

TO: Mayor and City Council Members  
FROM: League of Women Voters of San Diego  
DATE: Tuesday, May 30, 2000  
RE: Item-204 Waiving Council Policy 000-21 Regarding Public Submission of Ballot Proposals

As you may know, the League of Women Voters of San Diego participated for a short while on the Committee of 2000 (now called the Charter Change Committee). The League withdrew as an active participant late last year after it came to the conclusion that the charter change process undertaken by the Committee of 2000 was seriously flawed. Today's proposal to bypass public hearings at the Rules Committee only serves to increase our concerns about how flawed the process continues to be.

Council Policy 000-21 standardizes certain procedures for submitting ballot proposals to the City Council. This policy is a public safeguard against inadequate notification or consideration of ballot proposals slated for Council action. We can see no necessity to sidestep this policy, particularly for a ballot proposal as weighty as the overhaul of our city government.

It is our understanding that the City Council is also being asked to sponsor a series of public meetings for review and comment on the charter change ballot proposal prepared by the Committee of 2000. We find it highly unusual that the City Council would agree to conduct public hearings at the behest of a private group, to air an unofficial, unsolicited ballot proposal on a matter of enormous public consequence. Yes, this scenario is seriously flawed.

From our perspective, any official consideration of a major restructuring of our city's form of government is of such great public importance that it warrants the formal participation – from start to finish – of a widely-representative range of civic stakeholders. This means the establishment of an elected or appointed Charter Review Commission reflecting the entire spectrum of our population.

Today's attempt to accommodate a private group of individuals who have taken it upon themselves to restructure our city government should be tabled. If you would like to pursue this issue, we urge you to choose a more democratic alternative.