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**To:** [WebMail - CCD](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment - Item 10C  
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Dear Mayor Becerra and members of the City Council,

Thank you for keeping some of your campaign promises and beginning the discussion of pro-democracy amendments to the city charter. I strongly support moving city elections to the November general election date. I favor this over holding local elections in conjunction with the primaries for two reasons: First, because voter turnouts are larger in November, and second because California holds its primaries in March in presidential election years and in June in gubernatorial election years. I think it would be better for elections always to be at the same time of year. If elections are scheduled in conjunction with California primaries, either council terms will not all be the same length or sometimes members will be elected months before their terms begin. Neither of these options is optimal.

I am also strongly in favor of ranked-choice voting. Also called instant primary voting, this method assures each of our electeds receives the support of the majority of the voters, even if that person is not a voter's first choice.

I would also like to see you consider returning to electing five council members from five districts, with the council choosing its mayor. I believe this would give us greater diversity in representation as well as prevent a system in which the person with the biggest money machine ends up holding that office for many years due to being the only one who can afford to fund a viable campaign every two years. I recommend a charter amendment whereby five districts be established after the 2030 census.

There are other election reforms that city residents want you to consider, some requiring charter amendments and others that could be enacted by ordinance. One of these is term limits, about which I personally have mixed feelings. I have seen our former mayor's hand-picked candidates vote in lockstep with him for their first few terms, and become more independent after gaining some experience. I am concerned that term limits could result in a political machine gaining power, with an unelected cabal pulling the strings as their hand-picked puppets rotate through the city council. Given our city manager form of government, with department heads' terms unlimited, I am concerned that term limits could mean our unelected staff gaining power, while our elected officials are always playing catch-up. In other

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words, I have concerns about a local "deep state" being fostered by local term limits. However, those advocating term limits have good arguments, as well.

The City of Los Angeles has just concluded a groundbreaking process by which a civic assembly reviewed the city charter and proposed amendments. I would like to see the City of Whittier explore the option, including seeking grant funding, for a sortition process to review everything election-related in our charter and ordinances. This is a process by which a representative cross-section of the community studies an issue in depth, gathers information, consults experts, deliberates the pros and cons, and then makes a comprehensive recommendation or recommendations for adoption.

I would also like to add that I am pleased to see the format of your agendas changing. I would prefer to see the Council return to holding closed sessions before the open session to avoid interruption of the public portion of the meeting, including reporting out closed session actions. Interrupting the public meeting to go into closed session makes the city less transparent and council members less accountable when those of us who have made public comments are no longer sitting in the room at the end of the meeting when council members can comment and direct staff to agendize items raised by the public. Please consider returning to the practice of holding closed sessions before open sessions, rather than after or between open session items.

Thank you for your careful consideration of these Good Government matters,

Susan Cameron