

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: Please see attached.

League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles
Public Comment Regarding the Chief Legislative Analyst's Report Dated
August 25, 2023

The League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles (LWVGLA) offers the following comments to the Chief Legislative Analyst's (CLA) Report dated August 25, 2023 regarding Independent Redistricting Charter Reform.

Section A.1 Number of Council Districts

- LWVGLA agrees that council expansion would necessitate a budget increase for City Council; however, we do not believe that council expansion would warrant an increase in budget for City services/departments.
- The CLA noted that Common Cause recommended the Fixed Population Growth methodology to determine the size of future city council districts. LWVGLA opposes that methodology because it would be too complicated to implement and confusing to the public.

Section C.3 Commission Term

LWVGLA supports a 10-year term for members of the Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC or Commission). LWVGLA supports beginning the redistricting process in January of years ending in the number nine.

Section D.1 Commissioner Qualifications

LWVGLA recommends that qualifications for Commissioner include both objective and subjective qualifications.

Section D.8 Ex Parte Communications

In order to assure public trust in the redistricting process, there must be a ban on all ex parte communications by Commissioners and their consultants. The only exception to this ban should be communications regarding administrative matters.

Section E.3a Commission Selection Process

LWVGLA recommends that the responsibility to screen applicants should lay with the LA City Ethics Commission, not with the LA City Clerk. The City Clerk's office should administer the clerical aspects of the application process with oversight by the Ethics Commission.

F.2 Redistricting Criteria

- LWVGLA strongly recommends ranked criteria be written into the Charter Amendment.
- LWVGLA strongly opposes preserving population cores because it provides an unfair advantage to incumbents.

G.1 Public Meetings and Public Comment

- LWVGLA supports 14 days' notice for IRC meetings until the final 28 days before the map is due. During that time, 3 days' notice is sufficient.
- The purpose of the IRC is to produce maps that are fair and trusted by the public. To achieve that goal, it is essential that the public receive ample opportunities to participate in the process. This must include the following:
 - Public meetings must be geographically distributed throughout the City
 - At least half the meetings must take place in the evenings and/or on weekends
 - LWVGLA suggests that meetings be virtual
 - IRC meetings must be broadcast live with prior notice provided to the public
 - IRC meetings must be recorded for public viewing
 - The public must be provided multiple means of communication with the IRC, including:
 - In person
 - By phone
 - By computer
 - In writing
 - Via Zoom or other virtual application

H.5 Public Viewing of Maps (see chart page 27)

LWVGLA believes it is imperative that the public have sufficient time to review maps drawn by the IRC. LWVGLA supports the CLA's view that the draft maps and final maps should be posted for public consideration for a minimum of 7 days before the IRC meets.

J.1 Budget (see chart page 29)

The Commission must have a protected budget, the same as that of the California Independent Redistricting Commission.

K.7 Independent Counsel (see chart page 30)

LWVGLA strongly believes that the Commission must be completely independent of any government control. The Commission must have independent general counsel as well as independent Voting Rights Act counsel.

K.8a & K.8b Compensation (see chart page 31)

Members of the IRC should receive per diem compensation.

M.1a City Data Bureau (see chart page 32)

LWVGLA suggests further discussion as to whether a City Data Bureau be established by ordinance or included in the Charter Amendment.