

League of Women Voters, Los Angeles
May16, 2017 General Municipal Election
Ballot Measure *Pros and Cons*

Los Angeles City Charter Amendment, Measure C

What are you being asked?

Shall the Charter be amended to allow the City Council to provide that a police officer who is entitled to a Police Department Board of Rights hearing for a disciplinary matter may select a Board of Rights composed of all civilian members?

How did Measure C get on the ballot?

Measure C was placed on the ballot by the City Council; it was not based on a petition or signatures gathered.

What would Measure C change?

Measure C would amend the City Charter to give the City Council the authority to allow a police officer accused of misconduct to choose to have the case heard by a Police Department Board of Rights panel composed either of: a) two police officers with the rank of captain or above, and one civilian chosen from a list of carefully screened professional mediators, as is currently the case, or b) three civilians. Measure C does not define the criteria for who would serve on this 3-member civilian panel. Police officers could choose whether to have their case heard by the traditional Board of Rights or the civilian Board of Rights.

PRO –

Measure C is designed to remove the possibility of department favoritism or conflict of interest when police officers are brought up on charges of misconduct. Police department politics are unlikely to intrude on the decisions of the three civilians. Proponents say that Measure C will increase police accountability while also ensuring a fair disciplinary process.

Supporters include: Mayor Eric Garcetti, Council President Herb Wesson, the Los Angeles Police Protective League (police union), Cynthia McClain-Hill (Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners)

CON –

The Los Angeles Police Protective League has advocated for this measure because the civilian panel members have been the more lenient. During the past five years, in cases where there was a split vote to reduce or eliminate the Chief's recommended penalty, it was the civilian member of the Board of Rights who voted for the more lenient option. The measure currently has no guidelines for who the civilians would be; those guidelines would be determined after the measure is passed. Historically, civilians on the Board of Rights panel have been less likely to hold police accountable for behavior that has threatened the trust of the community it is designed to protect and serve.

Opponents include: ACLU of Southern California, Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Southern California, Los Angeles Times Editorial Board, Community Coalition

A YES VOTE MEANS:

You want to allow the City Council to adopt an ordinance to provide a police officer accused of misconduct the additional option to have the case heard and decided by a Board of Rights panel composed of three civilians.

A NO VOTE MEANS:

You want to keep the Board of Rights as is: comprised of two command-level police officers and one civilian, with no option for an all-civilian Board.