

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK**

ANNE POPE, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

-against-

COUNTY OF ALBANY, et al.,

Defendants.

No. 11-cv-0736 (LEK) (DRH)

DECLARATION OF SAMUEL COLEMAN

I, Samuel Coleman, hereby declare the following:

1. I am a black man over the age of eighteen residing in the Arbor Hill neighborhood of Albany, New York. I give this declaration based upon personal knowledge.

2. I reside in and am a declared candidate for the Albany County Legislature in the Third District under both the recently adopted redistricting plan (“Local Law C”) and the plan developed by Arbor Hill Environmental Justice and presented by Plaintiff’s in this litigation (“AHEJ plan”). I have received the endorsement of the Democratic Committee in my district.

3. The incumbent in the Third District is Virginia Maffia-Tobler, a white candidate from the Shaker Park neighborhood.

4. I hold a committee seat of the Democratic Committee in a ward in Ms. Maffia-Tobler's legislative district. I have attempted to contact Ms. Maffia-Tobler in order to meet and talk with her about issues facing her district and, particularly, her minority constituents. I have not received a response. Failure to respond to my efforts to discuss the needs of minorities contributes to a failure to meet those needs in my district.

5. The Shaker Park neighborhood comprises a small percentage of the district and most of its residents are white. Most of the residents of the remainder of the district, including the Arbor Hill neighborhood, are predominately black and Hispanic and significantly less affluent.

6. Since I declared my candidacy, members of the Democratic Committee with whom I had close personal and professional relationships have backed away from me, resulting in my noticeable isolation from much of the Committee.

7. Of the 11 Committee members in my district, only two obtained any signatures for me to get on the ballot. One of those two Committee members who did obtain signatures on my behalf obtained only 2 signatures over the course of one month.

8. Since around April 2011, on a weekly basis I have received anonymous papers dropped off at my house saying that I am not qualified to run and that the seat is already taken by the long-term incumbent, Ms. Maffia-Tobler. I believe this is because I am a minority, and there is resistance to another minority winning a legislative seat.

9. In the voting on the endorsement from the Democratic Committee, votes were cast generally along racial lines, with minority ward representatives voting for me and majority ward representatives voting for Ms. Maffia-Tobler.

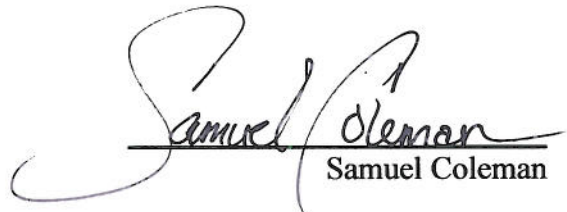
10. Minorities in Albany County, and especially in the Arbor Hill area, are underserved by the County Legislature, and there is a lack of responsiveness to their needs. For example, in Arbor Hill, the lights in public parks are out, the community center has been given reduced hours, after school programs are lacking, the baseball fields are unusable, and the Boy's Club building was sold. Efforts to bring attention and resources to these issues have been unsuccessful, and my complaints have gone unheard.

11. Educational issues present another example of unmet need. While most students in the Arbor Hill neighborhood do not go to college, many do not even finish high school. Furthermore, there have been a number of school closings, forcing students to be transported to schools that are farther away, resulting in decreased attendance.

12. I attended several public meetings of the Redistricting Commission, as well as the County Executive's public meeting on the plan. At the County Executive's meeting, I spoke about the need and justification for a fifth majority-minority district. My concerns were not addressed.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: July 16, 2011



Samuel Coleman