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**Presidential Commission on Election Administration
Public Hearing
Friday, June 28, 2013
Marlon A. Hill, Esq., Poll Watcher Attorney**

Good Afternoon, members of Commission, my name is Marlon Hill. I am a local attorney here in Miami, and I reside at 13525 SW 119th Avenue, Miami, Florida and personally vote at Precinct 814 in Richmond Heights, Miami, Florida. For the last three Presidential elections, I have volunteered as a poll watch attorney in Miami Dade County, Florida.

On November 6, 2012, I volunteered to serve as a poll watch attorney affiliated with the Obama-Biden campaign. I was assigned the responsibility of overseeing troubleshooting for polls in the South Miami Dade County.

I arrived at my first poll (Precinct 812), Miami Southridge Senior High School, which happened to be my former high school, on or about 6:00am. Upon arrival, there were an estimated 200 voters waiting in line. At 7am, the poll opened. I introduced myself to the Precinct supervisor. A peer colleague from the Romney-Ryan campaign arrived later that morning.

There are a couple concerns that I witnessed at this poll and subsequently at other polls in my geographic region.

1. Accommodations for seating for elderly and disabled persons is not consistent and at times overlooked or even considered;
2. At my first poll, the size of the room for voting booths is too cramped and small. Having attended that high school in recent years, I certainly believe that more physical space could be considered and secured for more comfortable accommodations;
3. On more than one occasion, I witnessed and spoke voters outside the permissible boundaries who may have recently relocated and were being redirected at their inconvenience without being offered a provisional ballot (or better yet an actual ballot);
4. In addition, though I recognize the financial constraints, we should also consider providing more onsite supervisory and operational support for precinct supervisors. At one poll in South Dade, St Martin de Porres Catholic Church, the precinct supervisor appeared so tired, worn and agitated that he could not deliver the responsiveness and customer service that was expected for special requests from voters. He definitely needed a break to recharge and return.

5. Another obstacle that contributed to the backlogs in lines was the extraordinary length of the constitutional amendments. Even with the provision of Election Department sample election ballots to voters while they waited in line, I am convinced this contributed to greater voter confusion and fatigue.

6. Lastly, I need not implore you to also provide some direction on the streamlining of the process of absentee ballot requests: who can request, how to make this request, and when and who can turn them in. In addition, the public would be well served to have a similar express mail tracking and verification process similar to any of our express mail delivery companies.

I left my last poll in Kendall, Miami (West Sunset Fire Station) on or around 1:30am well beyond the closure of the polls. This is a clear indication of our lack of capacity and hindrances in the process of our election administration.

Together, we must ensure greater equity, synchronicity, and support for our election administration across the State. Let us ensure that our laws and procedures continue to afford for restoration of the 14 days (or similar period) of early voting; allowing residents who have relocated in-state to cast actual, not provisional, ballots, recommitting to putting 75-word summaries of constitutional amendments on the ballot, and providing more capacity and accommodations for elderly and disabled persons.

This is America where all voices stand on equal ground of this sacred space for the right to vote and to be heard. No person, absolutely no eligible and qualified person, should be impeded or inconvenienced in anyway to exercise their right. Let us use the breadth of our financial and legislative power to protect this sacred cornerstone of our democracy.

The integrity of the voting process and experience is not a partisan issue. As Americans, we must be diligent in improving the voter experience to make our systems easier to access and not more cumbersome or uncomfortable or worst prohibitive. We want more consistent and voluminous turnout from ALL citizens NOT LESS. Our union is stronger with greater civic engagement.

I thank the Commission for this opportunity to share my experience and look forward to reading your final report and recommendations to the President and the leadership of all states prior to the next election cycle.

Thank you for your service.