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In the matter of the Complaint
 Against
Church Poll Site
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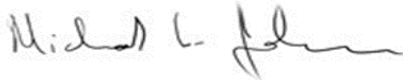
WHEREAS, on or about October 9, 2024, the Division of Election Law Enforcement (DELE) received a complaint alleging that St. Clare’s Church, located in Albany, NY, has campaign signs displayed on the church’s property. The complaint stated that the signs were concerning because St. Clare’s is a polling site, and because of their tax-exempt status, religious institutions are “*forbidden from political campaigning*”; and

WHEREAS, New York State Election Law § 8-104(1) states, “... no political banner, button, poster or placard shall be allowed in or upon the polling place or within such one hundred foot radial.” Additionally, under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, charitable organizations such as St. Clare’s are eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions in accordance with Code Section 170. However, they “are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office”; and

WHEREAS, after reviewing the complaint, a DELE special investigator drove to St. Clare’s but did not witness any campaign signage on the property. The only signs visible stated, “Kindness Matters” with the website for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany; and

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the foregoing, this matter is closed with no further enforcement action.

DIVISION OF ELECTION
LAW ENFORCEMENT



By: Michael L. Johnson
Chief Enforcement Counsel