

**DECLARATION OF JOSEPH COPELAND**  
**(pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1776)**

My name is Joseph Copeland and I am over the age of 18 and fully competent to make this declaration. Under penalty of perjury, I declare the following:

**Personal Background**

1. I was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio.
2. I attended Hughes High School in Cincinnati and then took online courses with Moody Theological Seminary, which is located Chicago, Illinois.
3. I have been a member of The Greater New Hope Missionary Baptist Church (Greater New Hope) in Cincinnati, Ohio for over 30 years and I have served as the Associate Minister at Greater New Hope for 20 years.

**Souls to the Polls**

4. I helped organize Souls to the Polls efforts in the Cincinnati area in both 2011 and 2012.
5. In 2012, I helped coordinate a Souls to the Polls effort that engaged 12-15 churches in the Cincinnati area. Approximately 80 percent of these churches were African American.
6. Participating churches that had transportation vehicles at their disposal brought them either to Greater New Hope or another church down the road. Some of these vehicles were already filled with congregants from other churches by the time that they got to Greater New Hope. We placed people who showed up at Greater New Hope to participate in Souls to the Polls in any vehicles where space was available.
7. Between 400 and 500 people participated in our Souls to the Polls efforts. These individuals ranged in age from 18 to 80 and were both congregants and walk-ins who had heard about our efforts through flyers that I posted in the area or a radio announcement on The Buzz.

8. We were only able to conduct our Souls to the Polls efforts on the last Sunday of the early voting period because that was the only Sunday when early voting was available in 2012. The lines on that day were lengthy and people had to wait well over an hour at the early voting location in order to cast their ballot.
9. I believe that having more than one Sunday of early voting available would assist the congregants and individuals I work with in being able to more effectively engage in the democratic process.
10. Additionally, the individuals participating in Souls to the Polls really liked the service and I believe that, were early voting to be available on Sundays in the future, Souls to the Polls turnout would increase in the Cincinnati area.

**The Importance of Early In-Person Voting to the African-American Churches and Communities I have Worked With**

11. Early voting is important to the communities with which I work.
12. Many people in Hamilton County are working multiple jobs and earning less than a living wage.
13. I hear from a lot of people that they are unable to vote because they cannot get to the polling locations at the available times. Many individuals have to get to work and pick up their kids from daycare. They cannot afford to take time off of work in order to travel to the polling location and cast their ballot.
14. Additionally, some individuals, particularly the younger voters that I have worked with, do not trust vote-by-mail. They are skeptical about the integrity of the voting process and want to see their ballots actually being processed.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the forgoing is true and correct.

Executed on June 4, 2014.

  
Rev. Joseph R. Copeland