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PRESS RELEASE

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Larry Aguilar, candidate for state District 79, 239-919-4777

Candidate for State House Sues Division of Elections

What happened to Larry Aguilar, candidate for state representative District 79 in Lee County, should not happen to any candidate for political office in the state of Florida.

Aguilar sent his qualifying paperwork, along with a \$1,781.82 check, to the Division of Elections (DOE) in Tallahassee before the June 20 candidate qualifying date only to have DOE mishandle the paperwork, an error that the state division refuses to acknowledge.

Instead, DOE officials state –incorrectly– that they didn't receive Aguilar's paperwork in time, using that as the basis for disqualifying him from the race.

The lack of DOE accountability has prompted Aguilar to file suit July 15 in the 20th Circuit Court (case no. 14-ca-002192 before Judge Keith R. Kyle) requesting an emergency motion for a permanent injunction against DOE. Judge Kyle has yet to rule on this important matter.

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DOE's sloppiness may unjustly cost Aguilar his candidacy for District 79 through no fault of his own.

"These people have hurt me tremendously. Even after all the evidence that has been shared with them, they refuse to accept that they made a mistake. These guys are taking a viable choice away from voters of Lee County," Aguilar said.

The Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida stands behind Aguilar in demanding that DOE acknowledge its mistake and reinstate him as candidate for state District 79.

Aguilar has written proof he hopes to present in court that the DOE received all his paperwork *before* June 20. Aguilar received an email from Kristie Bronson, the chief of records at DOE who handles candidate qualifying, confirming that her office had received his qualifying check on *June 19*, the day *before* the June 20 cutoff date.

If DOE's Bronson received Aguilar's check, then the office received the entire package of qualifying material, including his financial disclosures and notarized oath.

"If she got my qualifying check, she got my parcel of mail," Aguilar said.

DOE's intransigence undermines the candidate qualifying process for each and every person seeking state office in Florida, be they Democrat or Republican. The rules are the rules and Aguilar complied with DOE's policy.

The Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida is asking DOE to reverse its decision and allow Aguilar to run for office. Let the voters, not the DOE, determine their representative.

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