

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

No Directly Elected Mayor for Sunnyvale

August 13, 2019

Sunnyvale, CA - On June 18th, 2019 the Sunnyvale City council voted 5 to 2 to move forward with a March 2020 ballot initiative to change Sunnyvale's governance system. For over 100 years Sunnyvale has had a council of equals – elected council members with the mayor selected from the city council members by the city council. Sunnyvale currently has 7 equal council members. The proposed ballot measure would change Sunnyvale's governance system to 6-districts plus one at-large directly elected mayor (a "6+1" election system). We oppose this decision. The City Council is going to districts in response to the California Voting Rights Act. We believe that the ballot question should ask for voter approval for a 7 single-member district system.

The October 2, 2018 and January 18, 2019 demand letters from the Goldstein, Borgen, Dardarian & Ho (GBDH) law firm and communications from the Asian Law Caucus (ALC) charged that "...the City's at-large method for electing members of the seven-seat City Council violates the California Voting Rights Act ("CVRA") due to racially polarized voting..."

The California Voting Rights Act prohibits dilution of the votes of a protected class by "at-large" elections. A directly elected at-large mayor weakens the CVRA. 7 single-member districts in Sunnyvale enhances opportunity for under-represented and minority voters to field and elect locally supported candidates of their choice.

Sunnyvale's mayor is NOT directly elected. By proposing the "6+1" ballot question, City Council majority acts inappropriately to voters by lumping together a change in the way the mayor is selected with a change to district elections. The creation of a new at-large directly elected mayor position is the way to offset the benefits of district elections. Supporters of 7 single-member district elections have no choice but to vote 'NO' on the city council's "6+1" proposal.

Sunnyvale conducted extensive outreach and public input to educate about district elections and to gauge resident sentiment. A majority of participants wanted a 7 single-member district voting system with a mayor selected from within the council, as is currently done, and NO at-large directly elected mayor. Sunnyvale citizens voted down ballot measures for a directly elected mayor governance both in 1991 and in 2011 by large margins.

The City Council has abused its power by overriding its residents' written, polling, public testimony and past ballot measure initiative failures. The council should have chosen to move forward with a 7 single-member district system or at least offered voters a choice in March. They still can!

A group of concerned citizens has formed **No Directly Elected Sunnyvale Mayor to support 7 single-member districts in Sunnyvale** as the remedy to address CVRA concerns, to **enhance the ability of under-represented and minority voters to field and elect locally supported candidates of their choice** and to **object to an at-large city-wide elected mayor**. Please visit website <http://www.NoDirectlyElectedSunnyvaleMayor.org> and join our fight!

Contact:

Media Relations

No Directly Elected Sunnyvale Mayor

www.NoDirectlyElectedSunnyvaleMayor.org/get-involved then choose "Contact Us"

No Directly Elected Sunnyvale Mayor / FPPC # 1420008

P.O. Box 2656 Sunnyvale, CA 94087

www.NoDirectlyElectedSunnyvaleMayor.org