

MAYOR

I am sure many of you have seen the recent spate of endorsements for PROP 4 over PROP 3 in the Austin Chronicle, the Daily Texan and others publications as well as the growing support from citizens and organizations.

Should PROP 4 be successful and adopted into the City Charter, I will propose and push for a citizens' committee to investigate and review municipal redistricting methods and best practices in order to provide recommendations for Council approval.

This committee will look at redistricting methods in other cities, best practices, and the recommendations of a wide range of experts and community members through an open and public process. I believe this is the only way to come up with a method that is fair and fits the needs of our City.

I want to note that this process will provide what the PROP 3 independent redistricting commission proposal does not - a fair and open public vetting of the best options in redistricting methods with considerations such as reasonable budgets for such an effort, a wide range of expert opinions, and a fair opportunity for ALL of the citizens of Austin to participate in this review.

FRED MCGHEE

After having reviewed the PROP 3 proposal over the past several months, I and many others have noted the many problems with it:

1. Highly restrictive method that leaves out over 93% of Austinites from qualifying to be on the “independent redistricting commission”.
2. Confusing provisions requiring elections in May until 2016. This may be a problem if PROPs 1 and/or 2 pass requiring November elections.
3. Vague qualification requirements including “analytical ability” that aren’t quantifiable and could be used to disqualify Austinites unfairly from being considered for the IRC.
4. Poorly designed and based on the IRC of California. This does not fit well as California is a state with partisan elections and a huge pool of potential candidates for their IRC while Austin is a city with non-partisan elections and a very small pool of potential candidates for the IRC.
5. The PROP 3 IRC drawn map will be final with no ability for anyone to review it and change it, even if it tears apart neighborhoods or is in others ways objectionable to the citizens of Austin.

A fiscally irresponsible, overly complex, and ill-fitting plan drawn up by a small group of politicians, activists and consultants without a full and public vetting should not be ensconced in the City Charter.

We need a full and public review of the best options out there with input from a full range of academics, experts, and citizens. Anything less would be unfair and undemocratic.