

IN THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT IN AND FOR POLK COUNTY

ALEXANDRA “SONDRA” WILSON,	)	
	)	
<i>Plaintiff,</i>	)	Case No. _____
	)	
v.	)	In Equity
	)	
PAUL D. PATE, in his official capacity as	)	
Secretary of State of Iowa	)	
<i>Defendant</i>	)	
	)	
_____	)	

EMERGENCY PETITION FOR EQUITABLE EXTENSION OF BALLOT-ACCESS DEADLINE

COMES NOW Alexandra “Sondra” Wilson, appearing pro se, and respectfully requests equitable relief in the form of a limited extension to the June 2, 2026, ballot-access deadline due to extraordinary litigation burdens arising from ongoing legal proceedings, including numerous filing deadlines and hearings during the active signature-gathering period. Additional filings and briefing obligations remain pending prior to the August 4, 2026 trial in case no. LACV053674. Plaintiff therefore requests an alternative and equitable deadline to be set for July 23, 2026, in order to account for ongoing court-imposed litigation obligations, anticipated briefing associated with this matter, and additional filings necessary prior to the August 4, 2026 trial in case no. LACV053674.

**PARTIES**

Plaintiff Alexandra “Sondra” Wilson is an independent candidate for Governor of Iowa who is actively engaged in petition circulation for ballot access in the 2026 general election. Plaintiff resides in Story County, Iowa.

Defendant Paul D. Pate, in his official capacity as Secretary of State of Iowa, is the state official responsible for administering ballot-access requirements under Iowa Code chapter 44 and is the proper party for purposes of the equitable relief requested.

## **JURISDICTION**

This Court has jurisdiction pursuant to its general equitable powers under Iowa Code § 602.6101.

## **FACTUAL BACKGROUND**

1. On March 31, 2023, I announced my candidacy for Governor of Iowa. Since that time, I have invested substantial personal finances, time, and effort into building my campaign and developing a detailed public policy platform addressing infrastructure, healthcare, education, and justice reform. My campaign has also been made possible by supporters, including volunteers and campaign contributors. My campaign website may be found at [WildWillpower.org](https://WildWillpower.org).

2. I have been performing political activity for many years. Prior to announcing my candidacy, I founded and directed a political organization called Wild Willpower PAC. In December 2023, Plaintiff filed civil litigation arising from disputes and allegations that Plaintiff contends damaged her reputation and substantially interfered with her political and campaign activities (*see* case # LACV053674). That litigation remains ongoing and has involved substantial filing obligations, discovery requirements, motion practice, and hearings during the 2026 signature-gathering period.

3. Since January 1 this year, I have had multiple court-imposed filing deadlines and hearings associated with this case. Each has required a significant amount of preparation. These obligations directly took away from time needed to gather signatures and work on my campaign. Filing deadlines and hearings were as follows:

Date	Litigation Requirement	Campaign Impact
Jan. 7	Amended Petition and Exhibits A–G	Required extensive drafting and document preparation during signature-gathering period
Jan. 28	Reply and Reply Brief	Required legal research and response preparation
Feb. 9	Hearing	Required hearing preparation and attendance
Feb. 11	Notice of Withdrawal	Additional procedural filing obligations
Mar. 2	Discovery Request	Required review and preparation of evidentiary materials
Apr. 14	Motion to Compel and Resistance to Summary Judgment	Extensive briefing obligations during active campaign season
May 26	Hearing	Final hearing preparation immediately before ballot deadline

4. The trial for case # LACV053674 is scheduled for August 4, 2026. Plaintiff is currently preparing a renewed motion for leave to amend and proposed second amended petition in that matter in compliance with the Court’s April 22 order (*see* Attachment A – April 22, 2026 Order in Case No. LACV053674) and anticipates additional motion practice and briefing obligations as litigation continues.<sup>1</sup> Plaintiff also reasonably anticipates additional briefing obligations associated with anticipated resistance to the present petition and related motions, including preparation of a reply and reply brief pursuant to the Iowa Rules of Civil Procedure. Plaintiff therefore requests a July 23, 2026 equitable extension in order to account for these ongoing court-imposed litigation obligations and to prevent continued interference with the signature-gathering process.

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<sup>1</sup> Case No. LACV053674, April 22, 2026 Order (D0095), at 5.

5. During active petitioning periods, I was regularly able to gather substantial numbers of signatures, often approximately 60 per day. Plaintiff's litigation obligations substantially reduced the time available for petition circulation during critical portions of the signature-gathering period. Beginning on or about May 16, 2026, I shifted away from gathering signatures and instead began preparing for the May 26 hearing and to file this emergency deadline extension request. Prior to redirecting time toward hearing preparation and emergency filings, I had already gathered approximately 1,000 signatures toward the statutory requirement.

6. Plaintiff has also invested substantial financial resources into campaign infrastructure and election-related activities in reliance upon anticipated participation in the 2026 gubernatorial election, including campaign materials, media preparation, and voter outreach efforts.

7. Prior to filing this petition, I contacted the Iowa Secretary of State's Office seeking guidance regarding any available administrative remedy or extension procedure. In response, the Office indicated that no statutory administrative mechanism exists and that any such relief would require a court order. A copy of that correspondence is attached as Attachment B (May 19, 2026 correspondence from Iowa Secretary of State Elections Division confirming no administrative extension mechanism exists absent court order).

#### **ARGUMENT FOR EQUITABLE RELIEF**

8. Plaintiff is an independent candidate for Governor of Iowa in the 2026 gubernatorial election. Plaintiff's campaign offers Iowa voters an additional political perspective outside the traditional two-party framework. Plaintiff's platform addresses issues including healthcare, infrastructure, education, justice reform, and civil rights. Plaintiff respectfully submits that Iowa

voters benefit from the opportunity to hear and evaluate a wider range of viewpoints during the election process.

9. Plaintiff contends that the litigation described above, including multiple court-imposed deadlines, hearings, discovery obligations, and motion practice, substantially interfered with campaign activities and consumed significant time during the ballot-access period. Under these circumstances, strict enforcement of the June 2 deadline would unfairly deprive Iowa voters of an independent candidate choice despite Plaintiff's demonstrated diligence and substantial efforts toward compliance. Plaintiff therefore respectfully requests equitable relief in the form of an extension of the ballot-access deadline to July 23, 2026.

10. Plaintiff recognizes that equitable modification of election deadlines is extraordinary relief and therefore seeks only a narrowly tailored extension proportionate to the specific burdens alleged herein.

#### **LEGAL BASIS FOR EQUITABLE RELIEF**

11. Iowa courts recognize that statutory deadlines are not categorically immune from equitable modification under extraordinary circumstances. In *Rivas v. Brownell*, No. 23-1829 (Iowa Feb. 28, 2025), the Iowa Supreme Court held that addressing extraordinary roadblocks to the exercise of legal rights through tolling statutes of limitations falls within the judicial power and the Iowa Supreme Court's supervisory and administrative authority. The Court further recognized that "equitable exceptions to limitations statutes are common in Iowa." See also *Mormann v. Iowa Workforce Development*, 913 N.W.2d 554, 566 (Iowa 2018). Courts addressing ballot-access restrictions have likewise recognized that extraordinary external circumstances may

justify narrowly tailored relief where strict enforcement would substantially burden ballot access despite demonstrated diligence. See *Esshaki v. Whitmer*, No. 2:20-cv-10831 (E.D. Mich. 2020).

12. Plaintiff has exercised diligence in petition circulation, but extraordinary litigation burdens arising from ongoing court-imposed deadlines substantially interfered with her ability to meet the June 2, 2026 deadline. These obligations were not discretionary campaign activities, but court-imposed litigation requirements carrying mandatory filing deadlines and hearing obligations.

13. Federal constitutional ballot-access doctrine likewise requires courts to weigh the character and magnitude of burdens imposed on ballot access against the state interests asserted to justify those burdens. See *Anderson v. Celebrezze*, 460 U.S. 780, 789 (1983); *Burdick v. Takushi*, 504 U.S. 428, 434 (1992). Plaintiff respectfully submits that strict enforcement of the June 2, 2026 deadline would impose a substantial burden on ballot access disproportionate to the state interests served by denying narrowly tailored equitable relief under the circumstances presented.

14. Iowa courts have long recognized the broad equitable authority of courts to prevent unjust and excessively harsh outcomes under extraordinary circumstances. See *Moser v. Thorp Sales Corp.*, 312 N.W.2d 881 (Iowa 1981); *In re Estate of Young*, 273 N.W.2d 388, 391 (Iowa 1978). Plaintiff respectfully submits that these longstanding equitable principles further support the Court's authority to provide narrowly tailored relief where extraordinary external circumstances materially interfered with timely compliance despite demonstrated diligence.

15. Plaintiff does not seek invalidation of Iowa Code chapter 44, nor generalized judicial authority to disregard election deadlines. Rather, Plaintiff seeks narrowly tailored equitable relief

under extraordinary circumstances where external litigation burdens materially interfered with timely compliance despite demonstrated diligence and substantial progress toward compliance.

16. Plaintiff does not seek waiver of ballot-access requirements, but only a temporary equitable extension sufficient to complete the signature-gathering process.

### **REQUEST FOR EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION**

17. The June 2, 2026 ballot-access deadline is imminent. Absent expedited consideration, the relief requested herein may become moot before the Court has an opportunity to rule. Plaintiff therefore respectfully requests expedited consideration and hearing on this petition at the earliest practicable opportunity.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests:

- a. Equitable extension of the ballot-access deadline to July 23, 2026;
- b. Expedited consideration and hearing due to the imminence of the June 2, 2026 statutory deadline;
- c. Such other and further relief as the Court deems just and equitable.

Executed on this 1<sup>st</sup> day of June, 2026.

/s/ Alexandra “Sondra” Wilson  
Alexandra “Sondra” Wilson  
Pro Se Plaintiff  
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### **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I certify that on June 1, 2026, I served a copy of this Petition, attachments, and corresponding authorities on Defendant Paul D. Pate, Secretary of State of Iowa, by email at IVoters.Support@sos.iowa.gov and sos@sos.iowa.gov.

Defendant for Service Purposes

Paul D. Pate  
Secretary of State of Iowa  
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