



September 12, 2023  
*Via United States Mail*

Kidada Brown, District 1  
RaToya Gilmer McGee, District 2  
Jermal Clark, District 3  
Yvonne R. Horton, District 4  
Shirley Varnado, District 5

Hinds County Election Commissioners  
Post Office Box 946  
Jackson, Mississippi 39205

**RE: Follow-Up Regarding Potential Voting Rights Issues Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) of 1990 & the Help America Vote Act (“HAVA”) of 2002**

Commissioners:

Disability Rights Mississippi (DRMS) appreciates the invitation to attend your September 11, 2023 and thanks you for allowing our agency the time to present our Primary Election Day accessibility findings. As we stated during the meeting, we hope this can be the beginning of the conversation to improve voting accessibility throughout Hinds County and Mississippi.

As stated in the meeting and in our initial August 30 letter, DRMS utilized the concerns addressed in the Settlement Agreement between the United States of America and Hinds County Regarding the Accessibility of Polling places [DJ-204-41-184] to survey polling sites and collect data regarding accessibility during the August 8, 2023 elections. The full report of our findings at the 66 Hinds County polling locations we surveyed is enclosed herein for your review.

While there were several polling locations, highlighted in green, that met accessibility standards, it is concerning to our agency that accessibility issues were prevalent throughout the County. Voters with disabilities have the right to vote privately, independently, and without barriers, whether architectural, structural, mechanical, or attitudinal. Whether a polling place is located at a school, a fire station, a community center, or a church or other building, voters with disabilities are entitled, under the law, to have full access to the electoral process.

It is our understanding that, as you stated during the meeting, some of these issues are not in your jurisdiction to address; as such, we are including the Hinds County Board of Supervisors and the Hinds County Circuit Clerk on this letter so that they may have access to the report as well. However, as the Election Commissioners for Hinds County, we are hopeful that you will utilize your position to take the data provided by the appropriate entity to attend to the issues at hand. If the Board of Supervisors or the Circuit Clerk wishes to further discuss our findings, we welcome the opportunity to address it with them.

Our agency stands ready and willing to provide you with technical assistance regarding voting site accessibility. We welcome your questions about how to create a more accessible voting experience in your communities.

Additionally, included herein is a *Best Practices for Poll Managers Guide* that we hope you will utilize in training for poll workers. A poll worker with a misunderstanding of or a disinterest in a voter with a disability's rights is just as much of a barrier as an inaccessible doorway. We urge you to focus on training in your districts prior to the General Election.

It is our intention to revisit all 66 of the polling sites during the November 8, 2023 General Election, as well as to visit other precincts throughout the County. We will utilize the same survey, which is based on the Department of Justice Consent Decree. We are hopeful to see substantive change regarding the issues outlined in our August 8 survey findings. As Mississippi's federally mandated protection and advocacy agency for people with disabilities, we stand ready to utilize all remedies available to ensure that the rights of voters with disabilities are protected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Polly Tribble", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Polly Tribble  
Executive Director

cc: Zack Wallace, Circuit Clerk of Hinds County (via United States Mail)  
Hinds County Board of Supervisors (via United States Mail)