

EXHIBIT 7

**DECLARATION OF MARCUS BASS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE NORTH CAROLINA BLACK ALLIANCE**

I, Marcus Bass, hereby declare as follows:

1. I am a United States citizen and over the age of eighteen.
2. I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth in this declaration, except for those matters identified as based on information and belief, and if called upon to do so, could and would competently testify thereto.
3. I was born and raised in Sampson County, North Carolina. I am a current resident of Raleigh, North Carolina in Wake County where I have lived since 2018. I am a registered voter at my current address.
4. I earned my bachelor's degree in business education with a concentration in marketing from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T) in 2010.
5. Since 2018 I have served as the Deputy Director of the North Carolina Black Alliance ("NC Black Alliance"), a 501(c)3 organization working to enhance the well-being and advancement of Black communities through systemic policy change, economic empowerment and youth and leadership development.
6. As Deputy Director of NC Black Alliance, my responsibilities include working with the Executive Director and Board to set goals and objectives for the organization's alignment with our mission. In addition, I support the staff in the development of programs and fundraising for the organization.
7. I am authorized to speak for the NC Black Alliance in this matter.
8. The mission of the NC Black Alliance is to work toward state level systemic change by strengthening the network of elected officials representing communities of color throughout the

state and collaborating with progressive, grassroots networks on intersecting issues. These issues range from voting rights, gerrymandering, criminal justice reform, health and wellness, economic development to education.

9. NC Black Alliance is an intergovernmental network of African American legislators, county commissioners, school board members, and municipal elected officials united by a commitment to ambitiously address broad issues of inequality and fairness.

10. NC Black Alliance serves and organizes voters across the state, including Congressional District 1 (“CD1”). We serve several of the counties that were previously within CD1 – Greene, Lenoir, Wayne, and Wilson Counties. However, those counties were recently shoved into Congressional District 3 (“CD3”) by our state legislature.

11. NC Black Alliance has focused on CD1 because the district holds unique qualities: it serves as a pipeline of Black leadership and Black political power. Because of the rich history of CD1 and the diversity that exists in that part of the state, NC Black Alliance has spent a considerable amount of time focusing on our work in this district. The intentional attacks by state legislators that hinders the ability of Black voters to have elected officials of their choosing.

12. NC Black Alliance has deep ties and connections with local organizations and communities throughout CD1 including partnerships with the only historically black university in CD1, Elizabeth City State University, as well as the with the Eastern North Carolina Civic Group, one of the oldest civic engagement organizations in eastern North Carolina supporting historically underserved Black communities that were struggling to find ways to acquire economic and political power.

13. NC Black Alliance offers a range of programs aimed at encouraging civic engagement and increasing political effectiveness and personal responsibility among constituents.

Programs include Code Red Redistricting, Voter Safety + Protection, College Students Vote, and our Black Attorney Network.

14. NC Black Alliance launched its Code Red Redistricting campaign in 2021. It is an educational program offering training and resources on redistricting to help our community better understand and monitor the redistricting process and become more effective advocates for fair maps. Redistricting typically impacts Black voters the most, and they typically live in rural and eastern parts of our state. NC Black Alliance helps educate voters around redistricting, provide pop-up series across the state, and invite those participants to join with other advocacy groups that are working for a fairer redistricting process and maps.

15. NC Black Alliance has also been a vocal advocate for maps that represent and give voice to Black voters and against legislative policies that negatively impact Black communities and political power.

16. NC Black Alliance co-drafted Senate Bill 642 (filed April 5, 2023), titled “Independent Redistricting Commission” which is described as “an act to amend the North Carolina Constitution to provide for an independent redistricting process, to establish the North Carolina citizen’s redistricting commission, and to make conforming changes to the general statutes.”

17. On October 25, 2023, NC Black Alliance submitted written public comments to our state’s legislative leaders speaking against the 2023 maps that took representation from seven-Republican districts and seven-Democrat districts to eleven-Republican and just three-Democrat districts. In the comments, the organization recognized and stated, “...Black voters are deeply limited in moving transformative political change when the collective power of their votes are diluted... One can see how this gerrymandering not only works to destroy the Black vote, but also

raptures alliance and Black power building between Black communities all for the sake of political gain.”

18. On October 17, 2025, almost two years after submitting the public comments in 2023, NC Black Alliance submitted written comments once again against the legislature’s direct gerrymandering attack on Black voters, this time specifically in CD1. As was stated in our submitted comment, “making the decision to redraw this map will create a disproportionate impact on Black voters, significantly reducing their ability to elect representatives of their choice, which will effectively weaken their voice on issues that directly impact them most..”.

19. If this redistricting measure is not overturned, it will adversely affect our ability to organize around issues unique to the Black Belt and Black rural voters. These issues include the lack of internet in many rural communities, education deserts, environmental injustices, and economic struggles. NC Black Alliance’s policy work mirrors its programmatic work. The organization makes our legislative agenda based on who we represent and the needs of those individuals and their communities. With the abrupt adjustments to our legislators, NC Black Alliance will be forced to adjust and adapt to the new communities formed by the 2025 map.

20. If this redistricting measure remains in place, it may affect the stability NC Black Alliance because the organization’s education and mobilization programs would have to change drastically. At NC Black Alliance, program and staffing alignment are very intentional. The organization has five specific regions across the state, loosely connected to congressional districts. Over the past few years, we have outlined eastern North Carolina as an expansive territory for educating and empowering Black voters and have spent a lot of time building our base specifically in CD1. With the changing of the districts, our educational print materials, web information, advocates and staff coverage on the ground will all be impacted. Splitting NC Black Alliance’s

resources between two districts (CD1 and CD3) will cause strains on the organization's staffing and funding. CD1 and CD3 are two of the largest geographical districts in the state. A major shift in the amount of resources needed to cover educational measures in those areas is anticipated.

21. Without representation in Congress, advocacy around various policies necessary for the advancement of Black communities in CD1 may be difficult. There is no longer a guarantee that the priorities of Black voters will be lifted to a federal level by a representative elected by the people, so ultimately it dilutes Black CD1 voters' ability to have their concerns heard.

If this redistricting map is not overturned, the ability for Black voters in CD1 to elect an official who adequately represents their communities and who can relate to and understand their concerns, issues, and needs will be greatly diminished. Due to the foregoing reasons discussed above, the NC Black Alliance joins this Amicus Brief in support of the 2025 maps being overturned.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of North Carolina that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on November 13, 2025.

Marcus Bass

Marcus Bass (Nov 14, 2025 18:22:08 EST)

Marcus Bass, Deputy Director NCBA