



NORTH CAROLINA

STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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The Honorable Representative Robert Reives
NC House Minority Leader
300 N. Salisbury Street, Rm. 506
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

January 22, 2026

Dear Leader Reives,

We are writing in response to your Medium blog post, dated Jan. 21, 2026, regarding the recent decision of the State Board of Elections related to the candidacy of Mr. Bobby Knight in Wilson County. We appreciate the opportunity to clarify the legal basis for the Board's action and to ensure you and your colleagues can have continued confidence in North Carolina's election administration.

The State Board's decision was grounded squarely in North Carolina General Statute § 163-82.17. That statute governs the effective date of voter registration changes, including party affiliation, and establishes when such changes are legally recognized for purposes of candidate eligibility. After reviewing the record and applicable law, the Board determined that Mr. Knight's brief registration in party affiliation was accidental and thus not applicable to the statutory prohibition period for candidate filing. Accordingly, the Board concluded that his candidacy is still in compliance with North Carolina law.

While we recognize that many media reports regarding this appeal have characterized the Board's decision as inconsistent with state law, those accounts have not fully explained the statutory framework or the specific application of § 163-82.17 in this case. We offer this clarification to ensure that you and your colleagues have a complete and accurate understanding of the legal rationale supporting the Board's decision and can remain confident in the integrity and consistency of election administration in our state.

The State Board of Elections is committed to following the letter of the law in every matter before it, regardless of political considerations, and to applying statutes uniformly across all counties and candidates.

We also welcome open communication with members of the General Assembly. Should questions or concerns arise in the future, the board and staff would be glad to discuss them directly and provide clarification before misunderstandings take hold and involve public confusion on a social media platform.

Thank you again for your engagement on this issue and for your continued interest in maintaining public trust in North Carolina's elections.

Respectfully,
Francis X. De Luca
Chairman
North Carolina State Board of Elections