

## Question No. CC 1

Shall the Nevada Legislature amend the Carson City Charter to provide for nomination by ward only voting in ward-supervisor primary elections with an at-large general election run off - between the two highest primary vote receivers in each ward?

Yes

No

### EXPLANATION

A “YES” vote could encourage the Board of Supervisors to ask the Legislature to make a change to the Charter’s primary voting process to ensure that the two candidates for a ward’s supervisor office (but not for mayor) receiving in the primary the highest number of votes solely from their ward will have their names placed on the general election ballot for all city voters to decide in an at-large run off between the two finalists.

A “NO” vote could discourage the Board of Supervisors from asking the Legislature to make any Charter changes to the current voting system that requires at-large voting by all city voters in both the primary and general elections for any supervisor’s office.

### DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S DIGEST

Currently, under Section 2.010 of the Carson City Charter, candidates for ward supervisor run at-large in both the primary and general elections. Currently, under Section 5.010 of the Charter, if a candidate in the primary receives more than a majority of at-large votes cast in that election for the office for which he or she is a candidate, his or her name alone must be placed on the ballot for the general election. Currently, under Section 5.010 of the Charter, if in the primary election no candidate receives a majority of the at-large votes cast in that election for the office for which he or she is a candidate, the names of the two candidates receiving the highest numbers of votes must be placed on the ballot for the general election. This ballot question seeks *advisory* approval to seek legislative changes to the relevant articles and sections of the Carson City Charter to establish a ward-only primary election for a ward’s Board of Supervisor office to establish two candidates of that ward from which all the voters of the City can choose from by at-large voting in a general election run off. The primary’s two candidates receiving the highest number of votes solely from their ward would be placed on the general election ballot for their ward. Because the Office of Mayor represents the entire City, but is also deemed a supervisor under the Charter, an election for the Office of Mayor would *not* be subject to this ward-only primary change.

### ARGUMENTS FOR PASSAGE

Like other cities in Nevada, Carson City is divided into four wards. Each ward has, in essence, the same number of people.

Just as a state senator or assemblyman must live in his/her district and be elected by the voters in that district, so too must a supervisor live in the ward he/she represents.

But where only the residents of an assembly or senate district can vote for their representative, in Carson City everyone, no matter where they live, votes for all of the supervisors. Carson City is one of the few cities in Nevada to have this process. In some other cities, supervisors or council people are nominated or elected only by the people they represent in their wards. I.e. the people in Ward 3 would be the only ones to vote for the supervisor wanting to represent Ward 3 for either the primary and/or the general.

Three methods are possible for nominating and electing members of the Board of Supervisors. They are: 1) nominating and electing candidates from each ward (called at-ward nominations and at-ward elections); 2) our existing process, nominating and electing candidates from at-large (called at-large nominations and at-large elections); and 3) which is Ballot Question #1, a proposal to have at-ward nominations and at-large elections.

This means that if there are *three* or more people who want to run for supervisor from a particular ward, there would be a primary and only the voters in that ward would vote to nominate the two candidates to run in the general election. And everyone in the city would continue to vote for all the candidates in the general election.

This method would first ensure that candidates spend their time in the ward they are supposed to represent, possibly hold ward meetings, and learn the local issues and concerns of the various neighborhoods.

By bringing the candidates closer to the area in which they live, more people might be inspired to vote and become involved in their city. By running at-large in the general election, candidates will maintain their overall view of the city and its needs.

*The above argument was submitted by the Ballot Question Committee composed of a citizen in favor of this question as provided for in NRS 295.121.*

### **ARGUMENTS AGAINST PASSAGE**

Since 1969, Carson City has used a very broad-based and fair procedure for electing the four members of its Board of Supervisors. Each Supervisor must live in one of the four wards (districts) that are represented on the Board; one member per ward. Candidates for the Board of Supervisors must be elected by *all* Carson City voters at *both* the primary and general elections. The current procedure is already strong because a candidate who receives at least a majority vote in the primary election (50 percent, plus 1) advances unopposed to the general election. Ballot Question CC 1 proposes to change these procedures. As the old saying goes, "If it's not broken, don't fix it!" Vote "No" on this ballot question.

The residents of Carson City live in Eagle Valley and its surrounding hillsides. This is a very small and compact geographical area, which lacks significant regional differences. As such, decisions on important matters require a citywide perspective. The ballot question proposes to change the primary election for Carson City Supervisors from a citywide vote to a vote only in the ward (district) where a candidate lives. This means that each voter would lose his or her ability to vote in a primary election for three out of the four Supervisor positions. Instead of voting at the primary election for candidates in all four Board of Supervisor wards

(districts), under this proposal you could vote only for one candidate who lives in and would represent your ward.

This proposal complicates a 45-year tradition of voting in Carson City where voters are given the freedom to choose their city supervisors without the limitations of “ward-only voting.” By voting “No” on this question, you will advise the State Legislature that you want to maintain your ability to vote for candidates in *all* Board of Supervisor wards (districts) at *both* the primary and general elections.

*The above argument was submitted by the Ballot Question Committee composed of a citizen opposed to this question as provided by in NRS 295.121.*

### **REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST PASSAGE**

If this measure is approved by the voters, and only two supervisor candidates file from a ward, all voters in all wards will elect one from the two – as is in this election year. That will continue.

In the event, three or more candidates file from a ward, voters in the June primary in that respective ward, will nominate two candidates. Then, all voters in all wards will elect one in November.

Most importantly, this measure prevents an “election” of any supervisor by a continuing historic and significantly lower number of primary voters producing a 50%+1 June primary “election” of a supervisor.

Vote Yes on Carson City Ballot question 1.

*The above rebuttal was submitted by the Ballot Question Committee composed of a citizen in favor of this question as provided for in NRS 295.121.*

### **REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT FOR PASSAGE**

Vote “No” on this advisory question if you don’t fully understand or agree with the legislative changes it proposes to the Carson City Charter. A “Yes” vote means that you understand these changes and agree that the primary election for members of the Board of Supervisors be limited only to residents of the respective Supervisor wards (districts).

As stated in the arguments opposing this ballot question, the residents of Carson City live in Eagle Valley and its surrounding hillsides. This is a very small and compact geographical area, which lacks significant regional differences. As such, decisions on important matters require a citywide perspective, including the election of members of the Board of Supervisors. Retain your ability to vote for City Supervisors at both primary and general elections by voting “No” on this advisory ballot question.

*The above rebuttal was submitted by the Ballot Question Committee composed of a citizen opposed to this question as provided for in NRS 295.121.*

### **DESCRIPTION OF ANTICIPATED FINANCIAL EFFECT**

The financial effect of this change to the primary and general election process for the office of ward supervisor will be nominal. There will need to be some program changes by the Carson City Clerk-Recorder to the creation of the ballot and the vote counting process. The estimated fiscal impact is \$5,000.