORARY INJUNCTION**

The Florida Secretary of State gives notice of filing Supplemental Exhibit 14, attached hereto, to the Secretary's Response in Opposition to Plaintiffs' Motion for Temporary Injunction.

Exhibit 14	Supplemental Declaration of Maria Matthews, dated May 15, 2026
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Dated: May 15, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Mohammad O. Jazil
Mohammad O. Jazil (FBN 72556)
HOLTZMAN VOGEL BARAN
TORCHINSKY & JOSEFIK PLLC
119 South Monroe Street, Suite 500
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 270-5938
mjazil@holtzmanvogel.com

*Counsel for Florida Secretary of State in his
official capacity*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on May 15, 2026, a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been furnished to all counsel of record by electronic mail via the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal:

Frederick S. Wermuth
Quinn B. Ritter
KING, BLACKWELL, ZEHNDER & WERMUTH, P.A.
P.O. Box 1631
Orlando, FL 32802
(407) 422-2472
fweremuth@kbzwlaw.com
qritter@kbzwlaw.com

Abha Khanna
ELIAS LAW GROUP LLP
1700 Seventh Avenue, Suite 2100
Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 656-0177
akhanna@elias.law

Christina Ford
Harleen K. Gambhir
Julie Zuckerbrod
ELIAS LAW GROUP LLP
250 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 968-4490
cford@elias.law
hgambhir@elias.law
jzuckerbrod@elias.law

Counsel for Plaintiffs

Daniel E. Nordby
Tara R. Price
Kassandra S. Reardon
Margaret A. McCormick
SHUTTS & BOWEN LLP
215 South Monroe Street, Suite 804
Tallahassee, FL 32301
dnordby@shutts.com
tprice@shutts.com
kreardon@shutts.com
mmccormick@shutts.com

Counsel for Florida Senate

Andy Bardos
GRAYROBINSON, P.A.
301 South Bronough Street, Suite 600
Tallahassee, FL 32302
andy.bardos@gray-robinson.com

Counsel for Florida House of Representatives

/s/ Mohammad O. Jazil
Mohammad O. Jazil

EXHIBIT 14

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SUPPLEMENTAL DECLARATION OF MARIA MATTHEWS

I, Maria Matthews, consistent with section 92.525, Florida Statutes (2026), hereby state:

1. I am over 18 years of age, am competent to testify, and declare the following facts based on my own personal knowledge.

2. This Declaration supplements my previous Declaration dated May 12, 2026, to provide more detail as to why May 25, 2026, is the Department's "drop-dead" date to have congressional districts in place for the 2026 election cycle.

3. As Director of the Division of Elections of the Department of State, I am responsible for overseeing candidate qualifying with the Division of Elections pursuant to sections 99.061, Florida Statutes.

4. While the official qualifying period in Florida for congressional candidates is set to begin at noon on Monday, **June 8, 2026**, and to close at noon on Friday, **June 12, 2026**, the Division will begin accepting qualifying items on **May 25, 2026** (even though that Monday is the Memorial Day Holiday). § 99.061(9), Fla. Stat. (2026). In addition to congressional candidates, candidates for the Florida House of Representatives, half of the Florida Senate, Governor, Attorney

General, Chief Financial Officer, Commissioner of Agriculture, and various multidistrict offices will also be qualifying during the same period.

5. In 2022, the redistricting maps and consequently, district office numbers, were in flux. This caused candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives and the Florida House and Senate to constantly redesignate their district office number or race as they saw opposing candidates jumping in and out of districts and between offices changing the competition. The work involved in redesignating candidates was in addition to the Division receiving, processing, and reviewing multiple times, qualifying items from over 787 candidates who sought to qualify during that qualifying period and contacting those candidates where missing or incomplete items were discovered (which is required by section 99.061(7)(b)). During all of that, the Division failed to catch that two congressional candidates had filed oaths for state office instead of oaths for the federal offices they sought. Litigation ensued. *See Judge v. Byrd*, No.: 2022 CA 001094 (Fla. 2d Jud. Cir.); *Moore v. Byrd*, No.: 2022 CA 001097 (Fla. 2d Jud. Cir.).

6. The Division expects to again receive, process, and review multiple times, qualifying items from hundreds of candidates and contact those candidates where missing or incomplete items are discovered. Five hundred seventy-nine (579) candidates for federal office, state House and Senate, and Governor and Cabinet have already indicated they intend to qualify in the upcoming June period and the 194 candidates for U.S. House have indicated a district number. You can find the list on the Division's Candidate Listing for the 2026 Election available at: <https://dos.elections.myflorida.com/candidates/CanList.asp>.

7. HB 991 also created additional qualifying criteria for candidates which necessitated emergency rulemaking to incorporate those requirements into the qualifying forms. *See* Ch. 2026-26, Laws of Fla.; 1SER26-02, Fla. Admin. Code; available at: <https://dos.fl.gov/elections/laws->

rules/rules/. Specifically, congressional candidates now have to also check multiple boxes to swear or affirm their dual citizenship and intention to trade stocks and past stock trading. Therefore, candidates are facing new substantive requirements (that if incorrect could result in disqualification *see* § 11, Ch. 2026-26, Laws of Fla.) and forms for the first time. And, the Division is consequently receiving more inquiries and spending more time communicating with candidates and reviewing qualifying items for completeness.

8. The Division will receive qualifying items from these candidates during the pre-qualifying period that begins on May 25, 2026—and, frankly, that extra time is necessary considering the volume of work required even if the districts didn’t fluctuate. The deadline by which my office needs to have a definitive answer on the maps being used is therefore Monday, **May 25, 2026**. This date also provides the 67 Supervisors of Elections time to perform their tasks, including obtaining approval from their respective county commissions for any precinct changes occasioned by redistricting.

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have read the foregoing declaration and that the facts stated in it are true.

Executed this 15th day of May, 2026.

/s/ Maria Matthews
Maria Matthews
Director of the Division of Elections, Florida
Department of State