

VERIFIED PETITION OF RHODE ISLAND REPUBLICAN STATE CENTRALE ISLAND COMMITTEE BY AND THROUGH ITS CHAIRMAN MARK SMILEY AND OF MARKETIONS SMILEY IN HIS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY AS A QUALIFIED ELECTOR TO CHALLENGE MODERATE PARTY OF RHOSE ISLAND'S SEPTEMBER 11, 2014 DESIGNATION OF IZ: 35 ROBERT J. HEALEY, JR. AS ITS NOMINEE/CANDIDATE FOR THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR AND MOTION TO DISQUALIFY ROBERT J. HEALEY, JR. AS THE MODERATE PARTY OF RHODE ISLAND'S NOMINEE/CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR

Now comes the Rhode Island Republican State Central Committee and Mark Smiley, individually and in his capacity as the Chairmen of said Committee, who hereby request that the Rhode Island Board of Elections, the Rhode Island Secretary of State and/ or a court of competent jurisdiction disallow the Moderate Party of Rhode Island's September 11, 2014 designation of Robert J. Healey, Jr. as the substitute for its nominee/candidate James B. Spooner for the Office of Governor.

### History and Brief Statement of Facts

- 1. As of the primary election on September 9, 2014, the Moderate Party of Rhode Island's ("the Moderate Party") nominee/candidate for governor was James B. Spooner ("Mr. Speoner").
- 2. On-or about-September 11, 2014 at 10:51 am, two (2) letters-were submitted to the Rhode Island Board of Elections ("the Board"). The first letter is addressed to the Board on Moderate Party letterhead and said letter indicates that the Moderate Party's candidate for governor, Mr. Spooner, conditionally withdrew his candidacy and/or his nomination for governor ("Moderate Party Letter"). His withdrawal is expressly contingent upon the Board's acceptance of the Moderate Party's designation of Mr. Robert J. Healey, Jr. ("Mr. Healey") as substitute nominee/candidate for the office of governor on behalf of the Moderate Party. Said letter further expressly states "in the event that the candidacy of Robert J. Healey, Jr. is found to be in violation of any rule, regulation of law the State Committee shall retain James Spooner as Candidate." (A copy of the Moderate Party Letter is attached hereto as Exhibit "A")
- 3. The Moderate Party Letter is signed by Mr. Spooner, Mr. Healey and William H. Gilbert ("Mr. Gilbert"), who identifies himself as the purported chairman of the Moderate Party.
- 4. In addition to the aforementioned letter on Moderate Party letterhead, an additional handwritten letter by Mr. Spooner was submitted to the Board which states: "Of my own free will and act I withdraw my candidacy for Governor in R.I. under the Moderate Party." (A copy of Mr. Spooner's letter is attached hereto as Exhibit "B")
- 5. The Barrington Board of Canvassers lists Mr. Healey as an affiliated member of the Moderate Party as of September 11, 2014. Upon information and belief, Mr. Healey was not affiliated with the Moderate Party in any capacity prior to September 11, 2014.

- 6. Mark Smiley ("Mr. Smiley") is a qualified elector in the State of Rhode Island and he is also the duly elected and authorized chairman of the Rhode Island Republican State Central Committee ("the Republican Party").
- 7. The Republican Party and Mr. Smiley (sometimes collectively, "Petitioners") file this petition to challenge the Moderate Party's purported nomination of Mr. Healey as its substitute nominee/candidate for the office of governor.
- 8. As of September 15, 2014, the Rhode Island Secretary of State identifies Kenneth Block as the Moderate Party's President.

#### Issue 1

Mr. Spooner failed to legally remove himself as the Moderate Party's nominee for governor

Rhode Island law permits a political party to fill a vacancy for office created by an existing nominee's withdrawal in very limited circumstances. See R.I.G.L. § 17-15-38. Those circumstances include when the nominee of a party (i) dies after the primary; (ii) removes himself or herself from the applicable jurisdiction for office; (iii) removes himself or herself as a candidate; or (iv) becomes physically or mentally disabled. R.I.G.L. § 17-15-38(a):

The September 11, 2014 letter submitted by the Moderate Party attempts to conditionally replace Mr. Spooner as the Moderate Party candidate for governor by relying upon Mr. Spooner's purported physical disability as the reason for his withdrawal and the need to appoint a replacement nominee/candidate. Nonetheless, the obvious legal impediment to said action by Mr. Spooner is that R.I.G.L. 17-15-38 does not permit an individual duly nominated by an established party to conditionally withdraw his or her candidacy. According to the Moderate Party's letter which was executed by Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Healey and Mr. Spooner, the signatories stated in part:

The replacement is made <u>without prejudice</u>. In the event that the candidacy of Robert J. Healey is found to be in violation of any rule, regulation or law <u>the State Committee shall retain James Spooner as candidate</u>. (emphasis added)

Petitioners submit that Mr. Spooner failed to legally "remove" himself as Moderate Party nominee by conditioning his withdrawal. Mr. Spooner certainly had a right to permanently and unequivocally remove himself as the nominee, but he cannot place restrictions and conditions on his removal. By failing to permanently and unequivocally remove himself as the Moderate

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The proffered excuse of a disability is suspect on its face given Mr. Spooner's apparent ability and readiness to stay in the race in the event Mr. Healey's appointment as the nominee is found to be invalid. It appears that all three (3) signatories on the letter are hedging their bets with respect to Mr. Spooner's purported disability. By placing conditions upon Mr., Spooner's withdrawal of his candidacy the Moderate Party itself evidences doubt in its own ability to make said replacement nomination. In fact, a conditional withdrawal is a fatal statutory defect that at this date cannot be remedied.

Party's nominee, said action is violative of R.I.G.L. 17-15-38 and therefore, Mr. Spooner remains the Moderate Party's candidate/nominee for governor. Petitioners respectfully maintain that the statutory period to file an unconditional withdrawal of Mr. Spooner's candidacy irrevocably lapsed on Friday September 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 P.M. For this reason alone, the Board should disallow the purported appointment of Mr. Healey as the Moderate Party's nominee/candidate for the office of governor, and not place Mr. Healey's name on the ballot.

#### Issue 2

The Moderate Party improperly relies upon R.I.G.L. § 17-12-5 as legal authority to name Mr. Healey as its substitute nominee/candidate for the office of governor

The Moderate Party Letter relies upon R.I.G.L. § 17-15-38 and R.I.G.L. § 17-12-5 as the legal basis to nominate Mr. Healey. Petitioners submit that R.I.G.L. § 17-15-38 is the controlling statute and Moderate Party's reliance on R.I.G.L. § 17-12-5 is misplaced.

R.I.G.L. § 17-15-38 (a) provides in relevant part:

Whenever the nominee of a party for a particular office dies after the primary, or removes him or herself from the jurisdiction of or as a candidate for the office for which the nominee seeks election, or becomes physically or mentally disabled, the state committee of that party or a duly authorized subcommittee of the state committee in the case of state officers, and the appropriate city, town, ward, or district committee or any duly authorized subcommittee of them in the case of candidates for the other offices covered by § 17-15-7, may file with the appropriate authority the name of its nominee for the office; . . . . (emphasis added)

The statute makes clear that only the "state committee" or "a duly authorized subcommittee" of the Moderate Party has the legal authority to "file with the appropriate authority the name of its nominee for the office" when filling vacant slots for state officers. A review of the Moderate Party Letter clearly evidences that neither the party's "state committee" nor a "duly authorized subcommittee" designated Mr. Healey as the Moderate Party's substitute nominee/candidate for the office of governor. Instead, Mr. Gilbert, purportedly acting in his capacity as the Moderate Party chairman , designated Mr. Healey and signed and filed the letter with the Board.

Therefore, although the Moderate Party claims to rely upon R.I.G.L. § 17-15-38 (a), it failed to follow the statutes enumerated procedure for designating a substitute nominee/candidate. The Moderate Party did not have either its state committee or a duly authorized subcommittee appoint Mr. Healey as its nominee/candidate for the office of governor.

General Laws § 17-12-5 does not provide the Moderate Party with solace either. Said statute provides:

Any other contingency that arises pursuant to the provisions of the statutes with respect to the election of candidates for state or town office at any general, primary, or special election shall be met by the vote of the state committee, or the executive committee, or any duly selected subcommittee of the executive committee, of a political party, or by the state chairperson of the political party if so authorized. If any contingency arises under the provisions of the statutes with respect to the election of candidates for city office at any general, primary, or special election, it shall be met by vote of the city committee of a political party or the executive committee of the city committee or any duly elected subcommittee of the executive committee, or by the city chairperson of the political party if so authorized. For the purposes of this section, the term "contingency" means and includes the nonexistence of any required party committee, the failure of any existing party committee to act, an adjudication that a primary election is void, and the death, incapacity, or moving from the jurisdiction of a party's nominee-prior to a general or special election. This section shall-apply notwithstanding any provision of chapter-17 of this title to the contrary.

The Moderate Party and Mr. Gilbert cannot rely upon R.I.G.L. § 17-12-5 to support Mr. Healey designation. First, R.I.G.L. § 17-15-38 (a) is the operative statute that must be followed. General Laws § 17-12-5, which is a general or "catchall" statute, is only applicable when specifically enumerated "contingencies" arise, which are not present in the instant matter before the Board. The Moderate Party Letter makes clear that the Moderate Party State Committee exists and that it has taken actions during this election cycle. Therefore, the "contingencies", which are the legal predicate for the invocation of R.I.G.L. § 17-12-5 are absent, and the Moderate Party's reliance on said statute is improper and without legal effect. The Moderate Party failed to follow R.I.G.L. § 17-15-38 (a) and it cannot rely on R.I.G.L. § 17-12-5 to save Mr. Healey's improper designation as its substitute nominee/candidate for the office-of governor.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Moderate Party Letter specifically states that its state committee met and acted on June 27, 2014. The other contingencies enumerated in the statute (an adjudication that the primary election is void, the death, incapacity or moving from the jurisdiction of the party's nominee prior to the general or special election) do not exist in this matter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The elementary rules of statutory construction as set forth by the Rhode Island Supreme Court require that this-Board rely upon the applicable specific statute when there is no legitimate factual and/or-basis to apply a general or "catchall" statute. See Whitehouse vs. Moran, 808 A.2<sup>nd</sup> 626 (R.I. 2002); R.I.G.L. § 43-3-26.

#### Issue 3

It is unclear that Mr. Gilbert has the requisite authority as the Moderate Party chairman to designate Mr. Healey.

Assuming arguendo that R.I.G.L. § 17-15-38 (a) permits a party chairman, as opposed to the state committee or a duly authorized subcommittee, to designate a substitute nominee/candidate, the Petitioners contend that Mr. Gilbert may not have the requisite authority to designate Mr. Healey as the Moderate Party's substitute nominee/candidate in place of Mr. Spooner. Mr. Gilbert submitted the Moderate Party Letter purportedly in his capacity as the party's chairman. While the Republican Party is unable to definitively conclude one way or the other if Mr. Gilbert is truly the duly elected chairman of the Moderate Party, ample evidence exists to suggest that he is not. The Moderate Party has failed to submit the required non-profit corporate filings with the Rhode Island Secretary of State.

According to the Secretary of State's website, as of September 15, 2014, former Republican candidate for Governor, Mr. Kenneth Block, is listed as the Moderate Party party's President. A copy of the Moderate Party's last filed Annual Report is attached hereto as Exhibit "C". As this Board may be aware, the President of a political party historically serves as its chairman. The last annual report the Moderate Party filed with the Secretary of State was on June 19, 2013 and it lists Mr. Block as the President and John Goodman, Kenneth Block and Steve Parola as the Moderate Party's directors. Mr. Gilbert is not referenced in the annual report.

As the members of this Board are well aware, Moderate Party is a non-profit corporation that derives its authority from the filing of Articles of Incorporation with the Rhode Island Secretary of State. The non-profit corporation acts and operates through its designated and duly authorized corporate officers and directors. As of September 15, 2014 the date on which Petitioners filed this Complaint with the Board, Mr. Block remains as the President and one of three Directors of the Moderate Party. Mr. Gilbert, the individual who purports to be the chairman of Moderate Party, and the individual who has attempted to unilaterally nominate Mr. Healey as the Moderate Party's substitute nominee/candidate for-governor, is simply not listed as an officer or director of the Moderate Party. Therefore, Petitioners respectfully maintain that Mr. Gilbert is without any authority (actual and/or apparent) to act in any official capacity on or in behalf of the Moderate Party.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The Moderate Party is a non-profit corporation organized in Rhode Island on September 8, 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The Moderate Party neglected to file its 2014 annual report which was due in the month of June of 2014.

It also appears through filings with the Board that Moderate Party closed and dissolved its campaign fund. On December 30, 2013 at 3:27 pm, Moderate Party filed a form labeled "Affidavit Campaign Finance Status" which states that the campaign fund of Moderate Party "has completed its business and has been dissolved". (Exhibit E).

#### Issue 4

Mr. Healey is not eligible to serve as the Moderate Party's nominee/candidate for the office of governor

Upon information and belief, Mr. Healey did not become a member of Moderate Party until September 11, 2014. Mr. Healey presumably became affiliated with the Moderate Party as a result of Mr. Gilbert's designation of Mr. Healey as the party's substitute nominee/candidate. According to the Moderate Party's by-laws, a candidate for elective office under the party label must be a member of Moderate Party. Republican Party submits that Mr. Healey's late affiliation with Moderate Party as of September 11, 2014 disqualifies him from serving as the party's successor nominee for governor.

### Petitioners,

Rhode Island Republican State Central Committee by and through its Chairman Mark Smiley and Mark Smiley in his individual capacity as a qualified elector for the office of governor

Brandon S. Bell, Esq. (#5871)

FONTAINE-BELL, LLP.

1 Davol Square, Penthouse

Providence, RI 02903

Tel: (401) 274-8800

Fax (401) 274-8880

bbell@fontainebell.com

Subscribed and sworn to by Brandon S. Bell before me this 15th day of September 2014.

Notary Public

My commission expires:

07 123 12018

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> This information is culled from the Board's website.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Due to the short window to file the instant objection, the Republican Party has not yet had an opportunity to ascertain if Mr. Healey took any action on his own to affiliate with Moderate Party by filing with the Barrington Board of Canvassers which is required by the Moderate Party's own by-laws.

The petitioner is relying upon the by-laws filed by Moderate Party-with the Board of Elections on November 4, 2009 at 11:21 am. Again, due to time restrictions, petitioner is uncertain whether Moderate Party has filed updated or amended by-laws.

Mark Smiley

Mark Smiley in his individual capacity as a qualified elector

Rhode Island Republican State Central

Committee

Mark Smiley in his capacity as Chairman

Subscribed and sworn to by Mark Smiley, individually as a qualified elector and in his capacity as the Chairman of the Rhode Island Republican Central Committee, before me this 15<sup>th</sup> day of September 2014.

Notary Public

My commission expires: 3712312018

# Exhibit A



SECRETARY OF STATE
ELECTIONS DIJATE
2014 SEP | | AM 10: 5 |

209 Yorktown Road, North Kingstown RI 02852

Thursday, September 11, 2014

Rhode Island Board of Elections C/O Michael Narducci

Please be advised that Moderate Party of Rhode Island's candidate for governor has undergone radical and invasive surgery that disables his ability to actively campaign and complications may prevent him from even performing the duties of the office if elected.

Therefore, I, acting as Chairman of The Moderate Party of Rhode Island State Committee as authorized RI Gen. Laws § 17-15-38, § 17-12-5 and by the Moderate Party of Rhode Island State Committee's Friday, June 27, 2014 meeting here to prove James Spooner 1566 Lonsdale Ave. Lincoln RI 02865 for Robert J. Healey 75-Sowams Rd, Barrington, RI 02806 as the The Moderate Party of Rhode Island's candidate for governor.

The current candidate and newly appointed candidate hereby-concur and attach their signatures below.

This replacement is made without prejudice. In the event that the candidacy of Robert J. Healey is found to be in violation of any rule, regulation or law the State Committee shall retain James Spooner as candidate.

James Spooner

Robert J. Healey

Date: SUPCOMOUTILIZERY

Sincerely,

William H. Gilbert

Chairman

Moderate Party of Rhode Island State Committee

401 93/2 8364

Moderate Party of Rhode Island State Committee 401.932.8364

# Exhibit B

September 1/th, 2014

I famo & Spooner of my own

Thee will and art hereby

Withdraw my Candiday for

Sovernar in R.D. under the

Moderate Party.

James B. Spooner

MECETECHIONS DIV. 51

# Exhibit C

## State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations Office of the Secretary of State

Division Of Business Services 148 W. River Street Providence RI 02904-2615 (401) 222-3040

Help with this form

Request a Certificate

The exact name of the Domestic Non-Profit Corporation: Moderate Party of RI

Entity Type: <u>Domestic Non-Profit Corporation</u>

Identification Number: 000550823

Date of Incorporation in Rhode Island: 09/08/2010

The location of its principal office:

No. and Street:

20 ALTIERI WAY, UNIT 3

City or Town:

**WARWICK** 

State: RI

Zip: 02886

Country: USA

The mailing address or specified office:

No. and Street:

City or Town:

State:

Zip:

Country:

The name and address of the Registered Agent:

No. and Street:

Agent Resigned: N

20 ALTIERI WAY, UNIT 3

City or Town:

WARWICK

State: RI

Zip: 02886

Address Maintained: Y

Name:

LORI KENNELLY

The officers and all of the directors of the corporation:

Title	<b>Individual Name</b> First, Middle, Last, Suffix	Address Address, City or Town, State, Zip Code, Country				
PRESIDENT	KENNETH BLOCK	8 ATLANTIC CROSSING BARRINGTON, RI 02806 USA				
DIRECTOR	JOHN GOODMAN	51 COLUMBIA HEIGHTS ROAD CHARLESTOWN, RI 02813 USA				
DIRECTOR	KENNETH BLOCK	8 ATLANTIC CROSSING BARRINGTON, RI 02806 USA				
DIRECTOR	STEVE PAROLA	4 DANA COURT BARRINGTON, RI 02806 USA				

### Purpose POLITICAL ORGANIZATION Select a type of filing from below to view this business entity filings: ALL FILINGS Annual Report Annual Report - Amended Annual Report - Reinstatement Articles of Amendment Click Here to access 2006 and 2007 annual reports filed and imaged prior to July 25, 2007. Identification Number is Required View Filings New Search © 2007 - 2014 State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations All Rights Reserved Help

## Exhibit D



## State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations Office of the Secretary of State

Fee: \$20.00

Division Of Business Services 148 W. River Street Providence RI 02904-2615 (401) 222-3040

### Non-Profit Corporation Annual Report

Filing Period June 1 - June 30

In accordance with R.I.G.L. 7-6-94, each corporation failing or refusing to file its annual report within the time prescribed by law (R.I.G.L. 7-6-91) is subject to a penalty fee of \$25.00.

ANNUAL REPORT YEAR: 2013

1. Corporate ID No. 00

000550823

2. Name of Corporation Moderate Party of RI

3. State of Incorporation

State: RI\_

4. Corporate Address in Rhode Island

No. and Street:

20 ALTIERI WAY

UNIT 3

City or Town:

WARWICK

State: RI

Zip: 02886

Country: USA

5. Foreign Corporation. Enter Principal Office Address

No. and Street:

City or Town:

State: Zip:

Country:

6. Brief Description of the Character of the Affairs Which are Actually Conducted in Rhode Island

#### **POLITICAL ORGANIZATION**

7. Names and Addresses of the Officers and Directors:

All officers and directors must be listed. If officers and/or directors have been elected, the title-incorporator is no longer applicable; please delete

THE NUMBER OF DIRECTORS OF A DOMESTIC(RHODE ISLAND) CORPORATION SHALL NOT BE LESS THAN THREE(3), R.I.G.L. 7-6-23

	Title	Individual Name	Address
		First, Middle, Last, Suffix	Address,-City or Town, State, Zip Code, Country
-5	PRESIDENT - 900-0	KENNETH BLOCK	8 ATLANTIC CROSSING BARRINGTON, RI 02806 USA
	DIRECTOR	JOHN GOODMAN	51 COLUMBIA HEIGHTS ROAD CHARLESTOWN, RI 02813 USA

DIRECTOR	KENNETH BLOCK	8 ATLANTIC CROSSING BARRINGTON, RI 02806 USA					
DIRECTOR	STEVE PAROLA	4 DANA COURT BARRINGTON, RI 02806 USA					
8. REGISTERED AGENT IN RHODE ISLAND - DO NOT ALTER Changes Require Filing of Form 641 - R.I.G.L. 7-6-13 / 7-6-78							
LORI KENNELLY 20 ALTIERI V	LORI KENNELLY 20 ALTIERI WAY UNIT 3 WARWICK, RI 02886						
	9. This report must be signed by either the President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Receiver, or Trustee.						
individuals signing this instru signatory, under penalties of p act and deed of the corporatio	Signed this 19 Day of June, 2013 at 11:17:26 AM. This electronic signature of the individual or individuals signing this instrument constitutes the affirmation or acknowledgement of the signatory, under penalties of perjury, that this instrument is that individual's act and deed or the act and deed of the corporation, and that the facts stated herein are true, as of the date of the electronic filing, in compliance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 7-6.						
Signature of Officer of the C							
X_President_orVice-President_orSecretary or Assistant-Secretary or Treasurer or Receiver or Trustee - (check-one)							
This report cannot be accepted for filing if an officer has executed the form and he/she is not listed in Section 7.							
Form No. 631 Revised 09/07							
© 2007 - 2013 State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations All Rights Reserved							

.

# Exhibit E



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations Campaign Finance Electronic Reporting & Tracking System (ERTS)

### View Filing

Help with this page

| v 1.6.36

### Filing Amendments for MODERATE PARTY OF RI STATE COMMITTEE

Amendment	Desc/Electronic Filing	Date Filed	_
	CF-7. Affidavit for Campaign Finance	Dec 30 2013 3:27PM	

Return

r	KI.	1	O	æ	IŞ	51	а	Π	a	W	le	Į	1	L
												_		

Board of Elections Home Page

General Information

View Filed Reports

User Login

Search

- Ellings

- Contributions

- Expenditures

Contact Us

Forms

### State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

### **Board of Elections**

Campaign Finance Division
50 Branch Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island 02904
Tel. (401)222-2345 Fax (401)222-4424
www.elections.state.ri.us

### AFFIDAVIT CAMPAIGN FINANCE STATUS

Street A			Full Name of Candidate, Political Party Committee, or Political Action Committee (PAC) MODERATE PARTY OF RI STATE COMMITTEE					
P.O. BC	Address OX 378		City/Town, State a BARRINGTON R	•				
Mailing	Address (if different	)	City/Town, State a	nd Zip Code				
•	one Number 33-3360	Daytime Telephone Number (401) 533-3360	Fax Number	E-mail				
Reporti Period l	ng Period (Dates) Begin: 10/01/201:	Period End: 12/31/2	013					
Party A	ffiliation, if any:		If Candidate, Offic	e Sought				
2.[]	If box#1 above has incurred on behalf can be accepted.  The campaign function has compast election has compared to the campaign function has compast election electio	been checked and the campaign fund has been of or in opposition to a candidate or to advocate of the candidate, political party, or political completed its business relative to the past elect been checked, all campign finance reporting	en dissolved, no contributions inter ate the approval-or rejection of any action committee having been inst ion, but will continue its activities	question during the campaign				
	>>> ;	This form must be accompanied by a final account elections, including the final disposition of the arrangements that have been made for the dissolution. (See Summary of Campaign Actor.)  A	of any balance remaining in such : he discharge of any obligations-rer	fund at the time of dissolution or				
	ne of Treasurer	- Date	do hereby certify that the informa Subscribed and Sworn to me this x Notary Public	tion provided above is true and correct.  Day of				