

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: jbeard@colcompact.com [mailto:jbeard@colcompact.com]
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2014 9:44 AM
To: Charter
Subject: Council District History

Attached please find a history of the district issue in Columbus.

Jonathan C. Beard
President and CEO
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Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: jbeard@colcompact.com [mailto:jbeard@colcompact.com]
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2014 9:43 AM
To: Charter
Subject: Council Districts

Attached please find the proposed charter amendment petition for districts being circulated by the Columbus Coalition for Responsive Government.

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Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: Charter
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2014 9:42 AM
To: Charter
Subject: Council Districts

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 4/25/2014 9:41:36 AM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Jonathan Beard
Email address	jbeard@colsccompact.com
Subject	Council Districts
Message	<p>I write in support of council districts for Columbus, which would be the most impactful and best charter amendment this commission could recommend. A change to council districts would be a change back to districts/wards, from the current 7 member at large system adopted in 1914. Prior to enactment of the charter, the city had 19 wards; including ward 2 which as early as 1882 was represented by James Preston Poindexter, the first African American to hold elective office in Columbus. After the move to At Large, however, it was decades before another African American served on council - in fact, the parties eventually ended up "earmarking" seats for Blacks - similar to the "gentlemen's agreement" in Austin `to ensure Hispanic representation during the period in which Austin was all At Large. The point is, At Large representation is absent representation for minority citizens.</p> <p>Even in Columbus, which now has a majority Black council members, the Council President's PAC pays for 72% (Mills and Tyson), to 84% (Craig) to 90% (Miller) of the Black incumbent's campaigns, leaving the distinct impression that all are serving the interests and needs of the council president, rather than the citizens they would presumably seek to serve. When our incumbent politicians can not even afford to finance their own elections, something is wrong with the system -- District elections are less expensive than city-wide elections, and would garner more competition for elected office and more independent political figures.</p> <p>Recent events such as the demolition of Poindexter Village and the relocation of 83% of its residents from the Near East Side without a peep of protest from council; and the Columbus City Schools proposed Issue 50/51 that was rejected by nearly 70% of voters despite unanimous support of city council, show how out-of-touch our council has become from the majority of residents. Such a reality and perception of control through campaign finance is damaging to the integrity of the office of member of council and to our local democracy.</p>

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Field	Value
	<p>This is why, for decades until its recent political dominance, the Democratic Party led calls for reform and a return to District-based governance. Democratic icons such as Jack Sensenbrenner and Maury Portman led efforts to return to Districts/wards, with Portman (Columbus's longest-serving council member) complaining as late as the 1980s that it was ridiculous to believe that 7 members of council could represent a city the size of Columbus. And Columbus, in fact, has the smallest council of all major Ohio cities except Dayton (5 - the state law minimum) -- despite having by far larger geography and population than the rest.</p> <p>It is past time for change. I encourage the Charter Review Commission to look at this issue and make a recommendation to put District governance on the ballot for the people to decide.</p>

Email "Council Districts" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 4/25/2014 9:41:36 AM.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: jbeard@colcompact.com [mailto:jbeard@colcompact.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2014 4:45 PM
To: Charter
Subject: Charter Review Commission input

Attached are several fact sheets concerning Columbus City Council and the At Large representation issue.

-- Jon

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Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: jbeard@colcompact.com [mailto:jbeard@colcompact.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2014 4:43 PM
To: Charter
Subject: Representation issues in Columbus

Columbus City Council has become distant from the people it serves, possibly due to the at large system of elections, which makes elections extraordinarily expensive and reduces competition for the office. Recent examples include the Issue 50/51 debacle, where all Columbus elected officials supported the proposed school levy, but 70% of the voters opposed it. We note in review of campaign finance reports that our elections are too expensive for most of the incumbent council members, who turn to Andrew Ginther's PAC for the majority of their campaign funds. Of those now in office, Eileen Paley received 57% of her campaign contributions from *Friends for Ginther PAC*, and Zach Klein received 52%, Michelle Mills and Priscilla Tyson --72% each, Herschel Craig (84%) and Troy Miller (90%). If incumbents can't even afford their own campaigns, something is seriously wrong with the system. Challengers are similarly unable to raise sufficient money to run credible campaigns: in the 2013 election cycle, the 3 challengers combined to raise just over \$17,000. The fact that council receives funding from the council president/appointer undermines any notions of the independence of individual council members who were all originally appointed to their positions, and ran in their first election with a majority of money from the appointed council president. Every one of the current incumbents was originally appointed, and faced voters for the first time with all the advantages of incumbency. These facts undermine the credibility of the office of member of council and the individuals serving in those positions. Such undermining is corrosive to a democracy, and must be fixed through charter amendments designed to make council members more able to run for election. The City of Los Angeles has a campaign finance reform provision within its charter (a public matching funds program with mandatory appropriations). A powerpoint describing the program is at:

http://1.facebook.com/1.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fclerk.seattle.gov%2F%2Fpublic%2Fmeetingrecords%2F2013%2Fgpnf20130131_1a.pdf&h=VAQHdyDKu&enc=AZNDtFWuMLrzdgIZZJNPKl6HDA6X0mNsjPg2aqBV6epIQP-WkwNfe-c1FaNczxX5iIRkuhh9yHaiQ97qHKUGrYZqcZIT0f0MbK88IAjpZSdQCNe10UISg-HjLfIL-7dJUIgO4sUaCMJ-gSVUG_Oeu-Hu&s=1

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Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: jbeard@colcompact.com [mailto:jbeard@colcompact.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2014 4:17 PM
To: jbeard@colcompact.com; Charter
Subject: In support of council districts

Attached please find two Fact Sheets on Council Districts, prepared by the Columbus Coalition for Responsive Government. The first lists the largest 50 cities in America and breaks down their council structures. You will note that the “average” top 50 city has a 13 member council, with 2 elected at large and 11 elected by district. Columbus is far out of line with a 7 member, all at large format. The second fact sheet outlines how Columbus Democrats have traditionally supported council districts, starting with Mayor Sensenbrenner in 1957 and continuing through Maury Portman (the city’s longest-serving council member) in the 1980s.

The form of government is the exclusive province of the people of Columbus, and I encourage the Charter Review Commission to recommend that council districts be placed on the ballot for a vote of the people.

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From: Jon Beard
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2014 9:44 AM
To: 'charter@columbus.gov'
Subject: Council District History

Attached please find a history of the district issue in Columbus.

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Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: Charter
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2014 2:02 PM
To: Charter
Subject: Council Districts

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 4/29/2014 2:02:18 PM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Jonathan Beard
Email address	jbeard@colsccompact.com
Subject	Council Districts
Message	<p>In 1914, prior to adoption of the Charter of the City of Columbus, Thomas E. Beall, wrote a letter to the editor of the Dispatch, saying:</p> <p>Sir: I feel that a great injustice will be done to the great mass of our citizens should they be so unfortunate as to have the new proposed city charter foisted upon them. It is not a reform measure, but, on the contrary, it is strongly reactionary. It is distinctly a class charter, opposed to the welfare of the people, conserving the interest of the scholastic and the high class business man. It is therefore, unfair, un-American and should be destroyed ... evidently the whole intention of these master commissioners is to prohibit the frequency of elections; remove them as far as possible out of the hands of the 'common herd' of mankind; lengthen terms of office, reduce the number of elective officers, and, in a word, establish an aristocratic system. They plan that the parvenus and real 'nice people' shall have the places. But they place their alter on 'stairs of sand.'"</p> <p>Mr. Beall's words seem remarkably prophetic today, where we have elections that are virually unwinnable by non-incumbents, and where every city council member was initially appointed to office, rather than elected by the voters. We have the out-of-touch, aristocratic system that Beall warned about one hundred years earlier.</p> <p>This Charter Review Committee has the opportunity to address one of the major undemocratic provisions of he current charter: At Large council member elections. While this governmental structure was promoted by the industrialist of the early 1900's as a usiness-like approach to public secgtor governance-- this top-down, command and control model of governance is wildly inappropriate today, and Columubs is now the only big city that seeks to retain this archaic governance structure. The Columbus Coalition for Responsive Government secured over 27,000 petition signatures for a charter amendment changing to an 11 member council, with 4 members elected At Large, and 7 members elected from the Districts in which they</p>

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Field	Value
	<p>live.</p> <p>The average top 50 city council in America has 2 members at large and 11 from districts. Columbus, with 7 members at large and none from districts an extreme departure from common practice. In recent years, Detroit, Seattle, and Austin have each moved from all At Large formats to District-led formats. This Commission should recommend that the council approve placing language for council districts on the ballot, so the people can vote on their desired form of government.</p>

Email "Council Districts" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 4/29/2014 2:02:18 PM.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: Charter
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2014 4:54 PM
To: Charter
Subject: Fair representation

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 5/19/2014 4:54:07 PM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Naomi Johnson
Email address	beauvallet@aol.com
Subject	Fair representation
Message	<p>I'd like to see the charter be amended to achieve a more equitable representation of the citizens of Columbus by the city council. I've never seen a member of city council in my part of the city (southwest Columbus, the 'forgotten' piece of Hilltop that even the Hilltop Commission ignores, let alone the city council). I've never seen anyone who lives within 15 miles of my neighborhood be elected to city council. Wait a sec -- come to think of it I can't even remember the last time a newly elected member of the city council hadn't already been an appointee to that position. That's inherently unfair, not to mention how it both looks corrupt and lends itself to corruption. I think city council members should be drawn from every corner of the city. I think city council members appointed to fill a temporary opening should be ineligible to run for election to council for the term following the temporary appointment.</p> <p>I'd like the charter to withdraw the council's ability to hold closed-door meetings. Council business is the citizen's business, full stop.</p> <p>I'd like for the council meetings aired on public access TV to also include ALL of the input from the citizens of this city. A time for that input should be fixed either before or after the council's agenda, and not be subject to change so that council can slide their votes through without citizens being able to be heard on a given topic because of such changes.</p>

Email "Fair representation" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 5/19/2014 4:54:07 PM.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: Charter
Sent: Sunday, May 18, 2014 7:21 PM
To: Charter
Subject: City Charter reform

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 5/18/2014 7:20:45 PM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Suzanne Patzer
Email address	spatzer1959@gmail.com
Subject	City Charter reform
Message	<p>I would like to see the Columbus City Charter changed to require 11 members for our City Council -- seven ward representatives and four at large. This would necessitate a system where people would run based on seven wards in the city and be required to represent the interests of people in their ward.</p> <p>I would also like there to be City Council campaign finance reform.</p> <p>I would also like to roll back a decision that was passed in 2010 that allowed City Council to make decisions in secret without public discussion.</p> <p>I would also like to have the public comment section of City Council meetings changed so that it is all videotaped, there can be more than three speakers on a subject and allowing speakers to speak on subjects that are not on the agenda.</p>

Email "City Charter reform" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 5/18/2014 7:20:45 PM.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: Charter
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2014 9:18 PM
To: Charter
Subject: Revising structure to restore democratic participation

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 5/21/2014 9:18:07 PM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Simone Morgen
Email address	smorgen@juno.com
Subject	Revising structure to restore democratic participation
Message	I feel it is time to end the 100-year experiment in district-wide representation since it prevents direct citizen participation and representation. Without wards, the individual needs of specific wards are not really given a hearing. Columbus is fairly unique in this structure, and it does not serve the city well. I'm somewhat agnostic about term limits since they often have unexpected consequences, but I'd like to see more real competition for seats, which is more likely when you have ward representation.

Email "Revising structure to restore democratic participation" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 5/21/2014 9:18:07 PM.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: Charter
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2014 9:49 AM
To: Charter
Subject: City Council's structure

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 5/22/2014 9:49:16 AM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Joseph C. Sommer
Email address	jcsommer@aol.com
Subject	City Council's structure
Message	<p>I urge the Charter Review Commission to examine the advisability of expanding City Council's size and adding district representation to Council. Those actions have been advocated by prominent and experienced Columbus City officials in past decades, but have never been implemented. Meanwhile, the problems that led them to recommend the changes have gotten worse.</p> <p>In 1958, a City-appointed Charter Revision Committee noted Columbus' population growth and recommended "an increase in the size of Council from 7 to 9."</p> <p>In the 1960s, Mayor Sensenbrenner advocated expanding Council to 13 members, with a majority elected from districts. He said "we need representation of every segment of the City of Columbus."</p> <p>In the 1970s, Council Member Dr. John Rosemond supported expanding Council to 11 members, with six elected from Districts.</p> <p>In 1991, longtime Council Member Maury Portman said Council should be expanded to nine members. He explained that "seven council members for almost 700,000 people is ludicrous. . . . We're out of date."</p> <p>In 1998, then-former Council Member Portman said: "Seven council members for a city this size is ridiculous, you can't possibly be in touch with citizens regularly. . . . I feel that the most practical solution would be to divide the city into districts, and to prevent conflicts, you should have a certain number of at-large members to balance it out."</p> <p>In the past few years, Seattle and Austin changed from having City Councils elected all at-large to Councils including district representation. This means that among the 50 largest U.S. cites, Columbus is the only one left having a City Council elected all at-large.</p>

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Field	Value
	<p>Clearly, Columbus has a Council size that was adopted when the city was much smaller, both in terms of population and area. The outdated size of Council, along with the problem of no district representation on it, has been recognized by experienced and prominent City officials in past decades. Other large cities across the U.S. have moved in the direction they advocated, leaving Columbus with a Council structure that is out of step with what is considered best governmental practices for large cities.</p> <p>Now would be an excellent time for Columbus to start action to follow the example of those other cities, or at least study the possibility of doing it.</p>

Email "City Council's structure" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 5/22/2014 9:49:16 AM.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 5/31/2014 8:39:20 PM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Doug Zimmerman
Email address	dgzmmrmn@yahoo.com
Subject	District representation and campaign finance reform
Message	<p>Dear Charter Review Commission,</p> <p>I strongly urge the Commission to revise the charter so Columbus has a hybrid council composed of members representing districts/wards and at-large. Seven districts and four at-large seems appropriate. As I'm sure you know, we are the ONLY large city in the USA with an all at-large council. Past leaders such as Maury Portman saw this as problematic.</p> <p>We need a system that allows some neighborhood leaders to rise up to City Council. It is very expensive to campaign in city-wide elections. A candidate for council must raise several hundred thousand dollars to be competitive. Very rarely in the past 30 years has anyone been elected to council without being first appointed.</p> <p>Our society views competition as being useful in most aspects of life---in schools, businesses, etc. But our political system has been skewed to be non-competitive.</p> <p>I also strongly urge the Commission to enact Campaign Finance Reform so our politicians are responsive to the political action committee of the taxpayers rather than corporate or political PACs.</p> <p>I respectfully urge the Commission to support the funding of Public-Access TV. It would cost very little in relative terms. Columbus media ownership and control is extremely consolidated. We need outlets for differing viewpoints and forums.</p> <p>Thank you for your service and please carefully consider what's best for the common good of our town!</p>

Email "District representation and campaign finance reform" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 5/31/2014 8:39:20 PM.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: Charter
Sent: Monday, June 02, 2014 11:36 AM
To: Charter
Subject: Charter changes

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 6/2/2014 11:36:09 AM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Diann Thomas Beasley
Email address	dbea1796@yahoo.com
Subject	Charter changes
Message	<p>I am concerned that the Charter Review Commission will not address the concerns of the voters in Columbus.</p> <p>1st. concern: Would like for you to address Campaign Finance Reform for the Mayor, and City Council members. Ginther adds money to the coffers of the current council members because they were unable raise funds. Currently the way the council members campaigns are funded is wrong because it does not foster good will for those who attempt to run for the Council seats. I would like to see fair completion among people seeking to run for office whether it is a Republican, Democrat, Green Party, Libertarian or Constitution party.</p> <p>2nd concern: Please address automatic appointments to City Council - stop the hand picking from the mayor and Ginther, and open it up to the public.</p> <p>3rd concern: Address changing the at-large system, and go to Council Districts that will 'represent all' people instead of the narrow scope that is in place now. Add at least four more council members to represent a population of around 800,000. In 1914 there were roughly only 181,000 people when the at large system was instituted. Currently the citizens of Columbus are under-represented.</p> <p>Thank you for your action. I am looking forward to reading about the 'positive changes' that will be made to the City Charter that will represent 'all' people of Columbus.</p>

Email "Charter changes" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 6/2/2014 11:36:09 AM.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 6/25/2014 11:43:46 AM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Jack Reall
Email address	president@local67.com
Subject	Agenda for tomorrows meeting
Message	Please send me the agenda for tomorrow's meeting as soon as it is prepared.

Email "Agenda for tomorrows meeting" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 6/25/2014 11:43:46 AM.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: JCSommer@aol.com [mailto:JCSommer@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 26, 2014 2:48 PM
To: Charter
Subject: District Elections for Columbus City Council

Charter Review Commission:

Thank you for the work you have been doing concerning the Charter. In regard to whether Columbus should add district representation to City Council, I wanted to make sure you have the San Francisco Chronicle's article that I have pasted below and provided a link to.

As you know, of the 50 largest US cities, Columbus is the only one not having district representation on its City Council. Being so out of step with comparable cities should, by itself, be enough to raise concerns about and initiate investigation of whether an all at-large system is the best way to select Council members for a large city.

Because the other 49 largest US cities say it isn't, Columbus officials would appear arrogant and irrational by not considering why those cities believe that including district representation on Council is better.

The article points out some of the benefits that San Francisco experienced from changing to district representation. They include increased access to government by ordinary citizens, a government that is more responsive to ordinary citizens, less special-interest influence over government, lower campaign costs for running for a seat on Council, and a Council that better reflects the public's diversity.

I hope you will look at the possibility of Columbus receiving such benefits from amending the Charter to add district representation to Council

Joe Sommer
5672 Great Hall Court
Columbus, OH 43231-3067

The following article is also at this link:
<http://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/Why-district-elections-3197988.php>

Why district elections?

Tom Ammiano and David Chiu

Published 4:00 am, Sunday, February 28, 2010

In 1996, a ballot initiative establishing district elections passed overwhelmingly, winning in 24 of San Francisco's 25 neighborhoods. The measure, which took effect in 2001, was endorsed by the Democratic and Republican parties.

That sort of consensus is rare, especially when it comes to issues of governance.

Today, as we approach the 10th anniversary of a district-elected [Board of Supervisors](#), it's worthwhile to ask the question: "What have district elections brought San Francisco?"

Quite a lot.

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Far from giving San Francisco a splintered or parochial board, district elections have brought with them some of the most noteworthy citywide accomplishments in decades.

We provided universal access to health care for San Franciscans and established a living wage in one of the world's most expensive cities. We created a rainy-day fund we use to support our struggling public school system. And we are taking care of our city's aging infrastructure - from police and fire stations to our water and wastewater systems - through our 10-year capital plan. On issues that touch every corner of San Francisco, this district-elected Board of Supervisors has led the way.

But district elections' greatest improvement isn't any of those high-profile legislative accomplishments - it's the increased access to government for ordinary San Franciscans. Before district elections were passed, under a citywide election system, many neighborhoods - the Excelsior, the Sunset, the Mission and Bayview-Hunters Point - had no supervisor of their own. Today, all residents can pick up the phone and reach an office responsible for their neighborhood and responsive to their concerns - a broken streetlight, a dangerous pothole or a consistently tardy Muni line.

Part of that increased accessibility to government is the result of the decrease in the cost of running a district versus a citywide election. In the 1994 citywide elections, the average winning candidate spent \$456,000 in today's dollars. That's 225 percent greater than the amount spent today: In 2008, the winning candidates spent an average of \$204,000. Candidates needing to raise money for a citywide race will inevitably turn to special interests for contributions. If you believe elected representatives should speak up for people, not just the special interests that donated to their campaigns, today's district system serves you better.

And perhaps most important, the district-elected board has brought voters a body that is a better reflection of our city - Latino, Asian, African American, LGBT. At the time voters approved district elections, proponents noted that under the at-large system in place from 1979-96, only one supervisor from an ethnic community had ever been elected to the Board of Supervisors who hadn't first been appointed by a mayor or elected in a prior district election. The board today is the most ethnically diverse in the city's 150-year history and has its first Chinese American president. That's not the kind of diversity we could ever claim under a citywide elected board.

In 1996, voters spoke loud and clear. They wanted a Board of Supervisors that responded to neighborhood needs while having a citywide conscience. They wanted a board that spoke for real people, not just our city's biggest bank accounts. And that's what they got.

Today, it's not San Francisco voters who are disenchanting; it's the city's corporate interests. That's not surprising, given that they never supported district elections in the first place. And with the U.S. Supreme Court recently overturning limits on corporate contributions to campaigns, a return to a citywide system could coincide with a new wave of corporate cash that would drown out neighborhood voices in favor of moneyed interests.

Willie Brown, the last mayor who served with a Board of Supervisors elected at-large, not only hand-picked and appointed six of the 11, but he famously called them "my mistresses in need of servicing." Today's Board of Supervisors speaks for all neighborhoods and all San Franciscans, and we don't think the city is eager to go back to the days when it didn't.

Public Comments Submitted to the
Columbus Charter Review Commission

From: Charter
Sent: Thursday, July 03, 2014 10:20 PM
To: Charter
Subject: City of Los Angeles Charter: Campaign Finance Provision

Data from form "Contact the Commission" was received on 7/3/2014 10:20:28 PM.

Contact the Charter Review Commission

Field	Value
Name	Jonathan Beard
Email address	jbeard@colcompact.com
Subject	City of Los Angeles Charter: Campaign Finance Provision
Message	<p>The Seattle City Clerk compiled a Powerpoint presentation describing Los Angeles's Charter Amendment re: campaign finance reform, which I submit for your consideration:</p> <p>http://clerk.seattle.gov/~public/meetingrecords/2013/gpnf20130131_1a.pdf</p> <p>As you may know, voters overwhelmingly approved a charter amendment that allows campaign finance reform, but no law to implement was ever passed. Los Angeles's CFR is in charter which allows for mandatory annual funding of public financing, versus the annual appropriations that would be required in ordinance.</p> <p>The Columbus Coalition for Responsive Government will be submitted petitions supporting an initiated ordinance in support of campaign finance.</p>

Email "City of Los Angeles Charter: Campaign Finance Provision" originally sent to charter@columbus.gov from charter@columbus.gov on 7/3/2014 10:20:28 PM.

A History of Traditional Democrat Party Support for a More Open City Council

“We, the people of the city of Columbus, in order to secure and exercise the powers of local self government under the constitution of the state of Ohio do enact and ordain this charter.”

So begins the Charter of the City of Columbus, enacted by the voters in 1914. The Charter became the city’s authorizing and governing document following the State of Ohio’s enactment of Home Rule legislation in 1912.

But it is not a static document. The charter provided “the machinery with which the people may amend its provisions as future necessity may arise. The people will have the power to change it at any time to suit the requirements of a rapidly growing city, or to correct any possible defects which may develop in the new form of government.”¹

And it has, in fact, been amended 61 times since enactment. Democrats have had a tremendous role in keeping the Charter current and keeping Columbus governance open. Mayor Jack Sensenbrenner became Mayor for the first time in 1954 -- the first Democratic Mayor of Columbus since 1935. Mayor Sensenbrenner is credited with devising Columbus’s growth strategy of using water and sewer service as annexation leverage, allowing the city to avoid becoming landlocked by suburbs and retain growing outer areas within the municipal boundaries.

By 1957, Sensenbrenner had commissioned a Charter Revision Committee, which issued its report on December 19, 1958. The Commission stated “the present charter is 44 years old. It is no longer in tune with the times. In its present form it will be an increasingly heavy milestone around the neck of a city struggling with vast new problems.”² The Commission continued “most important of all, the council, enlarged from 7 to 9 members ... would remain the policy-determining body of the city.”

In 1968, the Columbus Dispatch wrote “a proposal to reorganize the Columbus City Council under the old-fashioned ward political plan may be placed on the ballot by the Sensenbrenner administration next May. One of the aims of the proposal will be to provide representation to the Negro minority which now has no voice on the City Council.”³

Within weeks, Council working with first assistant City Attorney Frank Reda, had prepared several District-based proposals, including three different proposals for 11 members elected to a combination of districts and at-large seats: 5 at-large, 5 wards,

¹ The Columbus Citizen. *Columbus Steps Forward*, May 6, 1914, P. 4.

² “Report of the Columbus Charter Review Commission to the Council of the City of Columbus, Ohio.” December 19, 1958.

³ Columbus Dispatch. “Ward Councilmen Proposed for City,” January 12, 1968, P. A10.

and one council president (at large); six wards and five at-large councilmen; and seven wards and four at-large council members.⁴ p

By March, Council had prepared a plan for a 13 member Council that had seven Districts and 6 At-Large seats. A complication arose in that three of the Democratic councilmen -- Donald Woodland, MD Portman, and Baumann – were up for re-election the next year. And while there was a Democratic trip up for election, only two of the seats would be At Large seats. And since the council president was restricted to an At Large member, one of the three would have had to run from a district and thereby forego any ambition to become council president. Chief proponent, councilman Baumann, solved the problem when he announced he would run from a district if Portman and Woodland preferred to run at large.⁵ The Democratic Council passed this plan by a vote of 6-1, with Republican Roland A. Sedgwick voting “no” and declaring “any change of this magnitude should have included public hearings.”

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Ultimately, the 1968 proposal by Democrat Mayor Sensenbrenner and the Democrat-controlled City Council failed at the ballot, with 45,337 residents voting against it, and 33,5476 voting for it. However, “many observers were surprised the controversial proposal received even 43 per cent of the vote on its

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Rosemond’s 1975 reform proposal was for an 11 member City Council, with 5 members elected at-large and 6 members elected from Districts. It named a committee of office holders and council members to draw the District boundaries. The four additional council members were estimated to cost the City \$120,000 more annually, and the Franklin County Board of Elections said the additional election costs would be very small.¹²

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However, the Council abandoned the recommendation to study changing the council without further consideration, and put the long-discussed council vacancy issue on the November ballot as Issue 1, where it was approved by a 2-1 margin.¹⁸ The 1993 decision by Council not to pursue the recommendation to further study expanding the council by at-large or District-based representation fell a long way from the Democratic traditional support for more representation, and more local representation. It marks a disappointing clear break with the long Democratic tradition of support for open elections and full empowerment of citizens.

When Mayor Michael B. Coleman was running for Governor in 2005, he described the Republican Coingate scandal in state government as “an example of the arrogance of power that comes with one-party rule.” Columbus is now a one-party rule city, with a Council that has become increasingly closed off and distant from the people it represents.

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A HISTORY AND PERSPECTIVES ON COLUMBUS CITY COUNCIL

In 1912, the State of Ohio adopted "Home Rule" legislation to allow local communities to self-govern. In response, local leaders created a 15 member Charter Commission to develop a City Charter that would provide the basis for "home rule" in Columbus. "The form of charter was left to the judgment of the commissioners, but they were pledged to write into the charter the non-partisan ballot, the short ballot and a more centralized form of government."¹

This was consistent with the *Progressive Reform movement* sweeping across the nation in the early 1900's, as a reaction to the facts that new immigrant populations were clustering in ethnic neighborhoods and developing Ward-based political power, and that big industrialists and their "new money" and power were becoming increasingly influential in the affairs of local communities. Across the country, "At Large" governance – where Ward politics were replaced by City-Wide politics - became a mechanism preferred by local business and social associations to help them retain the local influence they had long considered to be their province.²

A campaign committee led by Columbus attorney Hugh Huntington pushed for adoption of the proposed Charter, which was adopted by the voters in 1914. This new Charter changed the way the City was traditionally governed. In the immediate past, the City Council had consisted of 19 council members: 3 elected at large and 16 elected from Wards. The new council structure created by the new Charter consisted of seven members elected citywide ("At Large"), and for the first time, no members were elected by Ward ("Wards" and "Districts" are interchangeable terms). Terms of office were lengthened from 2 years to 4 years, and the president of council was to be chosen by the members of council itself, rather than by the citizens. Many of these provisions were quite controversial at the time:

"... I feel that a great injustice will be done to the great mass of our citizens should they be so unfortunate as to have the new proposed city charter foisted upon them. It is not a reform measure, but, on the contrary, it is strongly reactionary. It is distinctly a class charter, opposed to the welfare of the people, conserving the interest of the scholastic and the high class business man. It is, therefore, unfair, un-American and should be destroyed ... evidently the whole intention of these master commissioners is to prohibit the frequency of elections; remove them as far as possible out of the hands of the 'common herd' of mankind; lengthen terms of office, reduce the number of elective officers, and, in a word, establish an aristocratic system."³

Fortunately, the charter also provided "the machinery with which the people may amend its provisions as future necessity may arise. The people will have the power

¹ The Columbus Citizen. *Charter Adopted by Majority of 1042; Effective in 1916*, May 6, 1914, p. 1. [Emphasis added]

² Hofstader, Richard. *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.*, 1955. (Note: this book won the 1956 Pulitzer Prize for History.

³ Thomas E. Beall. *The Columbus Dispatch: A Reactionary Charter: To the Editor*, May 3, 1914, p. 5.

to change it at any time to suit the requirements of a rapidly growing city, or to correct any possible defects which may develop in the new form of government.”⁴

And the Columbus City Charter has, in fact, remained a living document, having been amended 61 times over the past 98 years. However, the 7 member At Large Council provision remains in place today, despite the huge changes in the City over that period of time. When this At Large system was adopted in 1914, the city had a population of 181,500 that was concentrated in 24.5 square miles. Columbus is now over 787,000 residents in 225 square miles. Despite those changes, we retain this archaic structure of 7 members elected At Large on Council.

Over the decades, studied efforts of reform have been undertaken to better match city governance with our growing community and the evolution of good governance concepts in America, but these efforts have been defeated. In 1958, when the City had an area of 86 square miles and a population of 475,000, the *Report of the Charter Revision Committee to the Council of the City of Columbus* said, “the present charter is 44 years old. It is no longer in tune with the times.” The Committee thus recommended adding two members to City Council, to move from 7 to 9 members, but Council did not move it to the ballot. In 1968, the Democratic City Council and Mayor Sensenbrenner attempted to update Council, this time by sponsoring a 13 member council with 7 district and 6 at large seats, which ultimately failed at the ballot. In 1975, Councilmember John Rosemond, who was running for Mayor at the same time, sponsored an eleven member Council reform with six seats from Districts and 5 seats At Large, which was defeated by voters. In 1993, there was another effort by a Charter Review Committee to revamp City Council, which included recommendation to study enlarging and/or moving to a District-based Council, which was rebuffed by the City Council and never placed before the voters.

These rejections of a District-based City Council leave Columbus in a small minority among American big cities. The average council of the largest 50 cities is comprised of 13 members: with 2 members elected At Large, and 11 members elected from Ward/Districts. More specifically, the cities Columbus most frequently compares itself to, have the following Council structures:

- Indianapolis has 29 members: 4 members At Large, and 25 from Districts;
- Charlotte has 11 members: 4 members At Large, and 7 from Districts;
- Boston has 11 members: 4 members At Large and 7 from Districts;
- San Francisco has 11 members, all 11 from Districts;
- Portland has 11 members: 4 members At Large, and 7 from Districts;
- Fort Worth has 7 members, all 7 from Districts.
- Austin has 7 members: all 7 At Large. However, the City – led by its Mayor -- is currently promoting charter change proposals to increase to either 9 or 11 members, with either 6 or 8 Districts respectively.

Clearly, the Columbus City Council, with 7 members elected at large and no member elected from Districts, is an outdated, aristocratic anomaly. After 98 years with this system, it is clearly appropriate to re-examine the rationale for maintaining a system that was designed to centralize power and designed to dilute citizen participation in the affairs of local governance. Citizens of Columbus deserve a form of government that is responsive and accountable to its people.

⁴ The Columbus Citizen. *Columbus Steps Forward*, May 6, 1914, p. 4.

COLUMBUS CITY CHARTER REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

May 7, 2014

The recently published Ohio Poverty Report of February 2014 shows some very alarming statistics related to poverty in the state of Ohio and of my immediate concern, Franklin County and the City of Columbus. With a population of nearly 1.15 million residents in Franklin County in 2012, there were 202,812 or 17.7% of the population that were considered persons of poverty. In the City of Columbus with a population of 771,624 in 2012, 169,372 or 22.2% were considered persons of poverty. That is equivalent to just over 1 out of every 5 citizens of our city. I believe it's time that Columbus voters be given the opportunity to express their moral obligation and provide all those employed in the City of Columbus a minimum hourly wage of \$10.00 per hour and a \$5.00 per hour rate for tipped employees. Both would be annually indexed into inflation. Our city leaders and marketing experts have been falling over each other for years now trying to get the attention of the rest of the country as to identifying Columbus. Well let's show everyone that we are a fair minded and compassionate people and allow the voters of Columbus to enrich our hard working citizens with a respectable hourly wage. It's time we put people and poverty before profits.

My next recommendation is to amend the City Charters Nominations and Elections Section. Specifically Section 202 The Nomination of City Council Members and other Officers. In Line 2 of this section it reads "Such petitions shall be signed by not less than 1,000 registered electors in the city". As some of you know in order to submit 1,000 registered electors' signatures, this means submitting a safeguard of 50% more signatures or 1,500. The 50% number is commonly used as a standard for petition gathering due to the number of rejected signatures. I feel this excessive signature requirement is equivalent to that of the recent restrictions and injustice that is taking place with our voting laws. This extraordinarily high signature requirement serves as a deterrent to those citizens whose fundamental right it is to run for public office. And they may not be part of our 2 party political machines, thus not equipped with the resources to gather so many signatures. This exorbitant requirement is meant to maintain the status quo. In the State of Ohio, a House or Senate member for the state legislature is required only 50 signatures. And when elected, he or she will vote on legislation that affects 11.5 million people. In Columbus, a City Council member votes on legislation that for the most part affects 780,000 citizens. I believe this signature requirement should be lowered to 100.

I would also like to see the portion of Line 3. Section 202 which reads “Such petitions shall contain a provision that each signer thereto thereby **pledges to support and vote for the candidate or candidates whose names are therein presented for a place upon the ballot**”. I am surprised that this language has remained in the charter as long as it has. Who we vote for has always been and I hope always will be a private and confidential right. I find it hard to believe that such language is even constitutional. How can signing a petition force someone to acknowledge that they will vote for them? How do we check if that individual did in fact vote for the person whose name is on the petition? We can’t. As someone who has personally gathered thousands of signatures, I can tell you that many people (as I am sure you are aware) will sign a candidate’s petition by saying “I think everyone has a right to run for office if they want to” and they sign. I also believe that so called “slate petitions” should be eliminated. Each candidate should be required to obtain the required number of signatures for themselves.

And lastly, I recommend that Section 3307.03, The Creation of Board of Zoning Adjustments be amended to read that: “5 residents live in the City of Columbus and that they be elected by the electors of Columbus (not appointed by the Mayor)”. Also eliminate the requirement that at least 3 members be actively engaged as an architect, building contractor, professional engineer, real estate broker or mortgage banker. The makeup of this body should be all inclusive. The zoning decisions that are granted by this board are comparable to the zoning decisions made by our elected member of City Council. The BZA’s decisions of have an everlasting impact on the development of our neighborhoods. Yet there is no accountability to these board members when their decisions create an adverse effect on our quality of life.

Recommendations submitted by:

Joe Motil
167 West Cooke Road
Columbus, Ohio 43214
614-420-5211 (c)
614-267-8124 (h)

A History of Traditional Democrat Party Support for a More Open City Council

“We, the people of the city of Columbus, in order to secure and exercise the powers of local self government under the constitution of the state of Ohio do enact and ordain this charter.”

So begins the Charter of the City of Columbus, enacted by the voters in 1914. The Charter became the city’s authorizing and governing document following the State of Ohio’s enactment of Home Rule legislation in 1912.

But it is not a static document. The charter provided “the machinery with which the people may amend its provisions as future necessity may arise. The people will have the power to change it at any time to suit the requirements of a rapidly growing city, or to correct any possible defects which may develop in the new form of government.”¹

And it has, in fact, been amended 61 times since enactment. Democrats have had a tremendous role in keeping the Charter current and keeping Columbus governance open. Mayor Jack Sensenbrenner became Mayor for the first time in 1954 -- the first Democratic Mayor of Columbus since 1935. Mayor Sensenbrenner is credited with devising Columbus’s growth strategy of using water and sewer service as annexation leverage, allowing the city to avoid becoming landlocked by suburbs and retain growing outer areas within the municipal boundaries.

By 1957, Sensenbrenner had commissioned a Charter Revision Committee, which issued its report on December 19, 1958. The Commission stated “the present charter is 44 years old. It is no longer in tune with the times. In its present form it will be an increasingly heavy milestone around the neck of a city struggling with vast new problems.”² The Commission continued “most important of all, the council, enlarged from 7 to 9 members ... would remain the policy-determining body of the city.”

In 1968, the Columbus Dispatch wrote “a proposal to reorganize the Columbus City Council under the old-fashioned ward political plan may be placed on the ballot by the Sensenbrenner administration next May. One of the aims of the proposal will be to provide representation to the Negro minority which now has no voice on the City Council.”³

Within weeks, Council working with first assistant City Attorney Frank Reda, had prepared several District-based proposals, including three different proposals for 11 members elected to a combination of districts and at-large seats: 5 at-large, 5 wards,

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² “Report of the Columbus Charter Review Commission to the Council of the City of Columbus, Ohio.” December 19, 1958.

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Providing A Better Voice To Address Neighborhood Concerns

One of the benefits of District representation on a City Council is that council members elected by district provide on-going contact and communication with the stakeholders of the neighborhoods. This institutional presence helps get long-term issues addressed. The Columbus Coalition for Responsive Government has presented the issue of the lack of responsiveness of Columbus City Council to the great neighborhoods of Columbus. Here is a sampling of the perspectives of various Columbus leaders (all emphases added):

Council is Unresponsive Once Elections are Over

" 'I feel that the commissions are often the scapegoat for the imprudent decisions made by our elected officials. Changing boundaries is a red herring that sidesteps the real issue, and that is that *oftentimes the city is totally unresponsive to neighborhood concerns*. Stormwater, trash and crime are issues that any resident can bring before the council. I wish more of them would do that. *Then they'd see how difficult it is to get a response once the election is over.*'

KATHLEEN BAILEY
Chairwoman
Near East Area Commission"

("Area commissions are unfairly criticized" in [The Columbus Dispatch](#), September 27, 2007)

Council Ignores Neighborhood Groups on Drugs and Violence

"A coalition of Near East Side and South Side groups contends that *Columbus City Council members have ignored their pleas for help to fight drugs and violence in their neighborhoods*. Meanwhile, *a letter to the council demanding action* has been circulating for signatures among neighborhood groups on the Near East Side and South Side, said Michael Aaron, president of the Livingston Avenue Area Commission. "*We're all screaming about the same thing. To just ignore this huge group of people, that's bold.*" ("Community groups: Council won't listen," in [The Columbus Dispatch](#), October 18, 2011)

Council is Unresponsive to Crime and Safety Issues

"*[Olde Towne East Block Watch leader Kathy] Webb said the block watch tried to meet with Councilwoman Michelle M. Mills, who leads the council's safety committee, but received no reply from her or her office for several months*. Kathleen Bailey, chairwoman of the Near East Area Commission, said Mills is no worse than the rest of the council: "*We get very little help from the council.*" ("CAMPAIGN 2011: WHERE THEY STAND - CRIME AND POLITICS," in [The Columbus Dispatch](#), September 20, 2011)

Long-Time Neglect of Neighborhood

"Columbus is spending \$5 million on a North Side **neighborhood** that has experienced little public investment for almost a century. '*I believe the city turned its back on that neighborhood,*' Mayor Michael B. Coleman said last week of American Addition, which is part of the larger Americrest neighborhood. '*The neglect is obvious simply by walking through the neighborhood,*' he said. *Generations of residents have asked the city for help, but commitments weren't fulfilled.*" ("NEIGHBORHOOD FUNDS - Bleak blocks to get money," in [The Columbus Dispatch](#), March 13, 2011)

Neglect of Neighborhoods and Loss of Population

"On the Near East Side, *Kathleen D. Bailey said the city has been slow to get her neighborhood back on its feet. 'We've been studied to death,'* said Bailey, chairwoman of the Near East Area Commission. 'What we really need are the capital-improvement dollars. We have a very good housing stock, *but it's just been neglected.'*" ("City's growth not uniform: Census data show Columbus following pattern of losing people from central city," in The Columbus Dispatch, March 11, 2011)

No One To Speak on Our Behalf - People Don't Have A Voice

"Council members were talking about divvying up federal stimulus dollars and providing jobs, housing and other social services. [Longtime activist Clarence] Lumpkin, 84, wanted South Linden to nab its share. 'There was no one from this area to speak on our behalf,' he said.

These days, South Linden isn't the only neighborhood missing at council meetings. Community leaders have become less visible over the past decade. 'Monday nights, it used to be you couldn't even find a seat,' recalled Peggy McElroy, an 18-year volunteer and former president of the Northwest Civic Association.

But many of the old guard have retired or died. Replacing them is difficult. Some younger residents say they don't have time. *Others believe that one person can't make a difference because council members already have made up their minds.* 'You go to a wedding, you know they're going to say 'I do.' You know it's not going to be a surprise,' said Debera Diggs, 52, who leads the Columbus South Side Area Commission. *'People feel like they don't have a voice.'*"

Lack of Deliberation on Council

"The Columbus City Council reconvenes Monday after *a six-week summer hiatus that has left its chambers void of rigorous debate and clashing opinions. In other words, it has been business as usual on the second floor of City Hall.*

Council members have cast a combined 37,742 votes on policy changes, spending proposals, procedural motions and other matters since January 2007, the earliest date that a majority of the current roster has been in office. Just 20 of those votes -- one-twentieth of 1 percent -- have been cast in dissent.

The Dispatch looked at the official record from 127 meetings conducted since Jan. 22, 2007, the day Council President Michael C. Mentel was elevated to the top leadership post. That vote was among the 5,808 unanimous decisions recorded. Also approved without dissent: laying off 140 workers and shutting down 11 recreation centers as part of last year's budget, draining the city's rainy-day fund to avoid even deeper cuts, doubling the number of red-light cameras to watch drivers at Columbus intersections, placing an income-tax increase on the special-election ballot in 2009, and putting the closed-meeting amendment before voters this fall.

As a group, those votes have added up to 5,823 decisions during that same 44-month span. All but 15 have been unanimous. *"Over-emphasis on consensus to the neglect of debate is group-think,"* Kayser said. *'There's a lack of creativity and innovation.'* 'Much of what any government does is routine, uncontroversial and required by law,' said Alex Heckman, who was recently hired by Franklin University to head a public-administration graduate program that will begin next fall, 'but on the spectrum, they might be some of the most agreeable folks,' he said of Columbus council members." ("Any opposed? Not too likely," in The Columbus Dispatch, September 12, 2010.)

FACT SHEET ON COUNCIL GOVERNANCE NATIONWIDE

COLUMBUS COALITION FOR RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT

Columbus City Council has seven members elected citywide, and no council members elected from Districts. When this At-Large system was adopted in 1914, the city had a population of 181,500 and covered 24.5 square miles. Columbus is now more than 787,000 residents in more than 225 square miles.

Columbus moved from District-based representation to At-Large representation in 1914 -- like many other cities -- because of the concerns of the power elite about the influence of Columbus's growing immigrant population and the growing influence of the new industrialists in local affairs. Over time, most Cities went back to either all-District representation, or a balance of District and At-Large representation.

In 2008, of the 50 largest cities in America, only Columbus, Austin, Detroit, and Seattle did not elect any council members by District or Ward. In 2009, Detroit voters overwhelmingly rejected its At Large system, and voted to move to a mixed system led of 2 At Large members and 7 District-based members. In 2012, Austin voters elected to move to a system of 10 District-based members and 1 member At Large, which will take effect in November 2015. In November, 2014, Seattle voters abandoned their At Large council format and moved to a 7 District/2 At Large format, leaving Columbus alone as an anachronism in council governance format.

Columbus's comparison cities have council bodies as follows:

City	2010 Population	Members At-Large	Members from Districts	Citizens per Member
Columbus, OH	787,033	7	0	112,443
Indianapolis, IN	820,445	4	25	28,291
San Francisco, CA	805,235	0	11	73,203
Austin, TX (voted 11/6/12)*	790,390	1	10	71,854
Fort Worth, TX	741,206	1	8	82,356
Charlotte, NC	731,424	4	7	66,493
Baltimore, MD	620,961	1	14	41,397
Boston, MA	617,594	4	7	56,145
Portland, OR	583,776	4	5	64,864
PROPOSED COLUMBUS	787,033	4	7	71,548

Of the largest 50 cities in America, on average, the ratio of citizens represented per council member is 73,093 citizens to every one council member. Of the largest 20 cities in America, the average ratio is 105,551 citizens to every one council member (and when you factor out Los Angeles, which has a much higher ratio than any other city, the average of the top 19 cities is 94,016 citizens per council member). Columbus's ratio of council members to citizens is well above average, and among the nation's highest. And in fact, Columbus has the smallest council of any major Ohio city, except Dayton -- despite having larger population and larger geography than every other city. Our citizens are under-represented. If you average the top 50 cities in America, the average city council has roughly 2 council members elected at-large and 11 council members elected from Districts. Among the top 20 cities, the average council has roughly 2 council members elected at-large, to 14 council members elected from Districts.

A Citizens' Ballot Initiative to reform the Charter of the City of Columbus, to create a more responsive and more accountable Columbus City Council that consists of 4 members elected "at-large" in city-wide elections, and 7 members elected by the residents of each of 7 neighborhood-based Districts.

We are a non-profit Ballot Initiative Committee

1051 E. Main Street
Columbus, OH 43205
(614) 595-2986
www.columbuscoalition.info

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COMPARISON OF CITIZEN REPRESENTATION IN U.S. CITY COUNCILS

Pop. Rank	City, State	2010 Population	Number of Council Members			Citizens per Member
			At Large	Districts	Total	
1	New York, N.Y.	8,175,133	0	51	51	160,297
2	Los Angeles, Calif.	3,792,621	0	15	15	252,841
3	Chicago, Ill.	2,695,598	0	50	50	53,912
4	Houston, Tex.	2,099,451	5	9	14	149,961
5	Philadelphia, Pa.	1,526,006	7	10	17	89,765
6	Phoenix, Ariz.	1,445,632	1	8	9	160,626
7	San Antonio, Tex.	1,327,407	1	10	11	120,673
8	San Diego, Calif.	1,307,402	0	8	8	163,425
9	Dallas, Tex.	1,197,816	1	14	15	79,854
10	San Jose, Calif.	945,942	1	10	11	85,995
11	Jacksonville, Fla.	821,784	5	14	19	43,252
12	Indianapolis, Ind.	820,445	4	25	29	28,291
13	San Francisco, Calif.	805,235	0	11	11	73,203
14	Austin, Tex. *	790,390	7	0	7	112,913
15	Columbus, Ohio	787,033	7	0	7	112,433
16	Fort Worth, Tex.	741,206	1	8	9	82,356
17	Charlotte, N.C.	731,424	4	7	11	66,493
18	Detroit, Mich. **	717,777	2	7	9	79,753
19	El Paso, Tex.	649,121	1	8	9	72,125
20	Memphis, Tenn.	646,889	0	9	9	71,877
21	Baltimore, Md.	620,961	1	14	15	41,397
22	Boston, Mass.	617,594	4	9	13	47,507
23	Seattle, Wash.	608,660	9	0	9	67,629
24	Washington, DC	601,723	5	8	13	46,286
25	Nashville-Davidson, TN	601,222	5	35	40	15,031
26	Denver, Colo.	600,158	2	11	13	46,166
27	Louisville-Jefferson, Ky	597,337	0	26	26	22,975
28	Milwaukee, Wis.	594,833	0	15	15	39,656
29	Portland, Ore.	583,776	4	5	9	64,864
30	Las Vegas, Nev.	583,756	1	6	7	83,394
31	Oklahoma City, Okla.	579,999	1	8	9	64,444
32	Albuquerque, N.M.	545,852	0	9	9	60,650
33	Tucson, Ariz.	520,116	1	6	7	74,302
34	Fresno, Calif.	494,665	0	7	7	70,666
35	Sacramento, Calif.	466,488	1	8	9	51,832
36	Long Beach, Calif.	462,257	0	9	9	51,362
37	Kansas City, Mo.	459,787	7	6	13	35,368
38	Mesa, Ariz.	439,041	0	6	6	73,174
39	Virginia Beach, Va.	437,994	4	7	11	39,818
40	Atlanta, Ga.	420,003	3	12	15	28,000
41	Colorado Springs, Colo.	416,427	5	4	9	46,270
42	Omaha, Nebr.	408,958	0	7	7	58,423
43	Raleigh, N.C.	403,892	3	5	8	50,487
44	Miami, Fla.	399,457	0	5	5	79,891
45	Cleveland, Ohio	396,815	0	19	19	20,885
46	Tulsa, Okla.	391,906	0	9	9	43,545
47	Oakland, Calif.	390,724	1	7	8	48,841
48	Minneapolis, Minn.	382,578	0	13	13	29,429
49	Wichita, Kans.	375,571	1	6	7	53,653
50	Arlington, Tex.	365,438	3	5	8	45,680
Totals			108	561	669	3,561,669
Averages			2.16	11.22	13.38	71,233

* Led by Mayor Leffingwell, in April 2011 City Council passed resolutions to create proposals for 9 or 11 member councils, with 6 or 8 geographic Districts

** In November 2009, Detroit voters overwhelmingly approved a move from At Large to Districts, to take effect in 2013.

CHARTER AMENDMENT PETITION

Ohio Constitution Article XVIII, Sections 7 – 9
Ohio Revised Code, Title VII
Charter of the City of Columbus, Section 234

NOTICE – Whoever knowingly signs this petition more than once, signs a name other than his own, or signs when not a legal voter, is liable to prosecution.

To the City Clerk of the City of Columbus, Ohio:

We, the undersigned, electors of the City of Columbus, Ohio, pursuant to Article XVIII of the Ohio Constitution and Section 234 of the Charter of the City of Columbus, respectfully request that the Charter Amendment proposed herein be submitted to a vote of the electors of this city at the next regular municipal election if one shall occur not less than sixty nor more than one hundred and twenty days after passage of the ordinance to do so; otherwise at a special election to be called and held within the time aforesaid.

The following is a full and correct copy of the title and text of the proposed Amendment:

TITLE: Districts Deserve a Vote. To amend Sections 3-6, 9, 17, 18, 20, 22, 202, 204, 205, 210, 211, 215, 216, 219, 223 and 234 of the Columbus City Charter, to create a council consisting of 11 members, with 4 elected at large and 7 elected from districts, and to make other provisions in support of such enhanced council to create a contemporary and responsive form of council governance in Columbus.

Sec. 3. - Legislative powers.

The legislative power of the city, except as reserved to the people by this charter, shall be vested in a council, consisting of seven members, elected at large, UNTIL THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY FOLLOWING THE SPECIAL OR REGULAR MUNICIPAL ELECTION CALLED AFTER ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 6.3, THEREUPON, THE COUNCIL SHALL CONSIST OF ELEVEN MEMBERS, FOUR ELECTED AT LARGE AND SEVEN ELECTED FROM DISTRICTS.

Sec. 4. - Council members.

All council members shall serve for a term of four years; except FOR THE COUNCIL MEMBERS ELECTED PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 6.3; WHERE, IF THE ELECTION OF SUCH COUNCIL MEMBERS IS AT A REGULAR MUNICIPAL ELECTION, THE TWO WHO HAVE THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOTES SHALL SERVE FOUR YEARS AND THE TWO WHO HAVE THE LOWEST NUMBER OF VOTES SHALL SERVE TWO YEARS AND THEREAFTER TERMS OF FOUR YEARS; OR IF THE ELECTION OF SAID MEMBERS IS AT A SPECIAL ELECTION, THE TWO WHO HAVE THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOTES SHALL SERVE THREE YEARS AND THEREAFTER TERMS OF FOUR YEARS AND THE TWO WHO HAVE THE LOWEST NUMBER OF VOTES SHALL SERVE ONE YEAR AND THEREAFTER TERMS OF FOUR YEARS. ~~that at the first election the four candidates having the highest number of votes shall serve for four years, and the three candidates having the next highest number of votes shall serve for two years.~~

Sec. 5. - Vacancies.

If a City council member should die, resign, or be removed from office during the term of office, the successor shall be appointed by Council to serve until the first day of January following the next regular municipal election. If such election be the time for the regular election of the council member, a council member shall then be elected to serve for a term of four years; otherwise, for the unexpired term.

SEC . 5-1. – VACANCIES IN AT LARGE POSITIONS

Vacancies IN AT LARGE POSITIONS in the council shall be filled by the council; provided, however, that, if the vacancies in the council are not filled by the council within thirty (30) days from the date following the occurrence of such vacancy, the mayor shall have in all future balloting a vote on the question of filling such vacancies; provided, further that any vacancy resulting from a recall election shall be filled in the manner hereinafter provided.

SEC. 5-2. – VACANCIES IN DISTRICT POSITIONS

DISTRICT VACANCIES IN THE COUNCIL SHALL BE FILLED BY THE COUNCIL SUBJECT TO THE PROVISION THAT ALL APPOINTEES FOR DISTRICT POSITIONS SHALL HAVE BEEN NOMINATED BY THE COGNIZANT

NEBHORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS ESTABLISHED UNDER CC 3109 OR ANY SUCCESSOR CHAPTER OF CODE. A COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF FILLING DISTRICT VACANCIES IS HEREIN DEFINED AS ONE WHERE AT LEAST 25% OF THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF SUCH NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION OR 25% OF THE POPULATION OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION IS COMPRISED WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE COUNCIL DISTRICT WITH THE VACANCY, OR BOTH. IN THE EVENT THERE IS NO COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION TO ACT ON A DISTRICT VACANCY, ALL COMMISSIONS WHICH HAVE TERRITORY THAT OVERLAPS INTO THE COUNCIL DISTRICT ASSUME THE ROLE OF COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION.

EACH COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION SHALL DEVELOP A PROCESS BY WHICH THAT COMMISSION WILL EVALUATE AND NOMINATE DISTRICT COUNCIL MEMBERS SEEKING TO FILL VACATED DISTRICT POSITIONS. UPON RECEIPT BY THE COMMISSION FROM THE CITY CLERK OF APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED TO FILL ONE OR MORE VACANCIES, EACH COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION MAY, BY RESOLUTION, FILE WITH THE CITY CLERK A NOMINATION OF ONE CANDIDATE TO BE APPOINTED TO EACH VACANT DISTRICT POSITION ALONG WITH A TALLY OF THE COMMISSIONER VOTES IN FAVOR OF EACH CANDIDATE CONSIDERED BY THAT COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION.

IF A MAJORITY OF THE NOMINATION RESOLUTIONS BY COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS ARE IN FAVOR OF ANY CANDIDATE, THAT PERSON SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL TO FILL THE REMAINDER OF THE VACANT TERM.

IN THE EVENT NO MAJORITY CHOICE ARISES FROM THE COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS WITHIN 90 DAYS OF THE PUBLICATION BY CITY CLERK OF A NOTIFICATION OF VACANCY AND SOLICITATION FOR APPLICATIONS, THE CANDIDATE RECEIVING THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOTES BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF ALL OF THE COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS COMBINED SHALL BE APPOINTED.

SUCH PERSON SHALL BE SO APPOINTED AT THE SOONER OF THE FIRST CITY COUNCIL MEETING FOLLOWING THE CLERK'S RECEIPT OF NOMINATION RESOLUTIONS FROM EACH OF THE COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS AS PREPARED AND SIGNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH EACH COMMISSION'S POLICIES, OR WITHIN 30 DAYS FOLLOWING THE CLERK'S RECEIPT OF RESOLUTIONS FROM A MAJORITY OF THE NUMBER OF COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS.

IN THE EVENT ONE OR MORE COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS FAILS TO SUBMIT A RESOLUTION FOR A NOMINEE FOR APPOINTMENT, THOSE ONE OR MORE COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS FAILING TO DO SO SHALL NOT BE COUNTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING THE NUMBER OF COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS THAT CONSTITUTE A MAJORITY.

IN THE EVENT THE NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER COLUMBUS CODE 3109 IS ABOLISHED, THE PROVISIONS FOR FILLING COUNCIL DISTRICT VACANCIES HEREIN ARE VOIDED AND THE COUNCIL SHALL ESTABLISH AN ALTERNATE PROCESS FOR THE NOMINATION AND APPOINTMENT OF DISTRICT COUNCIL MEMBERS. SUCH ALTERNANTE PROCESS MUST ENSURE THAT NOMINATIONS FOR APPOINTMENTS ARE SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL BY ONE OR MORE

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS, AND THAT THE POWER OF THE COUNCIL BE LIMITED TO CONFIRMATION AND APPOINTMENT OF THE NOMINEE. SHOULD THE NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION PROGRAM BE ABOLISHED, THE COUNCIL MUST PRESENT SUCH ALTERNATE PROCESS AS AN AMENDMENT TO BE VOTED UPON AT THE ELECTION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING ANY ABOLISHMENT OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSION PROGRAM.

NO AT LARGE COUNCIL MEMBER MAY BE APPOINTED TO FILL A COUNCIL DISTRICT VACANCY WITHOUT THE UNANIMOUS NOMINATION OF ALL THE COGNIZANT NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COMMISSIONS.

Sec. 6. - Qualifications of council members.

Members of council shall be residents of the city and have the qualifications of electors therein.

- (A) MEMBERS OF COUNCIL WHO ARE ELECTED TO DISTRICTS SHALL BE RESIDENTS OF THAT DISTRICT FOR ONE YEAR IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING ELECTION AND WHILE SERVING IN THAT OFFICE EXCEPT FOR THE INITIAL DESIGNATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS TO DISTRICTS THAT SHALL OCCUR WITHIN 30 DAYS OF COUNCIL ADOPTING THE INITIAL APPORTIONMENT PLAN AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 6-1, WHEN RESIDENCY WITHIN THE DISTRICT SHALL NOT BE A REQUIREMENT.
- (B) COUNCIL MEMBERS SUBJECT TO AN INITIAL ASSIGNMENT TO DISTRICTS PURSUANT TO SECTION 6-2 SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO THOSE DISTRICTS SEATS SUCH THAT THE COUNCIL MEMBER WHO EARNED THE LARGEST NUMBER OF VOTES OF ALL THE COUNCIL MEMBERS RECEIVING VOTES IN EITHER THE 2011 OR 2013 GENERAL ELECTION SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO DISTRICT 1; THE COUNCIL MEMBER WHO EARNED THE SECOND LARGEST NUMBER OF VOTES IN EITHER ELECTION SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO DISTRICT 2; THE COUNCIL MEMBER WHO EARNED THE THIRD HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOTES IN EITHER THE 2011 OR 2013 GENERAL ELECTION SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO DISTRICT 3; THE COUNCIL MEMBER WHO EARNED THE FOURTH HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOTES IN EITHER ELECTION SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO DISTRICT 4; THE COUNCIL MEMBER WHO EARNED THE FIFTH LARGEST NUMBER OF VOTES IN EITHER THE 2011 OR 2013 GENERAL ELECTION SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO DISTRICT 5; THE COUNCIL MEMBER WHO EARNED THE SIXTH LARGEST NUMBER OF VOTES IN EITHER ELECTION SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO DISTRICT 6; AND THE COUNCIL MEMBER WHO EARNED THE SEVENTH LARGEST NUMBER OF VOTES IN EITHER THE 2011 OR 2013 GENERAL ELECTION SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO DISTRICT 7. IN THE EVENT COUNCIL MEMBERS EARNED THE SAME NUMBER OF VOTES, THE ASSIGNMENT SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE COUNCIL MEMBER WHOSE LAST NAME COMES FIRST IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER.
- (C) IN THE EVENT ONE OR MORE COUNCIL MEMBERS WERE NOT ELECTED IN THE 2011 OR 2013 ELECTIONS, THE REMAINING DISTRICTS SHALL BE ASSIGNED IN NUMERICAL ORDER AND THE ASSIGNMENT SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE COUNCIL MEMBER WHOSE LAST NAME COMES FIRST IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER.
- (D) AT NO POINT SHALL THE RESIDENCE OF ANY INCUMBENT COUNCIL MEMBER BE GIVEN ANY WEIGHT IN THE INITIAL DESIGNATION OF DISTRICTS OR THE ASSIGNMENT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS TO THOSE DISTRICTS. ALL INITIAL DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES SHALL BE MADE IRRESPECTIVE OF THE COUNCIL MEMBER'S RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS. HOWEVER, ALL DISTRICT COUNCIL MEMBERS SERVING AS OF JANUARY 1, 2016 MUST HAVE A PRIMARY RESIDENCE IN THE DISTRICT WHICH THEY REPRESENT.

- (E) SUBSEQUENT TO THE INITIAL DESIGNATION, A COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED FROM A DISTRICT WHO DOES NOT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION SOLELY BECAUSE OF A CHANGE IN DISTRICT BOUNDARIES UNDER SECTION 6-1 OF THIS CHARTER, SHALL BE A RESIDENT AND QUALIFIED ELECTOR OF THAT DISTRICT NO LATER THAN THE DEADLINE FOR FILING A NOMINATING PETITION FOR THAT OFFICE.

Council members shall not hold any other public office except that of notary public or member of the state militia, and except as provided in Section 64 of this charter, shall not be interested in the profits of emoluments of any contract, job, work or service for the municipality. Any member who shall cease to possess any of the qualifications herein required shall forthwith forfeit the office, and any such contract in which any member is or may become interested may be declared void by the council.

SEC. 6 - 1. – CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS

THERE SHALL BE SEVEN CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS NUMBERED ONE THROUGH SEVEN. EXCEPT AS INITIALLY DESIGNATED UNDER SECTION 6 (A), EACH CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT SHALL BE REPRESENTED BY ONE COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED FROM THAT DISTRICT. THE NUMBER OF EACH COUNCIL DISTRICT SHALL BE DETERMINED INITIALLY BY LOT. AT THE TIME OF APPORTIONMENT, THE POPULATION OF ALL COUNCIL DISTRICTS SHALL BE AS NEARLY EQUAL AS PRACTICABLE AND SHALL NOT VARY FROM EQUALITY BY MORE THAN FIVE PER CENT. COUNCIL DISTRICTS SHALL BE COMPACT, COMPOSED OF CONTIGUOUS TERRITORY, AND COMPLY WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS. THE BOUNDARY OF EACH DISTRICT SHALL BE A SINGLE NON-INTERSECTING LINE. DISTRICT BOUNDARY LINES SHALL NOT DIVIDE A PRECINCT AND, TO THE EXTENT CONSISTENT WITH THIS SECTION, SHALL NOT DIVIDE A WARD. DISTRICT BOUNDARIES LINES SHALL MAINTAIN INTACT RECOGNIZED NEIGHBORHOODS, WHERE PRACTICAL AND WHERE NOT INCONSISTENT WITH THE ABOVE CRITERIA.

COUNCIL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES SHALL BE CHANGED ONLY PURSUANT TO APPORTIONMENT AS PROVIDED HEREIN, REGARDLESS OF ANY CHANGE IN WARDS OR PRECINCTS BETWEEN APPORTIONMENTS; EXCEPT THAT IF TERRITORY IS ANNEXED TO OR DETACHED FROM THE CITY BETWEEN APPORTIONMENTS, CITY COUNCIL SHALL ADD SUCH TERRITORY TO OR REMOVE IT FROM THE COUNCIL DISTRICT TO WHICH IT IS CONTIGUOUS, AND IF SUCH TERRITORY IS CONTIGUOUS TO MORE THAN ONE COUNCIL DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL SHALL ALLOCATE IT AMONG SUCH COUNCIL DISTRICTS CONSISTENT WITH THIS SECTION.

BEGINNING NOT LATER THAN FIFTEEN DAYS AFTER ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT, THE CITY CLERK SHALL ADVERTISE, FOR NOT LESS THAN THIRTY DAYS AND IN A MANNER DESIGNED TO BROADLY INFORM RESIDENTS OF THE CITY, THAT QUALIFIED PERSONS MAY SUBMIT TO THE CITY CLERK AN APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION. ALL SUCH APPLICATIONS SHALL BE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION. NOT EARLIER THAN FORTY FIVE DAYS OR LATER THAN SIXTY DAYS AFTER ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT, CITY COUNCIL SHALL ADOPT AN ORDINANCE APPOINTING AN APPORTIONMENT BOARD CONSISTING OF NINE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE THE QUALIFICATIONS PROVIDED IN SECTION 6 OF THIS CHARTER FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS ELECTED AT LARGE. NOT MORE THAN THREE MEMBERS OF THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL BELONG TO THE SAME POLITICAL PARTY. MEMBERS OF THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL BE

SELECTED FROM AMONG QUALIFIED PERSONS WHO SUBMIT A TIMELY APPLICATION, PROVIDED THAT IF FEWER THAN NINE QUALIFIED PERSONS APPLY FOR SUCH APPOINTMENT, COUNCIL MAY MAKE UP THE DEFICIT BY APPOINTING OTHER QUALIFIED PERSONS TO THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD.

TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, APPOINTMENTS TO THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL BROADLY REFLECT THE POPULATION OF THE CITY DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY AND TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION EACH APPLICANT'S EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, INVOLVEMENT IN CITY AFFAIRS, TIME AVAILABILITY, AND ABILITY TO CONDUCT THE APPORTIONMENT PROCESS IN THE OVERALL BEST INTERESTS OF THE CITY. CITY COUNCIL SHALL HAVE THE POWER TO FILL ANY VACANCY ON THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD BY APPOINTING A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL WHO APPLIED UNDER THIS SECTION TO SERVE ON THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD.

MEMBERS OF THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL RECEIVE NO COMPENSATION, SHALL BE REIMBURSED FOR REASONABLE EXPENSES ACTUALLY INCURRED, AND SHALL HAVE ALL LEGAL IMMUNITIES APPLICABLE TO CITY BOARDS OR COMMISSIONS. CITY COUNCIL SHALL APPROPRIATE TO THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD FUNDS SUFFICIENT FOR THE APPORTIONMENT PROCESS. THE CITY ATTORNEY SHALL PROVIDE LEGAL COUNSEL TO THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD.

MEMBERS OF THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL COMPLY WITH ALL APPLICABLE LAWS GOVERNING PUBLIC RECORDS AND MEETINGS; ACT BY MAJORITY VOTE; ORGANIZE THEMSELVES AND SELECT APPROPRIATE OFFICERS; ESTABLISH AND BROADLY ADVERTISE A WORK SCHEDULE THAT SHALL INCLUDE NOT LESS THAN THREE PUBLIC HEARINGS THAT FACILITATE BROAD PUBLIC AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE APPORTIONMENT PROCESS; INVITE THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSED APPORTIONMENT PLANS FROM ANY INTERESTED PARTIES; AND DETERMINE THE POPULATION OF PROPOSED COUNCIL DISTRICTS BASED ON DATA FROM THE MOST RECENT DECENNIAL CENSUS OF THE CITY CONDUCTED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

NOT LATER THAN ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY DAYS AFTER THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD IS APPOINTED, THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL SUBMIT TO CITY COUNCIL IN WRITING NOT MORE THAN THREE PROPOSED APPORTIONMENT PLANS THAT BEST SATISFY THE CRITERIA FOR APPORTIONMENT PROVIDED IN THIS SECTION. CONCURRENTLY, THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL PROVIDE FOR A 30 PERIOD OF PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE THREE PLANS UNDER CONSIDERATION. EACH SUCH PLAN SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY RELEVANT CENSUS DATA AND AN EXPLANATION AND MAP OF THE PLAN AND, IF MORE THAN ONE PLAN IS SUBMITTED, A RANKING OF THE PLANS AND THE REASONS FOR SUCH RANKING.

NOT LATER THAN FORTY FIVE DAYS AFTER THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SUBMITS ONE OR MORE SUCH PROPOSED APPORTIONMENT PLANS TO CITY COUNCIL AND FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT, THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL THEN SUBMIT FOR ADOPTION BY THE COUNCIL THE FINAL APPORTIONMENT PLAN IT SELECTS, FROM THE UP TO THREE APPORTIONMENT PLANS PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL AND MADE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT. THE COUNCIL SHALL ADOPT AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE FINAL APPORTIONMENT PLAN SUBMITTED BY THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD WITHIN TEN DAYS OF SUBMISSION OF THIS FINAL APPORTIONMENT PLAN TO COUNCIL, WHICH PLAN SHALL TAKE EFFECT IN THE NEXT REGULAR MUNICIPAL ELECTION AND

REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL THE NEXT APPORTIONMENT AS PROVIDED HEREIN. IF THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD DOES NOT TIMELY SUBMIT ONE OR MORE PROPOSED APPORTIONMENT PLANS TO CITY COUNCIL, WITHIN SIXTY DAYS COUNCIL SHALL ADOPT AN APPORTIONMENT PLAN AS PROVIDED IN THIS SECTION.

UPON ADOPTION OF AN APPORTIONMENT ORDINANCE, THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL FILE ITS RECORDS WITH THE CITY CLERK, SETTLE ALL ACCOUNTS, AND DISBAND. THE CITY CLERK SHALL PERMANENTLY MAINTAIN ALL SUCH RECORDS OR DEPOSIT THEM WITH A RECORDS DEPOSITORY IN WHICH THEY WILL BE MAINTAINED PERMANENTLY AND REMAIN SECURE AND OPEN TO PUBLIC INSPECTION.

AFTER EACH DECENNIAL CENSUS OF THE CITY CONDUCTED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, COUNCIL DISTRICTS SHALL BE REAPPORTIONED AS PROVIDED HEREIN, EXCEPT AS FOLLOWS: TIME PERIODS IN WHICH CITY COUNCIL AND THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE SPECIFIED STEPS SHALL BE COUNTED FROM THE FIRST DAY OF THE SECOND YEAR FOLLOWING THE DECENNIAL FEDERAL CENSUS. COUNCIL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES CONSISTENT WITH THOSE ESTABLISHED IN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING APPORTIONMENT SHALL BE FOLLOWED TO THE EXTENT THAT MAY BE DONE CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION.

WHEN THE BOUNDARIES OF ANY COUNCIL DISTRICT ARE CHANGED PURSUANT TO APPORTIONMENT, ANY COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED FROM A DISTRICT WHOSE TERM OF OFFICE WILL NOT EXPIRE WITHIN TWO YEARS OF THE DATE THE APPLICABLE APPORTIONMENT ORDINANCE IS ADOPTED SHALL REPRESENT, FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM FOR WHICH THAT COUNCIL MEMBER WAS ELECTED, THE COUNCIL DISTRICT THAT CONTAINS THE LARGEST AMOUNT OF THE POPULATION OF THE DISTRICT FROM WHICH THAT COUNCIL MEMBER WAS ELECTED, AND THAT COUNCIL DISTRICT SHALL BE GIVEN THE NUMBER OF THE COUNCIL DISTRICT FROM WHICH THAT COUNCIL MEMBER WAS ELECTED. IF MORE THAN ONE SUCH COUNCIL MEMBER WHOSE TERM WILL NOT SO EXPIRE WOULD REPRESENT THE SAME COUNCIL DISTRICT BY FOLLOWING THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION, THE APPORTIONMENT BOARD SHALL DESIGNATE WHICH SUCH COUNCIL MEMBER SHALL REPRESENT THAT COUNCIL DISTRICT, DESIGNATE WHICH COUNCIL DISTRICT THE OTHER COUNCIL MEMBER OR MEMBERS SHALL REPRESENT FOR THE BALANCE OF THEIR TERM OR TERMS OF OFFICE, AND INCLUDE SUCH DESIGNATIONS IN THE PLAN OR PLANS IT SUBMITS TO CITY COUNCIL.

SEC. 6 - 2. – INITIAL DESIGNATION OF DISTRICT MEMBERS

ALL AT LARGE COUNCIL DESIGNATIONS SHALL TERMINATE AT THE END OF THE DAY ON A DAY ADOPTED BY COUNCIL ORDINANCE AND THE DESIGNATION BE DEEMED ABOLISHED, SUCH DAY TO BE NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS FOLLOWING ADOPTION OF A FINAL APPORTIONMENT PLAN AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 6-1. AT THAT TIME, THE MEMBERS IN PLACE UNDER THE AT LARGE SYSTEM WILL BE RE-DESIGNATED AS DISTRICT MEMBERS AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 6(A) AND THEREUPON BEGIN SERVING THROUGH THE REMAINDER OF THAT TERM OF OFFICE WITH THE CONTINUING POWERS AND DUTIES OF MEMBER OF COUNCIL.

SEC. 6 - 3. – ELECTIONS FOR AT LARGE MEMBERS

REGULAR MUNICIPAL OR SPECIAL ELECTIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ELECTING FOUR AT LARGE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL SHALL BE HELD CONCURRENT WITH STATE PRIMARY AND GENERAL ELECTION SCHEDULES AT THE ELECTION CYCLE IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE INITIAL DESIGNATION OF AT LARGE MEMBERS TO DISTRICTS PURSUANT TO SECTION 6 – 2. THE TERMS OF MEMBERS ELECTED THROUGH THIS ELECTION ARE AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 6(A).

SEC. 6 - 4. – TERM LIMITS

MEMBERS WHO HAVE BEEN INITIALLY ELECTED TO OFFICE MAY SERVE UP TO 12 CONSECUTIVE YEARS ON COUNCIL, WITH NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN AT LARGE AND DISTRICT STATUS, AND THEREAFTER ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO CONTINUE AS MEMBERS OF COUNCIL WITHOUT ONE YEAR'S ABSENCE FROM COUNCIL SERVICE. MEMBERS WHO HAVE INITIALLY BEEN APPOINTED TO COUNCIL PURSUANT TO SECTION 5 SHALL NOT BE QUALIFIED FOR ANOTHER TERM OF OFFICE, WHEN THAT TERM OF OFFICE WILL INCLUDE THE START OF THE MEMBER'S NINTH YEAR OF CONSECUTIVE SERVICE ON COUNCIL. FORMER MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT SERVED ON THE COUNCIL FOR ONE FULL YEAR AND WHO ARE ELECTED TO COUNCIL THEREAFTER ARE ELIGIBLE TO SERVE FOR ADDITIONAL TERMS OF SERVICE NOT TO EXCEED TWELVE YEARS CONSECUTIVELY.

Sec. 9. - Rules and journal.

The council shall determine its own rules and order of business and shall keep a journal of its proceedings. It may punish or expel any member for disorderly conduct or violation of its rules. No expulsion shall take place without the concurrence of ~~TEN~~six members, nor until the delinquent member shall have been notified of the charge and been given an opportunity to be heard.

Sec. 17. - Legislative procedure.

The council shall be the judge of the election and qualification of its members. ~~SIX~~Four members shall constitute a quorum to do business, but a less number may adjourn from day to day and compel the attendance of absent members in such manner and under such penalties as may be prescribed by ordinance.

Sec. 18. - [Action on ordinances or resolutions.]

The action of council shall be by ordinance or resolution and the affirmative vote of at least ~~SIX~~four members of council shall be necessary to adopt any ordinance or resolution. The vote upon the passage of all ordinances, and upon the adoption of such resolution as the council by its rules shall prescribe, shall be taken by "yea" and "nays" and entered upon the journal.

Sec. 20. - [Reading procedure.]

No ordinance, unless it be an emergency measure, shall be passed until it has been read at two regular meetings, not less than one week apart, or the requirement of such reading has been dispensed with by an affirmative vote of at least EIGHT~~five~~ members of council.

Sec. 22. - Emergency measures.

All ordinances and resolutions shall be in effect from and after thirty days from the date of their passage by the council except as otherwise provided in this charter. The council may, by a vote of NINE~~six~~ of its members, pass emergency measures to take effect at the time indicated therein. An emergency measure is an ordinance or resolution for the immediate preservation of the public peace, property, health or safety, or providing for an emergency in the usual daily operation of a municipal department, in which the emergency is set forth and defined in a preamble thereto.

Sec. 202. - Nomination of council members and other officers.

(a) Candidates for the office of city council member and for mayor, city attorney, and auditor, shall be nominated by a non-partisan primary election. The name of any elector of the city shall be printed upon the primary ballot if there is filed with the election authorities a petition in accordance with the following provisions, to-wit:

1. Such petition shall state the name and place of residence of each person whose name is presented for a place upon the ballot and that the individual is a candidate for the designated office, INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF THE COUNCIL DISTRICT WHERE APPLICABLE, of the city of Columbus, Ohio.

2. Such petition shall be signed by not less than one thousand registered electors in the city, EXCEPT THAT A PETITION FOR A CITY COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED FROM A DISTRICT SHALL BE SIGNED BY NOT LESS THAN TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY REGISTERED ELECTORS IN THAT CONCIL DISTRICT.

3. Such petitions shall contain a provision that each signer thereto thereby pledges to support and vote for the candidate or candidates whose names are therein presented for a place upon the ballot, and each elector signing a petition shall add a place of residence, with street and number, and date of signing, and may subscribe to one nomination for each of the places to be filled and no more. All signatures shall be made with ink or indelible pencil.

4. The signatures of all the petitioners need not be appended to one paper, but to each separate paper there shall be attached a statement signed by the circulator thereof, under penalty of election falsification, stating the number of signers thereto, that each person signed in the circulator's presence on the date mentioned, and that to the best of the circulator's knowledge, the signature is that of the person whose name it purports to be.

5. Such petitions shall be filed with the election authorities no later than four p.m., not less than ninety days previous to the day of such primary election.

6. Such petitions shall contain the names and addresses of five registered electors of the City of Columbus designated in advance by the candidate or candidates as a nominating committee, which committee may fill vacancies caused by the death or withdrawal of the candidate or candidates as set forth in Section 206 of this Charter; EXCEPT THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR A CANDIDATE SEEKING ELECTION FROM A COUNCIL DISTRICT SHALL BE REGISTERED ELECTORS OF THAT DISTRICT.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Section, if no petition in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Section is filed for any of the offices to be voted on at the next regular municipal election, or if the number of persons filing such petitions does not exceed, as to any such office, the number of candidates which would be placed upon the ballot at the next regular municipal election, then no primary election should be held for the purpose of nominating candidates for such office to be voted upon at such next regular municipal election. The election officials whose duty it would have been to provide for and conduct the holding of such primary election, declare the results thereof and issue certificates of nomination to the persons entitled thereto if such primary election had been held, shall declare each of such persons filing petitions in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Section to be nominated and shall place their names on the ballot at the next regular municipal election in the same manner as though such primary election had been held and such persons had been nominated at such elections.

(Amended 11-2-82; 11-3-98.)

Sec. 202-1. - Nomination and election of the remainder of an unexpired term.

The following procedures for the nomination and election of a successor shall apply when this Charter requires an election for the remainder of an unexpired term of office:

(a)

When a vacancy occurs during the term of office of an elected city official and an appointment to fill that vacancy has been made more than 30 days before the deadline for filing nominating petitions for the next regular municipal election, then unless this charter section provides otherwise, the nomination and election of candidates for the unexpired term shall be conducted in the manner provided in this charter for the nomination and election for such office.

(b)

When a vacancy occurs during the term of office of an elected city official and an appointment to fill that vacancy has been made less than 30 days before the deadline for filing nominating petitions for the next regular municipal election but more than 90 days before the next regular municipal election, then candidates seeking election to the unexpired term shall file nominating petitions

otherwise in compliance with Charter Section 202(a) not less than 30 day after the appointment to fill such vacancy has been made, and there shall be no primary election.

Notwithstanding other provisions of this charter, in that case the election authorities shall place all candidates on the ballot at the next regular municipal election who have filed nominating petitions otherwise in compliance with Charter Section 202(a), and the candidate who shall receive the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected for the unexpired term.

(c)

Notwithstanding other provisions of this charter, an election for the remainder of an unexpired term of office is not required by this charter when an appointment to fill the vacancy occurs less than 90 days before the next regular municipal election.

(d)

The nomination and election for the remainder of an unexpired term of a council member shall be conducted separately from other council nominations and elections that may be on the ballot at that regular municipal election.

Sec. 204. - Form of primary ballot.

Except that the crosses here shown shall be omitted and that in place of the names of candidates and number of places to be filled, as here shown, there shall appear the names of candidates, actually seeking nomination, and the number of places to be filled, AND THE NUMER OF A COUNCIL DISTRICT WHERE APPLICABLE, the ballots shall be printed substantially as follows:

PRIMARY ELECTION

Instructions to voters. Vote for not more than the number of persons to be elected to the office designated by making a cross in the square opposite and to the left of their names.

If you wrongfully mark, tear or deface this ballot, return it to the judges and obtain another.

FOR COUNCILMEMBERS ELECTED AT LARGE

(Vote for not more than four)

X	JOHN COE
	JANE DOE
X	MICHAEL HOE
X	MARY POE
X	RICHARD ROE

FOR COUNCILMEMBERS ELECTED FROM COUNCIL DISTRICT X
(VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE)

X	THOMAS COE
	JANET DOE
X	DAVID HOE
X	MARTHA POE
X	STANLEY ROE

FOR MAYOR
(Vote for not more than one)

	ALICE DALTON
X	THOMAS DEAN
	LEE EVANS

Sec. 205. - Election of council members and other officers.

The candidates for nomination to the office of city council member who shall receive the greatest vote in such primary shall be placed on the ballot at the next regular municipal election in number not to exceed twice the number of vacancies in the city council FOR THAT OFFICE to be filled, and the two candidates for nomination for each of the other offices to be filled who shall receive the greatest number of votes shall also be placed on the ballot at such regular municipal election, and the candidates at the regular municipal election, equal in number to the places to be filled, who shall receive the highest number of votes at such regular municipal election, shall be declared elected. A tie between two or more candidates for the office of city council member, or between candidates for any other office, shall be decided by lot under the direction of the election authorities, as provided by the general election laws of the state.

Sec. 210. - Form of ballots.

Ballots used IN EACH COUNCIL DISTRICT for the election of candidates shall contain a complete set of the offices to be VOTED ON IN THE DISTRICT filled, and the names of candidates for each office shall be arranged under the title thereof as hereinbefore provided. The ballots shall be so printed that the voter may designate the candidates, to the number to be elected, for whom the voter desires to vote.

Sec. 211. - [Ballot form illustrated.]

Except that the crosses here shown shall be omitted, and that in place of the titles of officers and names of candidates here shown, there shall appear the titles of offices actually to be filled and the names of candidates nominated therefor, AND THE NUMBER OF A COUNCIL DISTRICT WHERE APPLICABLE, the ballots shall be printed substantially as follows:

FORM OF BALLOT
Instructions to Voters

- (1) Vote for the candidate or candidates you wish to support by making a cross (X) in the square opposite and to the left of their names. You must not vote for more than the number to be elected.
- (2) If you wrongfully mark, or tear or deface this ballot, return it to the judges and obtain another.

FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS AT LARGE
(Vote for not more than ~~TWO~~four)

X	JOHN COE
	JANE DOE
X	MICHAEL HOE
✗	MARY POE
✗	RICHARD ROE

FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS ELECTED FROM COUNCIL DISTRICT X
(VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE)

	<u>JOHN COE</u>
X	<u>JANE DOE</u>
	<u>MICHAEL HOE</u>
	<u>MARY POE</u>
	<u>RICHARD ROE</u>

FOR MAYOR
(Vote for not more than one)

	ALICE DALTON
X	THOMAS DEAN
	LEE EVANS

Sec. 215. - Recall petition.

EXCEPT AS PROVIDED HEREIN, aAny elective officer provided for in this charter may be removed from office by the electors, by the following procedure:

A petition for the recall of the officer or offices designated, signed by at least one thousand of the electors of the city, and containing a statement in not more than two hundred words of the grounds of the recall, shall be filed with the city clerk, who shall forthwith notify the officer or officers sought to be removed, and the officer(s), within five days after such notice, may file with such city clerk a defensive statement in not exceeding five hundred words. The city clerk shall at once, upon the expiration of said five days, cause sufficient printed or typewritten copies of such petition, without the signatures, to be made, and to each attach a printed or typewritten copy of such defensive statement, if one is furnished within the time provided. The city clerk shall cause one copy of such petition to be placed on file in the clerk's office, and provide facilities for their signing the same, and the city clerk shall cause one copy to be placed in each of the several fire engine houses of the city, where the same shall be in the custody of the captain of the house, who shall provide facilities for their signing the same. The city clerk shall immediately cause notice to be published in the City Bulletin of the placing of such copies of such petition, together with a complete copy of the petition, without the signature, and of the defensive statement.

Such copies of such petition shall remain on file in the several places designated, for the period of thirty days, during which time any of them may be signed by any elector of the city in person; but not by agent or attorney. Each signer of any of such copies shall sign in ink or indelible pencil, and shall place thereafter the signer's residence by street and number.

ANY CITY COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED FROM A DISTRICT MAY BE REMOVED FROM OFFICE BY THE ELECTORS OF THAT DISTRICT, BY THE PROCEDURE PROVIDED HEREIN, EXCEPT THAT THE RECALL PETITION SHALL BE SIGNED BY TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY ELECTORS IN THAT DISTRICT, THE RECALL PETITION AND ANY ACCOMPANYING DEFENSIVE STATEMENT SHALL BE PLACED IN FIRE ENGINE HOUSES OF THE CITY THAT ONLY ARE LOCATED IN OR REGULARLY SERVE THAT DISTRICT, AND ONLY QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THAT DISTRICT SHALL SIGN THE RECALL PETITION AND VOTE ON THE RECALL.

Sec. 216. - Notice.

At the expiration of said period of thirty days the city clerk shall assemble all of said copies as one instrument, and shall examine the same and ascertain and certify thereon whether the signatures thereto amount to at least fifteen per cent of the registered voters of the city, OR AT LEAST FIFTEEN PER CENT OF THE REGISTERED VOTERS OF A COUNCIL DISTRICT IN THE CASE OF A COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED FROM THAT DISTRICT. If such signatures do amount to such per cent the city clerk shall at once serve notice of that fact upon the officer or officers designated in the petition, and also deliver to the

election authorities a copy of the original petition, with a certificate as to the percentage of registered voters who signed the same and a certificate as to the date of the last mentioned notice to the officer or officers designated in the petition.

Sec. 219. - Filling of vacancies.

In any such election if a majority of the votes cast on the question of removal of any officer are affirmative, the person whose removal is sought shall thereupon be deemed removed from office upon the announcement of the official canvass of that election and the vacancy caused by such recall shall be filled in the manner provided in SECTION 5 OF this charter for filling vacancies, ~~caused by death or resignation.~~

If, however, an election is held for the recall of more than ~~FIVE~~ three council members, candidates to succeed them for their unexpired terms shall be voted upon at the same election, and shall be nominated without primary election, by petitions signed, dated and verified in the manner required for petitions presenting names of candidates for nomination at a primary election, and similar inform to such petitions, but signed by electors equal in number to at least two per cent of the registered voters of the city ~~OR IN THE CASE OF A COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED FROM A DISTRICT SIGNED BY ELECTORS EQUAL IN NUMBER TO AT LEAST TWO PERCENT OF THE REGISTERED VOTERS IN THE DISTRICT,~~ and filed with the election authorities at least thirty days prior to such recall election. But no such nominating petition shall be signed or circulated until after the time has expired for signing the copies of the petition for the recall, and any signatures thereon antedating such time shall not be counted.

Candidates FOR COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED AT LARGE shall not be nominated to succeed any particular council members; but if only one council member ELECTED AT LARGE is removed at such election, the candidate at such election receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term; and if more than one council member ELECTED AT LARGE is removed at such election, such candidates equal in number to the number of council members removed shall be declared elected to fill the vacancies; and among the successful candidates those receiving the greater number of votes shall be declared elected for the longer terms. Cases of ties, and all other matters not herein specially provided for, shall be determined by the rules governing elections generally.

Sec. 223. - [Violations; penalty.]

No person shall, either in or within one hundred feet of any place so designated, either solicit any elector to sign such petition or attempt to prevent or dissuade one from signing the same. ~~Nor shall any person employ or pay another, or accept employment or payment, for circulating any initiative or referendum petition upon the basis of the number of signatures procured thereto.~~ Any person violating any of the provisions of this section or the next preceding section shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction, be fined in any sum not to exceed one hundred dollars and the cost of prosecution. The foregoing provision shall not be held to be exclusive of, but in addition to, all

laws of the state prescribing penalties for the same offenses or for other offenses relating to the same matter.

Sec. 234. - Amendments.

Amendments to this charter may be submitted to the electors of the city by a two-thirds vote of the council, and shall be submitted by the council upon a petition signed by not less in number than TEN PERCENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES CAST AT THE LAST PRECEDING GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION ~~ten per cent of the electors of the city~~, setting forth any such proposed amendment. The ordinance providing for the submission of any such amendment shall be submitted to the electors at the next regular municipal election if one shall occur not less than sixty nor more than one hundred and twenty days after its passage; otherwise it shall provide for the submission of the amendment at a special election to be called and held within the time aforesaid. Not less than thirty days prior to such election the city clerk shall mail a copy of the proposed amendment to each elector whose name appears upon the registration books of the last regular municipal or general election, or, pursuant to laws passed by general assembly, give notice of the proposed amendment by newspaper advertising. If such proposed amendment be approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon, it shall become a part of the charter at the time fixed therein.

We hereby designate the following petitioners as a committee to be regarded as filing this petition or its circulation:

Name	Residence
Robert J. Fitrakis	1021 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43205
Willis E. Brown	164 N. Monroe Avenue, Columbus, OH 43203
Denise A. Benning-Adeduge	1094 Lavender Lane, Columbus, OH 43207
Suzanne M. Patzer	1021 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43205
Jonathan C. Beard	1815 Franklin Park South, Columbus, OH 43205

Signatures on this petition must be from only one county and must be written in ink.

	Name	Address	City	County	Date
1.	Legal Signature	Street Address	City	County	Date
	Printed Name				
2.	Legal Signature	Street Address	City	County	Date
	Printed Name				
3.	Legal Signature	Street Address	City	County	Date
	Printed Name				
4.	Legal Signature	Street Address	City	County	Date
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5.	Legal Signature	Street Address	City	County	Date
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31.	Legal Signature	Street Address	City	County	Date
	Printed Name				
32.	Legal Signature	Street Address	City	County	Date
	Printed Name				
33.	Legal Signature	Street Address	City	County	Date
	Printed Name				

**COLUMBUS
COALITION
FOR
RESPONSIVE
GOVERNMENT**

**At-Large City Council Elections and the Suppression of Free Speech in
Columbus**

To run a competitive campaign for a seat on Columbus city council, which consists of 7 members elected citywide (i.e., “at large”), a minimum of \$250,000 is necessary. To raise that kind of money, political contributions are needed from big-money donors, who almost always want something in return. Partly because of these relationships between candidates for municipal office and wealthy contributors, almost all academic research on the at-large model of governance finds that it unduly strengthens the influence of well-funded and well-organized constituencies at the expense of regular citizens. It is historically and widely considered a mechanism of control by the power elite of a community.

As one means of controlling Columbus citizens in the 21st century, the all at-large city council and their wealthy supporters have drastically limited free speech in central Ohio and monopolized the mass media with their own views. This has violated the fundamental American principle of a “marketplace of ideas” in which truth is expected to emerge from arguments made to the public by an unrestricted variety of voices. A free flow of information among citizens is also intended to prevent and correct corruption in government by making sure it is publicly exposed. These are reasons the U.S. Supreme Court has said the country has a “profound national commitment to the principle that debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide-open.”

Columbus city council, with the approval of their wealthy supporters, has incrementally restricted free speech to the point where criticism of governmental and corporate acts is unlikely to reach a mass audience in central Ohio unless the power elites allow it. They have implemented what Carter G. Woodson said about controlling people: “If you can control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his action.”

A first step in controlling thinking in Columbus was to eliminate public-access TV in 2002. For decades in the city, public-access TV had been a free-speech forum where any citizen or community group could speak to a mass audience about issues of the day or problems they were experiencing. It was “the people’s station” as opposed to stations under corporate or governmental control. Citizens regularly used public-access TV to criticize corporations, government, and the news media.

This situation was apparently intolerable to city officials and their rich supporters. So they closed the public-access TV station by claiming there was no money available for it, and continued making the same claim for years afterwards. Their position was revealed to be a sham after city officials convinced Columbus voters to approve a substantial income-tax increase in 2009. Despite the resulting millions of dollars of surplus tax revenue, city officials refused to reinstate public-access TV. Because a lack of funds was obviously not the real reason for their position, their actions supported

A Citizens’ Ballot Initiative to reform the Charter of the City of Columbus, to create a more responsive and more accountable Columbus City Council that consists of 4 members elected “at-large” in city-wide elections, and 7 members elected by the residents of each of 7 neighborhood-based Districts.

We are a non-profit
Ballot Initiative
Committee

(614) 595-2986

www.columbuscoalition.info

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George Bernard Shaw's statement that "All censorships exist to prevent anyone from challenging current conceptions and existing institutions."

To also restrict citizens from speaking freely to a mass audience on television, city council changed the policy about broadcasting its meetings on the city's government channel. City officials continued funding the government channel – on which they regularly appeared – with hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars each year, while claiming that no money was available for citizens to appear on public-access TV. And they decided that council meetings would be televised except for the last part, which is when citizens can speak about any topic, including ones that council had not placed on the meeting agenda. The effect was to allow people to be televised speaking at city council meetings only when they are addressing subjects that city officials allow them to address.

Besides keeping citizens off TV, city officials limited their ability to protest in person. They changed city ordinances to allow protests on the grounds of city hall solely between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. A permit for a protest can be issued for no longer than 72 hours, and no back-to-back permits are allowed. These restrictions, along with similar ones on uses of city parks, prevented Columbus from having the type of Occupy protests that occurred in New York City and many other cities in 2011 and 2012. The protests did much to educate the public about the serious and growing problems of income inequality and corporate control over government in the U.S.

After clamping down on citizens' protests on television and city property, city officials and their wealthy supporters still had the problem of a variety of print publications reaching a mass audience in Columbus. The only daily newspaper in the city, The Columbus Dispatch, had long been an enthusiastic cheerleader for the mayor and city council. But articles and letters critical of them could still appear in the main alternative weekly newspaper, The Other Paper, in Columbus Monthly magazine, in the Suburban News chain of weekly newspapers, and in a number of other print publications.

The Columbus corporate and governmental power structure came up with a means of dealing with that problem too. After the city's professional hockey team, in which The Dispatch's parent company has 10% ownership, ran into financial difficulties, the mayor and city council decided to bail out the team with hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars. Their decision to buy the hockey arena for \$42.5 million and spend hundreds of millions more on operating it was made with hardly any public debate or input, even though voters had previously rejected a publicly funded arena five times. City officials argued that the bailout was necessary to save jobs in Columbus.

Less than two weeks after the public announcement that it would receive the bailout, The Dispatch's parent company spent something like \$40 million to buy The Other Paper, Columbus Monthly, Suburban News, and virtually every other print publication serving Columbus and its suburbs. This gave The Dispatch a virtual monopoly on the information that citizens in those areas receive in the local print media. That's in addition to the TV and radio stations owned by The Dispatch in the Columbus media market. In announcing the acquisition, The Dispatch reported that "Editorial convergence has been a hallmark of Dispatch Printing publications," thus signaling that the editorial positions of the various publications will become monolithic and in line with The Dispatch's positions.

The purchase was not only the result of a government bailout of millionaire corporate executives, redolent of the ones that had helped ignite the Occupy protests. It was also an example of what Democratic leaders at the national level, including Al Gore, John Kerry, Howard Dean, and Dennis Kucinich, had been strongly denouncing: the increasing corporatization and consolidation of the news media in recent years. They had pointed out that this process limits the views that citizens can hear and is inconsistent with the idea of government by the people, who need accurate information from a variety of sources to correctly decide governmental issues. These national Democratic leaders called for a greater variety of voices in the media – the opposite of what was happening in Columbus.

Although two local Democratic state senators denounced The Dispatch's purchase of the publications as causing "mind control" in Columbus (denouncements not carried by The Dispatch), Columbus's Democratic mayor and city council remained silent about it. They saw no problem with the purchase, the squelching of free speech, and the resulting mind control. They apparently felt that as long as The Dispatch continues supporting their reelections to public office, they are happy to give millions of taxpayers' dollars to help it buy and control all the other print publications, which previously had the power to run items critical of them.

In sum, Columbus citizens in the last 10 years have been subjected to severe restrictions on their capabilities of speaking and hearing alternative views in the local mass media. For a city with 787,000 residents, and a metropolitan area with 1.8 million people, the ability of citizens to speak and receive a variety of views in the local mass media is essential for there to be a true "marketplace of ideas" as the Founders of the U.S. intended. But Columbus city council and their corporate supporters have done all they can to silence citizens and put blinders on them in regard to the local television and print media.

Although city officials claim that the Internet allows citizens to effectively communicate about public issues, their acts reveal that they know the argument is bogus. If they really believed it, they would close the government channel to save hundreds of thousands of dollars each year, and use the Internet for showing the programs currently carried on that channel. And during their political campaigns, they would not pay for TV time for commercials and would instead rely on the Internet to get their messages to the public. But they clearly view both the government channel and commercial TV as essential for enabling a mass audience to hear their views. They can see that their YouTube posts, for example, get anywhere from a few dozen to a few thousand views, whereas television and print media go into the homes of hundreds of thousands of central Ohioans.

The Columbus Coalition for Responsive Government was formed in 2011 to advocate replacing Columbus's 7-member, all at-large city council with one comprised of 11 members, 7 of whom would be elected from districts and 4 elected at large. Because the 7 district members would not run citywide, their campaign costs would be lower, making them less dependent on big-money interests. Instead of being aligned with the wealthy, they would be closer to the people and the neighborhoods they represent. As a result, they would be less likely to go along with acts that enrich the corporate interests at the expense of the people and neighborhoods, be more likely to protect the right of citizens to be heard in the mass media and at city council, and be more willing to fight for the ability of citizens to receive information from a variety of independent sources.

Sadly, the coalition's efforts have resulted in further attempts by city officials to restrict freedom of speech and association. Shortly after the coalition began organizing, persons on its board of trustees received phone calls of displeasure made on behalf of city council. The coalition later received reports that council members were pressuring people – including city employees – to not speak about their support for the coalition's efforts. These intimidation attempts show once again the current city council's lack of respect for people's First Amendment rights. They prefer to coerce and silence citizens behind the scenes instead of using reasoned analysis and open debate in a democratic process of decision-making.

It's clear that Columbus's all at-large city council, funded by wealthy special interests, has produced a corporate and government alliance that seeks to maintain power by severely limiting the ability of citizens to use the mass media to discuss public issues, criticize community leaders, and hear alternative views. With freedom of speech being at the foundation of the American system of government, any city that so radically restricts that right cannot be operating in the manner the Founders intended: a government of, by, and for the people. As U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas said: "Restriction of free thought and free speech is the most dangerous of all subversions. It is the one un-American act that could most easily defeat us." And as George Washington put it: "The freedom of speech may be taken away, and dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter."

Reducing the influence of big money in campaigns for city council – such as by having a majority of council candidates running in districts instead of citywide – is an important way to restore to Columbus citizens their right to free speech. The alternative will be far worse than mind control. James Madison described it: "A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

To truly have government by the people, Columbus citizens must arm themselves with the power and knowledge that come only from freedom of speech. An important step toward achieving that goal can be made by modernizing city council to include district representation.

A Citizens' Ballot Initiative to reform the Charter of the City of Columbus, to create a more responsive and more accountable Columbus City Council that consists of 4 members elected "at-large" in city-wide elections, and 7 members elected by the residents of each of 7 neighborhood-based Districts.

We are a non-profit Ballot Initiative Committee

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VOICES FROM THE PAST:

98 YEARS OF COLUMBUS LEADERS' STATEMENTS ABOUT THE CHARTER AND COUNCIL

1914

- “The laboring men will not be benefited or represented in a council of seven men elected at large, four of whom, at least, will be corporation hand-picked, and will vote as the corporations dictate, as against the interests of the men who work.” (The Columbus Evening Dispatch, *Four Times, Form of Government Has Been Changed*, by George D. Jones, former assistant law Director, City of Columbus. May 1, 1914.)
- “... I feel that a great injustice will be done to the great mass of our citizens should they be so unfortunate as to have the new proposed city charter foisted upon them. It is not a reform measure, but, on the contrary, it is strongly reactionary. It is distinctly a class charter, opposed to the welfare of the people, conserving the interest of the scholastic and the high class business man. It is, therefore, unfair, un-American and should be destroyed ... evidently the whole intention of these master commissioners is to prohibit the frequency of elections; remove them as far as possible out of the hands of the ‘common herd’ of mankind; lengthen terms of office, reduce the number of elective officers, and, in a word, establish an aristocratic system.” (Thomas E. Beall. The Columbus Dispatch: A Reactionary Charter: To the Editor, May 3, 1914.)
- “Sir: If representative government, whereby a portion of the nation, state and city, chooses men to represent it in congress, the legislature and council, is right, the new charter which provides for election of councilmen at large, is wrong. If representative government is wrong, the new charter is right. It should not take much time for a good American to decide which he thinks is right, and which wrong, and vote accordingly at Tuesday’s election.” (Ann L. McCoy. The Columbus Dispatch: A Short Question: To the Editor, May 3, 1914.)
- “How can the laboring men, who work in shops and factories and along other lines of employment, cease from work and call at the city hall to urge upon city officials and members of council the many improvements which the neighbor hoods in which they live demand and especially when these visits will be made to men whom they have never met and who are not familiar with the localities in which these working men live? The present members of council, elected as they are by wards, can be seen by the people whom they represent at most any hour of the day or night. Their constituents are acquainted with them, as friends and neighbors, and therefore feel free to talk of required improvements or file complaints. (The Columbus Sunday Dispatch. *Vote Against the Charter Because It Will Destroy Home Rule (Political Advertisement)*, May 3, 1914.)
- “The Franklin County Democratic Club requests you to go to the polls and vote and work against the proposed charter tomorrow, May 5th.” (Columbus Citizen. *Charter is Adopted by Majority of 1042; Effective in 1916*, May 6, 1914.)

1958

- The City-appointed Charter Revision Committee reported that “Columbus has been growing with ever-increasing rapidity, both in area and population, and the present Charter is no longer in tune with the times,” and recommended “an increase in the size of Council from 7 to 9.” (*Report of the Charter Revision Committee to the Council of the City of Columbus, Ohio*, December 19, 1958.)

1968

- Mayor M.E. “Jack” Sensenbrenner declared that “we need representation of every segment of the City of Columbus,” as he supported a 13 member Council where a majority (7) was elected from Districts. (*The Columbus Dispatch*. *13 Member Council On May 7 Ballot*, March 5, 1968.)
- The Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution in support of the 13 member, District-led council proposal, saying “approval of the proposed amendments would provide area representation on a proportionate population basis, whereby citizens in every part of the city would have assured access to their elected councilmen.” (*The Columbus Dispatch*. *C of C Alters Stand on Charter Change*, April 29, 1968.)

1975

- Councilmember Dr. John Rosemond, the first African American elected to council under the At Large scheme, endorsed a Charter Amendment placed before the voters to form an 11 member council consisting of 6 Districts during his run for Mayor against Republican Tom Moody. Both he, and the amendment, were soundly defeated. [Historical note: the first African American councilmember was Rev. James Preston Poindexter, elected in 1880 when Columbus had a 19 member council, with 3 elected At Large and 16 elected from Wards (Rev. Poindexter was elected from the 2nd Ward). After the 1914 change to an At Large system, it was 55 years before another African American was elected to council, in the person of Dr. Rosemond in 1969.] (*The Columbus Dispatch*. *Expanded Council Put to City Voters*, July 22, 1975.)
- “Under existing regulations, about half of the television time, including the prime-time hours, is supposed to be made available for public use. The other half of the time is to be used by the city for television government information and city council meetings. Much of the public use is expected to be informational programs by social service groups, educational groups, and scouting organizations. However, individuals will also be given the chance to broadcast their own shows and viewpoints.” (*The Columbus Dispatch*. *Fight Brews Over Control of City Cable TV Channel*, February 23, 1981.) [Note: City Council has eliminated all funding for public access television, and refuses to reinstate the funding and the public’s access to the mass media station the public, through the City of Columbus, owns. Instead, CTV-3 operates with programming controlled exclusively by city government and no public programming.]

1991

- Councilmember Maury (M.D.) Portman advocated for an expansion of Council to 9 members, saying "the council is going through the motions of trying to represent all of the city ... I think the city has just grown too big to be represented by seven members. With the annexation of a chunk of southern Delaware County, the city is even bigger ... seven council members for almost 700,000 people is ludicrous. One council member represents 100,000 people? We're out of date." (The Columbus Dispatch. *9-Seat Council Pushed*, June 13, 1991.)

1993

- A five member Charter Review Commission initiated by Mayor Rinehart, Council President Lazarus, and City Attorney O'Brien recommended further studying the size and composition of council. (The Columbus Dispatch. *City Charter – Council Submits, Voters Decide on Revisions*, March 21, 1993.) [Note: This recommendation was dismissed by City Council and never brought to a vote.]
- "The open forum at the end of each Columbus City Council meeting should continue to be televised, a task force has concluded. 'A responsive governing body will place a high value on the involvement of citizens in the legislated process,' concluded the panel, headed by Councilwoman Jennette Bradley. 'This language ... guarantees those permitted to speak before council the right to be televised on the public access channel.' In the past, Columbus City Council has provided an opportunity for citizens to express their opinions about proposed legislation at council meetings and public hearings, the task force said, it is the opinion of this committee that this citizen involvement should continue." (The Columbus Dispatch. September 11, 1993.) [Note: Council woman Bradley was the last Republican on Council. Council terminated the "right" for citizens to speak in open forum at the end of council and have that speech broadcast on the public access channel. In addition, Council has terminated and continues to refuse to provide funding for Public Access Television, over the objections of many citizens.]
- "The high cost of running for the Columbus City Council, which has nearly doubled in four years, has renewed calls for city campaign finance reform. The trio of incumbents who won this year spent an average of more than \$155,000, according to campaign finance reports filed Friday. The losers in the six-way contest spent an average of about \$25,000 ... 'It really cuts out the people who want to run and want to serve, who do not have the resources to put the money in it ... you don't need to be raising a half-million dollars for that kind of position,' Sams said, 'electing some council representatives from wards would cut down on the need for huge campaign bankrolls as well as give neighborhoods a greater voice on the council.'" (The Columbus Dispatch. Quoting Ron Sams, Republican candidate for City Council, in *Lazarus, Others Sound Reform Call on City Elections*, December 13, 1993.) [Note: campaign finance reform was never enacted by City Council. In 2011 elections, incumbents raised and spent over \$790,000, while the challengers raised and spent \$240,000 combined. Campaign finance reform exists in other At Large cities; however, such as Austin, TX.]
- "Salerno said campaign finance reform is needed to level the playing field for challengers, who usually have fewer connections with high-powered contributors. 'If it takes six figures to win elections locally, you're just going to continue to have incumbents win', Salerno said. 'It doesn't allow the public the access they should have to the challengers.'" (The Columbus Dispatch. Quoting Amy Salerno, Republican candidate for City Council, in *Lazarus, Others Sound Reform Call on City Elections*, December 13, 1993.)

- “When you’ve got a couple hundred thousand dollars in the bank, it’s a lot easier to just pull the wagons in a circle and wait until that last two weeks for a media blitz, ‘ he said. ‘I had difficulty in engaging the opposition in any meaningful discussion of the issues ... The people who can solve the problem are the people who benefit most from the status quo.’” ([The Columbus Dispatch](#). Quoting Richard Whitehouse, Republican candidate for City Council, in *Lazarus, Others Sound Reform Call on City Elections*, December 13, 1993.)

1994

- By 1994, even the Columbus Dispatch Editorial Board wrote about a proposed campaign finance reform initiative for Columbus City Council: “Cynicism about government at all levels has been growing for some time. Certainly the huge amounts of money that grease the election process result in many citizens believing officeholders do the bidding of their powerful supporters, and the average citizen has almost no voice.” ([The Columbus Dispatch](#). *Campaign Gold – Council Working toward Election Reform*, July 21, 1994.)

1998

- A City-appointed Charter Review Committee held a public hearing and “most of those who spoke - from neighborhoods on the South Side, East Side, Far West Side and Clintonville - said they want council members who represent their slice of the city and some members who represent the city at large.” ([The Columbus Dispatch](#). *Ward-Government Idea for City Has Its Constituency*, June 24, 1998.)
- Former councilmember Portman reiterated, "Seven council members for a city this size is ridiculous, you can't possibly be in touch with citizens regularly. You can't rely on your aides completely, and you can't rely on the commissions. I feel that the most practical solution would divide the city into districts, and to prevent conflicts, you should have a certain number of at-large members to balance it out." ([The Columbus Dispatch](#), June 24, 1998.)
- “Columbus voters ought to reflect upon several questions. Does this tightly controlled, one-party legislative body impact the city’s growth and competitiveness? Can council members appointed to office by their fellow members and re-elected as part of a “team’ possibly have sufficient independence to think “out of the box” or aggressively oppose other council members? Can this tiny body of seven people really reflect the needs of a community nearly three-quarters of a million in size? Finally, when more than 90 percent of council members who have served since 1985 have been appointed to their seats and then run as incumbents a year or two later, is new talent and fresh thinking being sacrificed for party loyalty?” (Ernie J. Shannon, *Columbus City Council*, October 2009.)

2010

- Former Columbus City Council President John Kennedy said of a discussion of District-based governance: "it's a fair issue to look at as the city grows." ([The Columbus Dispatch](#). *Group’s New Push: Columbus Council Elections By District*, November 5, 2010.)

2011

- Finally, Columbus -- the largest city in Ohio by both population and geography -- has a smaller council than Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Parma, Toledo, and Youngstown. Among Ohio’s largest cities, only Dayton has a smaller council than Columbus. ([The Columbus Dispatch](#). *Only Inconsistencies Rule in Big-City Councils*, May 1, 2011.)