City of Albuquerque

City of Albuquerque
Government Center
One Civic Plaza
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Legislation Details (With Text)

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Effective date:				
Title:	Adopting A Proposition To Be Sent To The Voters At The November 5, 2019 Regular Local Election Proposing To Amend Article II, Section 8, Of The Albuquerque City Charter Concerning Ranked Choice Voting (Harris)			
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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
8/5/2019	1	City Council	Withdrawn	Pass
6/17/2019	1	City Council	Tabled	Pass
6/17/2019	1	City Council	Motion	Pass
6/17/2019	1	City Council	Motion	Pass
6/17/2019	1	City Council	Amended	Pass
6/17/2019	1	City Council	Postponed as Amended	Pass
6/17/2019	1	City Council	Amended	Pass
6/3/2019	1	City Council	Postponed	Pass
4/15/2019	1	President	Referred	
4/15/2019	1	City Council	Introduced and Referred	

CITY of ALBUQUERQUE
TWENTY THIRD COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. _____ **P-19-3**   **ENACTMENT NO.** _____

SPONSORED BY: **Don Harris**

Charter Amendment Proposal

Adopting A Proposition To Be Sent To The Voters At The November 5, 2019 Regular Local

Election Proposing To Amend Article II, Section 8, Of The Albuquerque City Charter Concerning Ranked Choice Voting (Harris)

WHEREAS, the City of Albuquerque City Charter includes an election provision requiring elected office holders to receive at least 50% of the total number of votes cast for their respective office in order to be elected, stating:

> "Those persons who are candidates for Mayor or Councillor and receive the largest number of votes cast for the office in question are elected, provided the number of votes equals or exceeds 50% of the total number of votes cast for the office;" and

WHEREAS, at present, if no candidate for office meets the 50% threshold required by the Charter, a runoff election must be held within 45 days where the two candidates with the highest number of votes cast are placed on the ballot; and

WHEREAS, since the runoff provisions have been in place, the City has been required to hold two runoff elections, including a runoff election in 2013 for Council District 7 (which resulted in a city-wide election in order to also accommodate a ballot initiative), and a Mayoral runoff election in 2017, which cost the City $667,045 and $840,890 respectively ($1,507,935 combined); and

WHEREAS, in contrast to the City's current post-election runoff system, a ranked choice voting system is an electoral system in which voters rank candidates by preference on their ballots. If a candidate wins a majority of first-preference votes, he or she is declared the winner. If no candidate wins a majority of first-preference votes, the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated. First-preference votes cast for the failed candidate are eliminated, lifting the second-preference choices indicated on those ballots. A new tally is conducted to determine whether any candidate has won a majority of the adjusted votes. The process is repeated until a candidate wins an outright majority. This system is sometimes referred to as an instant runoff voting system; and

WHEREAS, A ranked choice voting system which is also commonly referred to as an "instant runoff" would help eliminate costly separate runoff elections in the City, would help minimize administrative and staffing burdens, would be more respectful of the time and resources of City voters, and would also be consistent with the City Charter's 50% requirement.

BE IT PROPOSED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF

ALBUQUERQUE:

SECTION 1. The City Clerk shall place the summary, title and text of the following proposition on the ballot at the November 5, 2019 regular local election, and City of Albuquerque voters shall be permitted to vote "for" or "against":

SUMMARY

Proposing to implement a ranked-choice voting system, an electoral system in which voters rank candidates by preference on their ballots.

PROPOSITION

Proposing to amend the City Charter of the City of Albuquerque by amending Article II, Section 8, as follows:

"Section 8. [RUNOFF ELECTIONS.

(a) If no candidate receives 50% of the votes cast for the particular office in question, a runoff election shall be held within forty-five days after certification of the results of the election in question as now provided by law and as amended and supplemented from time to time. Unless otherwise specified in this Charter, the two candidates who receive the highest number of votes cast for the office in question shall automatically become the candidates at the runoff election and the filing of declarations of candidacy is dispensed with.

(b) The Council shall by resolution fix the date of the runoff election and specify the offices to be filled and the names of the candidates therefor. The resolution shall be published once, at least seven days before the runoff election date. Otherwise, no publications are required in connection with runoff elections.

(c) Only such voting precincts and procedures will be reactivated for a runoff as will be required, on a city-wide basis if officials to be voted on by the entire city electorate are involved, otherwise only such District Councillor districts as may be involved.][RANKED CHOICE VOTING.

Commencing with the regular municipal election in November 2019, the Mayor and City Councilors shall be elected using a ranked choice voting system allowing voters to rank in order of their preference the candidates for each office appearing on the ballot. If after counting all voters' first preference votes listed on their ballots for an office, no candidate receives a total number of votes cast equaling or exceeding 50% of the total number of votes cast for the office, the candidate with the fewest first preference votes shall be

eliminated. Each ballot shall then be tallied again for that office counting the first and second preference votes from each ballot for the remaining candidates for that office who have not been eliminated. If still no candidate for that office receives a total number of votes cast equaling or exceeding 50% of the total number of votes cast for the office, the process shall be repeated until a candidate receives at least 50% of the total number of votes cast for that office.]"

SECTION 2. TIME OF FILING WITH THE CITY CLERK. The Director of City Council Services, or designee, shall file this Charter amendment proposal with the City Clerk within 90 days of the November 5, 2019 regular local election.

SECTION 3. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any section, paragraph, word or phrase of this proposition is for any reason held to be invalid or unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this proposition. The Council hereby declares that it would have passed this proposition and each section, paragraph, sentence, clause, word or phrase thereof irrespective of any provision being declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid.

SECTION 4. COORDINATION WITH BERNALILLO COUNTY. The City Clerk shall coordinate with the Bernalillo County Clerk to prepare and file any necessary documents and agreements to facilitate the placement of this proposed Charter amendment on the November 5, 2019 regular local election ballot.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This proposition is effective immediately. The Charter Amendment described in Section 1 of this proposition shall take effect immediately following the certification of the election if approved by the voters.