

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY
CLERK

JAMES N. HOGAN
COUNTY CLERK

COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY



HEATHER L. POOL
JUDICIAL DEPUTY
COUNTY CLERK

MICHAEL P. SAUTER
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The County of Gloucester complies with all state and federal rules and regulations against discrimination in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, and activities. In addition, County encourages participation of people with disabilities in its programs and activities and offers special services to all residents 60 years of age and older. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the County's ADA Coordinator at 856) 384-6842 / New Jersey Relay Service 711.



March 31, 2025

Rodney A. Dean, Sr.
43 B South School St.
Gibbstown, NJ 08027

Dear Mr. Dean,

Rodney A. Dean of 43 B South School Street, Gloucester County NJ 08027 filed a compliant and complete "Nomination By Petition for Primary Election" for the Democrat Primary election to be held on June 10, 2025.

The petition for nomination was filed on January 8, 2025.

At the time of the filing and under the then applicable election law, there was a requirement that it be signed by 100 registered voters of Gloucester County. N.J.S.A. 19:23-8.

A review and examination by the Clerk's Office found that there were 147 signatures, of which 50 were determined to be invalid and 14 could not be determined as to their validity for various reasons (See Clerk's Review attached). Thus, the reviewed petition contained 97 valid signatures.

At that time, the Petition for nomination was deficient, there were 14 signatures that could not be identified as registered voters and were possibly subject to "cure".

Any petitioner for nomination has the statutory right to "cure" deficiencies in the Petition other than the addition of signatures. (N.J.S.A. 19:23-19 Defective Petition, Notice to Candidates; see Matter of Cowan, 265 N.J. 176 (App. Div., 1993) allowing cure of anything but adding Signatures.)

The election laws of New Jersey and after the filing of this petition were amended with a purported assertion of a retroactive application to require a greater number of signatures on the nominating petition, in this instance 172 signers.

On March 25, 2025, the Gloucester County Democratic Committee filed a "formal objection to the acceptance of the nominating petition for Rodney Dean.

April 2, 2025, is the deadline for a final determination by the County Clerk for petition such Challenges. The provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:13-11 provides that the determination of validity of objections by the County Clerk proceeds in a summary manner.

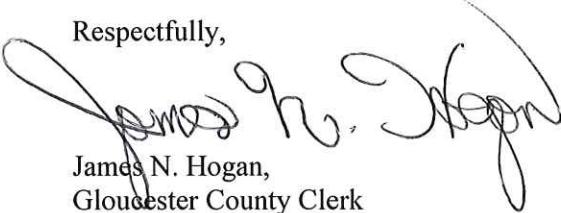
This letter shall serve as Notice to Petitioner Rodney A. Dean that he is being afforded the opportunity to cure the deficiencies in the Petition as set forth above. These actions must be accomplished no later than the close of business on April 2, 2025.

This opportunity is being afforded to Petitioner with the caveat that legal issues may still preclude the nomination on the signature requirements as amended under the law. This shall not constitute legal advice but is provide as a caveat and caution to Petitioner.

First, whether a newly enacted law should receive retroactive application is a "pure legal question of statutory interpretation" based on legislative intent. State v. J.V., 242 N.J. 432, 442 (2020); Johnson v. Roselle EZ Quick LLC, 226 N.J. 370, 386 (2016). The Office of the County Clerk neither expresses an opinion nor adopts a position.

More critically, since there is a legal issue regarding the change to the law in the number of signatures required which affects the right of Petitioner, we note that the Courts have held that in the application of a statute which as here is being retroactively applied and conditioned only where the Legislature intended to do so and as long as its "retroactive application of the statute will [not] result in either an unconstitutional interference with vested rights or a manifest injustice." State v. J.V., 242 N.J. 432, 444 (2020); James v. New Jersey Manufacturers Ins. Co., 216 N.J. 552, 583 (2014) Again, the Office of the County Clerk neither expresses an opinion nor adopts a position.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James N. Hogan".

James N. Hogan,
Gloucester County Clerk

CC: Chad Bruner, Chairman
Gloucester County Democrat Executive Committee

Adam Wingate, Chairman
Republican Party County Chair

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June 19, 2025

Rodney A. Dean, Sr.
43 B South School St.
Gibbstown, NJ 08027

Dear Mr. Dean,

**DECISION ON CHALLENGE TO THE PETITION OF
NOMINATION OF RODNEY A. DEAN, SR. FOR THE
NOVEMBER 4, 2025 GENERAL ELECTION**

RODNEY A. DEAN, SR., a registered voter of Gloucester County residing at 43 B S School St., Apt. B, Gibbstown NJ 08027-1131.

The petition for nomination was filed with this office on April 29, 2025.

The candidate on the filed petition offered that there were 313 valid signatures contained therein.

The County Clerk's staff after review determined there were but 308 signatures on the petition.

An objection to the petition was filed on June 12, 2025, by Justin Kolman, Executive Director of the Gloucester County Democratic Committee claiming there were an insufficient number of legally qualified voters who signed the petition as required by NJSA 19:23-8.

Petitioner was notified, by a letter of June 13, 2025, that an objection to the petition was filed.

Thereafter, pursuant to the provisions of NJSA 19:13-11 the County Clerk's staff conducted a summary review of the petition and the findings are contained herein.

Pursuant to statute, the petition requires 250 signatures for countywide petitions.

The County Clerk's staff determined there are but 308 signatures on the petition.

The filed objection to the petition challenged 228 signatures.

County Clerk's staff reviewed the petition and objection and determined one hundred forty-four (144) signatures were not valid for various reasons, which are set forth herein.

- Thirty-six (36) signatures were not registered voters.
- Five (5) voters were deleted in Statewide Voter Registration System.
- Six (6) did not sign the petition.
- Twenty-one (21) signatures on the Petition do not match the Statewide Voter Registration System.
- One (1) voter is registered in another County.
- Fifty-five (55) names and/or addresses were illegible, which precluded finding the purported voter.
- Twenty (20) names and/or addresses were incomplete which precluded finding the voter.

FINDING AND DETERMINATION

Of the 308 voter's signatures submitted on the petition, 144 are rejected and 164 were found acceptable.

Based on these findings and conclusions of law, the objection filed by Justin Kolman is valid.

Thus, the nomination of RODNEY A. DEAN, SR., as filed for the Gloucester County Board of Commissioners, in the County of Gloucester and State of New Jersey for the 2025 General election is invalid and his name will not appear on the ballot. A copy will be filed for public access and display and provide to the candidate an objector.

The Petitioner may seek review of this decision in the Superior Court of New Jersey:

NJSA 19:13-12 judicial hearing. Any judge of the Superior Court, in the case of candidates to be voted for by the electors of the entire State or of more than one county thereof, and in all other cases a judge of the Superior Court assigned to the county in which any petition of nomination shall be filed, on the application or complaint, duly verified, of any candidate, which application or complaint shall be made on or before the twelfth day after the last day for the filing of petitions, setting forth any invasion or threatened invasion of his rights under the petition of nomination filed with the Secretary of State or with any county clerk, shall hear such application or complaint in a summary way and make such order thereon as will protect and enforce the rights of such candidates, which order or determination shall be filed within three days after the filing of the application or complaint.

Notwithstanding the above provision, in the case of a nomination petition or petitions for electors of candidates for President and Vice President of the United States, which candidates have not been nominated at a convention of a political party as defined by this Title,

any judge of the Superior Court, on the application or complaint, duly verified, of any candidate, which application or complaint shall be made at least 95 days before the general election, setting forth any invasion or threatened invasion of his or her rights under the petition of nomination filed with the Secretary of State, shall hear such application or complaint in a summary way and make such order thereon as will protect and enforce the rights of such candidates, which order or determination shall be filed within three days after the filing of the application or complaint.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James N. Hogan" followed by a handwritten date "1/22".

James N. Hogan,
Gloucester County Clerk

CC: Justin Kolman, Executive Director
Gloucester County Democrat Executive Committee
Chad Bruner, Chairman
Gloucester County Democrat Executive Committee
Adam Wingate, Chairman, Republican Party County Chair
Heather L. Pool, Judicial Deputy County Clerk

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**DECISION OF THE GLOUCESTER COUNTY CLERK REGARDING THE
CHALLENGE TO THE NOMINATING PETITION OF DIANE DORNEY AND
BARBARA S. CAREY FOR MEMBERSHIP ON THE BOROUGH OF NEWFIELD
BOARD OF EDUCATION IN THE COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER, STATE OF NEW
JERSEY FOR THE NOVEMBER 2025 GENERAL ELECTION**

FINDINGS OF FACT and CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

As the Gloucester County Clerk, I find as follows:

For the General Election, school board petitions must be filed with the County Clerk by 4:00 PM on July 28, 2025 (as per N.J.S.A. 19:60-7).

On July 24, 2025 at 2:28 PM, a petition for the nomination of Barbara S. Carey was filed for membership on the Borough of Newfield Board of Education, in the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey for the November 2025 General Election.

On July 28, 2025 at 11:25 AM, a petition for the nomination of Diane Dorney was filed for membership on the Borough of Newfield Board of Education, in the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey for the November 2025 General Election.

On August 1, 2025 at 1:47 PM, the Office of the Gloucester County Clerk was offered an objection to Barbara S. Carey and Diane Dorney's school board petitions. John Nessel filed the formal objection.

Pursuant to the provision of N.J.S.A. 19:13-10, every petition for nomination is presumed valid.

Pursuant to the provision of N.J.S.A. 19:13-10, a challenge to a nominating petition must be made not later than the fourth day after the last day for the filing of petitions.

The last day for filing petitions was July 28, 2025 and thus the last day for filing a challenge was August 1, 2025.

Pursuant to the provision of N.J.S.A. 19:60-7, the Office of the County Clerk must pass upon and rule on such objection in a summary way, file a public copy of the written decision, and do so on or before the tenth day after the last day for filing petitions, which is August 7, 2025.

The objection requests that Barbara S. Carey and Diane Dorney's petitions be deemed invalid on the grounds that the candidates had signature discrepancies and notary issues.

After thorough review and investigation, the following has been determined:

There are two (2) full term office open for the Newfield Board of Education.
There is no conflict regarding the Notary.

Based on these Findings and Conclusions of law, the objection filed by John Nessel is not valid. Thus, the nomination of Barbara S. Carey and Diane Dorney as filed for membership on the Borough of Newfield Board of Education, in the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey for the November 2025 General Election is valid and these names will appear on the ballot. A copy of this determination will be filed for public access and display and will be provided to the candidate/s and objector.



James N. Hogan, County Clerk

Dated: August 7, 2025

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**DECISION OF THE GLOUCESTER COUNTY CLERK REGARDING THE
CHALLENGE TO THE NOMINATING PETITION OF DIANE DORNEY AND
BARBARA S. CAREY FOR MEMBERSHIP ON THE BOROUGH OF NEWFIELD
BOARD OF EDUCATION IN THE COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER, STATE OF NEW
JERSEY FOR THE NOVEMBER 2025 GENERAL ELECTION**

FINDINGS OF FACT and CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

As the Gloucester County Clerk, I find as follows:

For the General Election, school board petitions must be filed with the County Clerk by 4:00 PM on July 28, 2025 (as per N.J.S.A. 19:60-7).

On July 24, 2025 at 2:28 PM, a petition for the nomination of Barbara S. Carey was filed for membership on the Borough of Newfield Board of Education, in the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey for the November 2025 General Election.

On July 28, 2025 at 11:25 AM, a petition for the nomination of Diane Dorney was filed for membership on the Borough of Newfield Board of Education, in the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey for the November 2025 General Election.

On August 1, 2025 at 1:47 PM, the Office of the Gloucester County Clerk was offered an objection to Barbara S. Carey and Diane Dorney's school board petitions. John Nessel filed the formal objection.

Pursuant to the provision of N.J.S.A. 19:13-10, every petition for nomination is presumed valid.

Pursuant to the provision of N.J.S.A. 19:13-10, a challenge to a nominating petition must be made not later than the fourth day after the last day for the filing of petitions.

The last day for filing petitions was July 28, 2025 and thus the last day for filing a challenge was August 1, 2025.

Pursuant to the provision of N.J.S.A. 19:60-7, the Office of the County Clerk must pass upon and rule on such objection in a summary way, file a public copy of the written decision, and do so on or before the tenth day after the last day for filing petitions, which is August 7, 2025.

The objection requests that Barbara S. Carey and Diane Dorney's petitions be deemed invalid on the grounds that the candidates had signature discrepancies and notary issues.

After thorough review and investigation, the following has been determined:

There are two (2) full term office open for the Newfield Board of Education.
There is no conflict regarding the Notary.

Based on these Findings and Conclusions of law, the objection filed by John Nessel is not valid. Thus, the nomination of Barbara S. Carey and Diane Dorney as filed for membership on the Borough of Newfield Board of Education, in the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey for the November 2025 General Election is valid and these names will appear on the ballot. A copy of this determination will be filed for public access and display and will be provided to the candidate/s and objector.



James N. Hogan, County Clerk

Dated: August 7, 2025

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**DECISION OF THE GLOUCESTER COUNTY CLERK REGARDING THE
CHALLENGE TO THE NOMINATING PETITION OF BENJAMIN F. SMITH FOR
MEMBERSHIP ON THE WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION IN
THE COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY FOR THE NOVEMBER
2025 GENERAL ELECTION**

FINDINGS OF FACT and CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

As the Gloucester County Clerk, I find as follows:

For the General Election, school board petitions must be filed with the County Clerk by 4:00 PM on July 28, 2025 (as per N.J.S.A. 19:60-7).

On July 28, 2025 at 12:49 PM, a petition for the nomination of Ben Smith was filed for membership on the Washington Township Board of Education, in the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey for the November 2025 General Election.

On July 30, 2025 at 5:59 PM, the Office of the Gloucester County Clerk was offered an objection to Ben Smith's school board petition. Chris O'Brien filed the formal objection.

Pursuant to the provision of N.J.S.A. 19:13-10, every petition for nomination is presumed valid.

Pursuant to the provision of N.J.S.A. 19:13-10, a challenge to a nominating petition must be made not later than the fourth day after the last day for the filing of petitions.

The last day for filing petitions was July 28, 2025 and thus the last day for filing a challenge was August 1, 2025.

Pursuant to the provision of N.J.S.A. 19:60-7, the Office of the County Clerk must pass upon and rule on such objection in a summary way, file a public copy of the written decision, and do so on or before the tenth day after the last day for filing petitions, which is August 7, 2025.

The objection requests that Ben Smith's petition be deemed invalid on the grounds that the candidate filed a petition containing discrepancies that may indicate it was circulated under false pretense and the petition has no credible notary stamp.

After thorough review and investigation, the following has been determined:

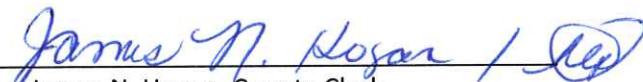
The objector stated the following regarding Section A. NOMINATING STATEMENT, the *"candidate's name was originally listed as Bern and whited out to say Ben creating an assumption that the voters signed in support of Bern Smith not Ben (or the legal name Benjamin)"*.

The objector stated the following regarding Section D. VERIFICATION – ADDRESS OF CIRCULATOR and Section E. CANDIDATE'S ACCEPTANCE/OATH, AFFIRMATION, OR DECLARATION OF ALLEGIANCE, there was *"no credible notary stamp which reflects validity of notary. (Signature of Jennifer Wilkins as of 7/28/25 but no stamp or identification number present)"*.

On August 1, 2025, Judicial Deputy County Clerk Heather Pool interviewed Ben Smith regarding the objections. Candidate Smith stated he originally printed the petition as "Bem" (typo). Prior to circulation, candidate Smith stated he manually corrected the spelling to "Ben". Candidate Smith stated he circulated the petition after the correction was made. Candidate Smith swore all the signatures were those of voters he knows personally or through acquaintances.

On August 1, 2025, the Camden County Clerk's Office confirmed they have documentation regarding Jennifer A. Wilkins as being sworn in as a Notary and has the same expiration date as that specified on the petition. The petition filed in the Gloucester County Clerk's office meets statutory Notary requirements and has a raised seal in both Section D. and Section E.

Based on these Findings and Conclusions of law, the objection filed by Chris O'Brian is not valid. Thus, the nomination of Ben Smith as filed for membership on the Washington Township Board of Education, in the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey for the November 2025 General Election is valid and his name will appear on the ballot. A copy of this determination will be filed for public access and display and will be provided to the candidate and objector.



James N. Hogan, County Clerk

Dated: August 7, 2025