

Circuit Court for Prince George's County
Case No. C-16-CV-26-005022
Argued: September 9, 2026

IN THE SUPREME COURT
OF MARYLAND

No. 25

September Term, 2026

MOISETTE I. SWEAT

v.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BOARD OF
ELECTIONS

Fader, C.J.,
Watts,
Booth,
Biran,
Gould,
Eaves,
Killough,

JJ.

PER CURIAM ORDER

Filed: September 9, 2026

Pursuant to the Maryland Uniform Electronic Legal
Materials Act (§§ 10-1601 et seq. of the State
Government Article) this document is authentic.



Gregory Hilton, Clerk

MOISETTE I. SWEAT

v.

PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY
BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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PER CURIAM ORDER

Maryland law gives political candidates three ways to access the ballot in a general election: (1) nomination by a political party, (2) nomination by petition, or (3) as a write-in candidate. Md. Code Ann., Elec. Law § 5-702. Candidates seeking nomination by petition must file a certificate of candidacy and a petition “signed by the lesser of 10,000 registered voters or 1% of the total number of registered voters who are eligible to vote for the office for which the nomination by petition is sought,” or at least 250 eligible voters. Md. Code Ann., Elec. Law § 5-703(d)(1). Title 6 of the Election Law Article further regulates the content of nomination petitions, the validity of nominating signatures, and how election officials process those petitions.

Moisette I. Sweat, the appellant, is an unaffiliated candidate seeking the Office of County Executive for Prince George’s County in the 2026 general election. Ms. Sweat filed a timely certificate of candidacy with the Prince George’s County Board of Elections on June 8, 2026. On August 3, 2026, Ms. Sweat filed her petition with 1,608 pages of signatures attached. Two weeks later, the Board sent Ms. Sweat notice that it had reviewed

the 6,743 signatures she submitted and determined that 1,316 were invalid, leaving her short of the 6,531 signatures required for placement on the ballot.

Ms. Sweat promptly filed a complaint for declaratory and injunctive relief in the Circuit Court for Prince George's County challenging the Board's determination. The circuit court held a bench trial on September 3, 2026. Later that day, it issued an order declaring "that there is insufficient evidence for the court to determine whether the County Board rejected valid signatures and thereby caused Ms. Sweat to fail to meet the one percent threshold." Consequently, the court denied Ms. Sweat's requested relief.

Ms. Sweat noted a direct appeal to this Court. We issued an expedited schedule, required both parties to submit briefs by noon on September 8, 2026, and held oral argument on September 9, 2026. For reasons to be set forth in an opinion to be filed later, it is this 9th day of September 2026, by the Supreme Court of Maryland,

ORDERED that the judgment of the Circuit Court for Prince George's County is affirmed. The circuit court did not abuse its discretion in determining that the record contains insufficient evidence to establish that Ms. Sweat qualified for the November 2026 general election ballot; and it is further

ORDERED that costs are to be paid by the appellant. The mandate shall issue forthwith.



/s/ Matthew J. Fader
Chief Justice