



Legislation Text

File #: P-19-2, Version: 1

CITY of ALBUQUERQUE

TWENTY THIRD COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. P-19-2 ENACTMENT NO. _____

SPONSORED BY: Isaac Benton

CHARTER AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

Adopting A Proposition To Be Submitted To The Voters At The November 5, 2019 Regular Local Election Proposing To Amend Article IV, Sections 1, 2, And 3 Of The Albuquerque City Charter Concerning Council Districts (Benton)

WHEREAS, the City Charter was amended in 1974 to establish nine City Council Districts for the City; and

WHEREAS, when the current nine Council District structure was established in 1974, the population of City was estimated at approximately 260,000; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Census estimates that as of 2017 the City's population within its municipal limits was 585,545, which represents a more than doubling of population since the City's nine Council Districts were originally established; and

WHEREAS, across nine U.S. cities of comparable population, the average population per City Council representative is approximately 52,986 - that is, in those cities there is approximately one city councilor for every 52,986 people; and

WHEREAS, in order to achieve this average ratio of Council representatives to population in Albuquerque, a total of eleven Council Districts would currently be required ($585,545 \div 52,986 = 11.05$); and

WHEREAS, it appears that the City's political structure has not kept pace with population growth which could have the negative impact of diluting access of individuals to participate with their City government and engage their representatives; and

WHEREAS, consideration of the question as to whether additional Council Districts should be added to the City would be ideally timed at the 2019 election, which is immediately in advance of the 2020 census and the associated decennial redistricting process required by the City Charter.

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 increase the number of City Council Districts from nine to eleven.

PROPOSITION

Proposing to amend the City Charter of the City of Albuquerque by amending Article IV, Sections 1, 2 and 3 as follows:

“Section 1. AUTHORITY AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL.

The legislative authority of the city shall be vested in a governing body which shall constitute the legislative branch of the city and shall be known as a Council, consisting of [~~nine~~ eleven] members . . .

Section 2. COUNCIL DISTRICTS.

(a) The total area of the city shall be divided into [~~nine~~ eleven] Council Districts, numbered one to [~~nine~~ eleven] inclusive, and each district shall elect one Councillor. . .

Section 3. DISTRICT BOUNDARY REVISIONS.

(a) After each Federal Census, the Council shall appoint a committee composed of an equal number of representatives from each Council District, none of whom shall be elective city officers, to review and make recommendations concerning the [~~nine~~ eleven] Council Districts. . . .”

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.