

**IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
STATE OF GEORGIA**

<b>GABRIEL STERLING,</b>	)	
	)	
<b>Petitioner,</b>	)	
	)	
<b>v.</b>	)	<b>Docket Number: 1835352</b>
	)	<b>1835352-OSAH-SECSTATE-CE-60-</b>
	)	<b>Schroer</b>
<b>JOSHUA IVAN MCLAURIN,</b>	)	
	)	
<b>Respondent.</b>	)	
_____	)	

**FINAL DECISION**

Petitioner, GABRIEL STERLING (hereinafter “Petitioner”), is an eligible elector in Georgia State House District 51 (hereinafter “HD 51”) who filed this candidate challenge pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 21-2-5(b), contending that Respondent, JOSHUA IVAN MCLAURIN (hereinafter “Respondent”), does not meet the qualifications to be a candidate in HD 51 for the May 22, 2018 General Primary Election. Specifically, Petitioner contends that Respondent fails to meet the residency and citizenship requirements to be a candidate as set forth in Article III, Section II, Paragraph III(b) of the Georgia Constitution and O.C.G.A. § 28-2-1(b).

An Administrative Law Judge (hereinafter “ALJ”) of the Office of State Administrative Hearings held a hearing on April 20, 2018. Petitioner was not present, but was represented by his legal counsel, Vincent R. Russo and David B. Dove. The ALJ issued his Initial Decision on April 30, 2018, finding that Respondent is qualified to be a candidate in HD 51.

Subsequent to the ALJ’s Initial Decision, legal counsel for Petitioner and Respondent filed memoranda with the Secretary of State in support of their respective positions. (Ex. 1: Petitioner’s Memorandum; Ex. 2: Respondent’s Memorandum). After considering the hearing transcript, initial decision, and the parties’ memoranda, the Secretary of State finds that the preponderance of

the evidence shows that Respondent had both the intention to permanently reside in Georgia and had physically removed himself from New York to Georgia in October 2016. Respondent therefore meets the Constitutional requirement that he be a citizen of Georgia for at least two years prior to his election.

Therefore, **IT IS HEREBY DECIDED** that Respondent, JOSHUA IVAN MCLAURIN, is **QUALIFIED** to be a candidate in HD 51 for the May 22, 2018 General Primary Election.

SO DECIDED this 18th day of May, 2018.



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BRIAN P. KEMP  
Secretary of State