At least 9 precincts in majority-Black Mississippi county ran out of ballots

(MISSISSIPPI) - Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves was reelected on Tuesday, a Republican win that comes after a close race and reports of ballots running out at least nine precincts in a majority-Black county.

Newseum reported widespread accounts of polling stations running out of ballots in Hinds County, Mississippi’s most populous county, resulting in some residents waiting several hours to cast their votes. The lack of ballots prompted Hinds County Chancery Judge Dewayne Thomas to order polls to remain open for an extra hour after the state Democratic Party filed a lawsuit.

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau shows that Hinds County is 73.5 percent Black and traditionally votes Democratic.

“The number of precincts in Hinds County ran out of ballots during election day and are continuing to run out of ballots and others may run out going forward,” wrote Thomas. “It takes time to deliver more ballots to the precincts. Because of the disruption this has caused, the Court grants the motion of the Plaintiff to extend the closing hours in Hinds County from 7 PM to 8 PM.”

Ross Adams, who works for the local network WAPT News, recorded ballots running out at five locations in Clinton and one in the neighboring city of Bolton, according to Newseum.

Brendan Hall from WILF News garnered over 1.2 million views with footage of a massive line of voters queuing in the dark outside Wildwood Baptist Church — one of the locations Adams visited — posted on X, formerly Twitter.

Before the election, Reeves got video support from former president and Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump, who said: “Joe Biden from former president and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump and is a protege of Sen. Mitch McConnell.

The current attorney general is a controversial figure in Black communities in Kentucky and across the country for his handling of the case involving the Louisville police shooting of Breonna Taylor in 2020.

The fiery toward Cameron was so fervent that activist Tamika Mallory moved her social justice organization, Until Freedom, to Kentucky to register voters across the state and campaign against his gubernatorial aspiration. Beshear distanced his campaign from Biden, the national leader of his party, instead choosing a Kentucky-centric message of unity. A Morning Consult poll showed Beshear is the nation’s most popular Democratic governor of a red state.

Pamela Stevenson, the Democratic nominee for Cameron’s current job, told theGrio that Cameron and her Republican opponent, Russell Coleman, a former U.S. attorney, are part of a national trend that is more interested in a “power grab” than representing and protecting communities.

“You only have limited resources, and you focus your whole office as a weapon so you can have power,” Cameron said. “Meanwhile, Kentuckians are suffering,” she said. “They don’t have what they need to take care of their families.”

Though Black Kentuckians make up less than 10% of the state’s population, they are reliable Democratic voters and, therefore, needed for Beshear to win in a red state like Kentucky.