

City Council meeting of May 11, 2010
Comments on Item 12C
Proposition 14 on the 2010 Primary Election Ballot

Mayor Scotto and Members of the City Council.

While attending a meeting with the Los Angeles County Registrar last Friday I learned that the passage of Proposition 14 may have some impact on the future of the Torrance elections currently consolidated on the primary ballot with Los Angeles County.

Proposition 14 is a statewide measure to create a Top Two Primary Election creating a single ballot for statewide offices - Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Controller, Insurance Commissioner, and Attorney General, state assembly, state senate and State Board of Equalization as well as the congressional offices – senators and members of the US House of Representatives. An example is given in the Official Voter Information Guide.

Candidates would indicate on their ballot either their political party or no party preference. Voters would be voting for one candidate in an open primary with the top two vote getters, regardless of party, running against each other in the November general election.

The analysis by the Legislative Analyst in the Official Voter Information Guide suggests that in some cases the costs might be increased as the ballots may be longer.

As Torrance is the only city with a general election on a primary election date no costs to cities were addressed in this analysis. If passed, this change may impact future City of Torrance elections due to the number of physical spaces required on a ballot for candidates and the variable number of statewide measures. The City must ask for permission to be included on the ballot and may be denied due to a lack of physical space on the ballot.

There are two possibilities that might occur if the proposition passes –

- If Torrance is allowed on the Los Angeles County ballot the City election will as usual be at the very bottom of a potentially long ballot.

- If denied a space on the ballot the City must still conduct an election on the primary election date and would do so by
 - either attempting to use the same polling locations set up by the County
 - if there is available space at the location **OR**
 - consolidating the number of City precincts and having voters
 - go to another location to vote.

In each of these two scenarios there would be separate mailings, ballots and separate ballot boxes resulting in inconvenience to voters.

This proposition suggests one more reason to support moving the local Torrance elections away from a statewide primary election where election issues are focused on the statewide issues and candidates.