



For Immediate Release

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King County Elections certifies Seattle Districts Now has the signatures to place Charter Amendment 19 on the November ballot.

King County Elections certified to the Seattle City Clerk that Seattle Districts Now's petitions have enough valid signatures for Charter Amendment 19 to qualify for the November 5, 2013 Ballot.

On June 11 Seattle Districts Now, an activist group proposing to elect Seattle City Council members using a mixed district/at-large system submitted petitions containing 46,633 signatures to the Seattle City Clerk for City Charter Amendment 19. Some 31,000 valid signatures were required to qualify Charter Amendment 19, the number assigned to the proposal by the City Clerk, for this November's final city election ballot.

The City Attorney is currently drafting a City Council resolution placing City Charter Amendment 19 on the November 5 Ballot for City Council approval. The City Council is required to approve this resolution in the next several weeks.

The Seattle Districts Now proposal would replace the current at-large City Council voting with a system of 7 representatives of geographic districts and 2 at-large representatives..

Julius Caesar Robinson said, "Our 7-2 mixed system would increase accountability and people's access to government, while dramatically reducing the voter contact cost of running for City Council."

At-large City Council elections are expensive: In 2005, winning Council campaigns spent an average of \$205,000. By the 2011 election, that average increased to \$270,000 per winning campaign. That money is needed, because at-large candidates need to contact every voter within city limits. Seattle's current population is 617,000

people. The seven districts proposed by Seattle Districts Now would each contain about 88,000 residents.

“Right now, even when you correct for multiple-voter households, you have to knock on 93,000 doors citywide to reach every likely primary voter,” said David Bloom. “Under our proposal, you can do the same job by knocking on just over 13,000 doors per district—an achievable goal for a small, underfunded campaign.”

If approved by Seattle voters in November, Charter Amendment 19 would mandate that all nine Council positions would be on the ballot in 2015. The seven district representatives would be elected to four-year terms. The two at-large representatives would be elected to two-year terms at this election and for four-year terms thereafter. This would create an election cycle under which the seven district seats would be elected at one election and the four citywide representatives (Mayor, City Attorney, and the two at-large Council members) would be elected two years later.

Seattle voters have rejected proposals to elect all nine City Council members by district in the past, but the Seattle District Now proposal differs from these earlier efforts by using a mixed system and by including as part of the proposal an initial district map drafted using guidelines set out in state law by Richard Morrill, a University of Washington Emeritus Professor of Geography.

Districts would be redrawn every ten years under the Seattle Districts Now proposal with the first redistricting done by a broad committee just six years after the first elections under the new measure.

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Seattle Districts Now

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