

Statement on Minority Party Representation in Allegheny County BOE

Good morning. My name is Suzanne Filiaggi. I am here today both as a resident and as the sole Republican serving on the Allegheny County Council.

First and foremost, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Board of Elections (BOE) for their ongoing commitment to maintaining election integrity. I firmly believe that this institution plays a crucial role in safeguarding our democracy.

The purpose of my remarks today is to highlight an important issue: minority party representation on the BOE. Based on current circumstances, it appears this representation may be compromised over the next two years due to several potential scenarios. Of these, three would require the appointment of a new minority party member to the BOE. Additionally, I wish to provide notice that the Republican Party intends to submit names for consideration to serve on the BOE.

(For context, the Pennsylvania Election Code stipulates that minor parties, such as the newly formed Labor Party, must continuously meet specific vote thresholds to maintain their official status as a “political party.” If the Labor Party fails to meet these ongoing requirements, its representative would be ineligible to hold a seat on the BOE.)

There are four scenarios to consider, three of which would necessitate appointing a new member to the BOE:

- The Labor Party representative declares themselves a candidate in the 2026 or 2027 election.
- The Labor Party representative changes their registration back to Democrat, their original party affiliation.
- The Labor Party, after the 2026 election, fails to meet the required voter percentage and reverts to a “body,” making it ineligible for BOE representation.
- The Labor Party representative remains on the BOE if there is no change in party affiliation, no candidacy declaration, and the party does not revert to a “body.” However, the likelihood of this scenario is low.

Historically, the goal of the BOE has been to have representation from the major political parties to ensure balanced oversight of the election process.

For 88 years, the BOE in Allegheny County has always had representation of the 2 major parties, Democrats and Republicans. This most recent election has changed this dynamic, even if temporarily. While some may laud this as a funny comeuppance of sorts for the MAGA crowd, it has serious implications as it may cause some of the residents of Allegheny County to question the integrity of our elections process and possibly become

disenfranchised. Not a result that I, an elected member of the Allegheny county legislative body, wish to see.

Given these concerns, I urge the current BOE members and support staff to consider the likely consequences of these changes and to prepare in advance. I encourage an open and transparent dialogue with the Republican Party, which is an established major party in Pennsylvania, to address this issue proactively and avoid unnecessary litigation or voter agitation. It is essential that we act in support of democracy and maintain public trust in our electoral process.

In closing, while the Democratic Party in Allegheny County currently holds significant Power and thus influences outcomes, it is character that shapes institutions. I respectfully ask the BOE to focus on character for the sake of the institution. Thank you for your time.