

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of a Complaint by Karen Jackson, Bridgeport

File No. 2019-129

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Complainant filed the instant complaint with the Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 9-7b. The Complainant alleged that Respondent Maria Pereira took possession of an absentee ballot improperly. The following are the Commission's findings of fact and conclusions of law:

PARTIES

1. At all times relevant hereto, Respondent Maria Pereira was an elector in the City of Bridgeport.

ALLEGATION

2. Complainant alleged that Respondent Maria Pereira took possession of an absentee ballot improperly.

STATEMENT OF THE LAW

3. General Statutes § 9-140b (d) in chapter 145 provides:

(d) No person shall have in his possession any official absentee ballot or ballot envelope for use at any primary, election or referendum except the applicant to whom it was issued, the Secretary of the State or his or her authorized agents, any official printer of absentee ballot forms and his designated carriers, the United States Postal Service, any other carrier, courier or messenger service recognized and approved by the Secretary of the State, any person authorized by a municipal clerk to receive and process official absentee ballot forms on behalf of the municipal clerk, any authorized primary, election or referendum official or any other person authorized by any provision of the general statutes to possess a ballot or ballot envelope.

4. General Statutes § 9-359 further provides that:

Any (1) person who executes an absentee ballot for the purpose of informing any other person how he votes, or procures any absentee ballot to be prepared for such purpose, (2) municipal clerk or moderator, elector appointed to count any absentee ballot or other person who wilfully attempts to ascertain how any elector marked his absentee ballot or how it was cast, (3) person who unlawfully opens or fills out, except as provided in section 9-140a with respect to a person unable to write,

any elector's absentee ballot signed in blank, (4) person designated under section 9-140a who executes an absentee ballot contrary to the elector's wishes, or (5) person who wilfully violates any provision of chapter 145, shall be guilty of a class D felony.

STATEMENT OF THE FACTS

5. On September 10, 2019, the City of Bridgeport held a primary for the selection of Democratic nominees to municipal office in that city, including the office of Mayor (the "2019 Bridgeport Democratic Primary").
6. As part of that primary, some Bridgeport electors that were enrolled in the Democratic Party requested absentee ballots in order to participate in the 2019 Bridgeport Democratic Primary.
7. On or about September 27, 2019, Complainant filed the instant complaint with the Commission.
8. Complainant specifically alleged that Respondent took possession of elector Maydine Ellis's absentee ballot for the 2019 Bridgeport Democratic Primary.
9. In response to this Complaint, Commission investigators made contact with Ms. Ellis. Ms. Ellis reported to Commission investigators that Respondent assisted her with her absentee ballot application but was not present when she filled out her absentee ballot and did not take possession of her ballot.
10. Respondent also provided a statement to the Commission investigators also stating that she assisted Ms. Ellis with her absentee ballot application, but not her absentee ballot and specifically denied taking possession of Ms. Ellis's absentee ballot.

CONCLUSION

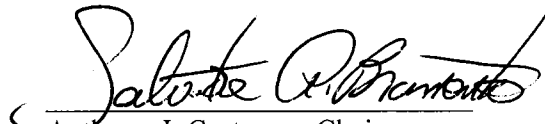
11. Based upon the foregoing, the Commission concludes that this matter should be dismissed.

ORDER

The following Order is recommended on the basis of the aforementioned findings:

That this matter be dismissed.

Adopted this 16th day of September, 2020 at Hartford, Connecticut.


~~Anthony J. Castagno, Chairperson~~
By Order of the Commission
Salvatore Bramante, Vice Chair