

I'm Debbie Kaye, President of the League of Women Voters of Portland.

For more than a hundred years, the League has provided balanced voter education. We have never endorsed candidates or parties. Yet throughout our history, we have carefully studied political issues. And we have worked diligently for **effective, representative government** and for **expanding voters' rights**.

The League bases its ballot measure endorsements on careful studies of issues. Based on our 2019 City Government study and League studies of Election Methods, **we wholeheartedly support Measure 26-228**. Our emphasis on research also leads to our deep appreciation for the Charter Review Commission's transparent and careful process, and the public outreach that led to Measure 26-228.

The League's support for this measure is grounded in how it will **strengthen our democracy**. Its **interdependent** elements will make Portland government and elections more **effective - accountable - responsive, and - representative**.

This measure creates a separation of powers. The mayor has the **executive** and **administrative** responsibilities. **Professional** management of bureaus by a city administrator is smartly coupled with **oversight by the mayor**—an elected official. The professional city administrator provides more efficient management and better coordination among the bureaus.

The City Council has the legislative responsibilities. Because the City Council will no longer manage city bureaus, councilors can focus on policy and constituent services.

Growing the current 5-member council to 12 members brings it closer to the national average of 1 councilor per 50,000 residents. A twelve-member council has the time to respond promptly and effectively to constituents' concerns. Portlanders will have more access to their councilors. And councilors will have more opportunities for gathering community input on policy development.

The League supports electing three councilors from four districts because this provides **better representation** than we would get from electing councilors citywide or from smaller single-member districts. Recent research on housing policies **in single-member-district cities** showed that councilors from smaller districts tend to make policy decisions that benefit their small districts. We don't need that kind of barrier to effective action on the urgent issues facing Portland.

Measure 26-228 will help neighborhoods that frequently have been left out of city hall discussions, but it also benefits all Portlanders. **Electing councilors with ranked choice voting in multi-member districts provides a combination of geographic and proportional representation. Plus, Portlanders are smart. We will understand how to rank our votes.**

For all these reasons, the League of Women Voters of Portland urges a "yes" vote on Measure 26-228.