

Primary 2022 Ballot Questions And Reasons for Recommendation

BALLOT QUESTION 1 – Would change the composition of the Zoning Board of Adjustment. It would be enlarged from 5–7 members and while preserving the Mayor’s power to appoint them, it requires his choices to be confirmed by Council. It also would require that the members include: an urban planner; an architect; a lawyer with zoning experience; a person with experience in the construction industry; and at least two recognized leaders from community organizations.

All Board members would also need to have shown sensitivity to community concerns regarding development and protection of the character of Philadelphia’s neighborhoods.

VOTE ON 1: YES

Comment: For years it has been the practice of Mayors to appoint pro-developer Boards. This would at least verbally put limits on that power and provide hope – although no guarantee – that future Boards will have more concern for community voices.

BALLOT QUESTION 2 – Would replace gender pronouns in the City Charter, replacing them with the name of the officer to which the pronoun applied. So, for example, if the word “he” is used to refer to the Mayor in a particular clause, that pronoun would be replaced by the words: “the Mayor.”

AND

BALLOT QUESTION 3 -- Would do the same as proposal 2 above for the Education Home Rule Supplement

VOTE ON 2 AND 3: YES

Comment: These proposals reflect the City’s desire for gender justice and equity. However, there is some concern that this matter is too inconsequential to call for a charter change, and that such relatively unimportant matters shouldn’t be used to distract voters from important issues, or to suggest that they bring about real change.

BALLOT QUESTION 4 – Would make the Fair Housing Commission a Charter-based agency, and therefore permanent.

VOTE ON 4: YES

Comment: The Fair Housing Commission provides some protection for tenants threatened by retaliatory eviction for having complained about housing conditions, and in the event landlords don't keep their properties up to Code. There is concern that this protection isn't enough, but tenants retain their court remedies, and making the FHC permanent creates a base upon which to build.