

**ASSEMBLY MEMBER SULTE, LITTLEFIELD and MYERS
AO No. 2024-125**

Change to Regular Municipal Elections

Worksession



AO Goals

To put the question before the voter

- The voter is the ultimate bell weather

Cut election cost by Half

- Reduce the number of elections required by moving from Odd year Terms to Even Year Terms

Increase voter turnout by up to 100%

- Align elections with State and Federal election and ride the State and Federal election coattails.

Why make this change?

To Cut Cost of Elections by Half

- The average election cost from 2018 to 2024 is ~\$682,640.
 - 2024 was \$716,820 for regular and 391,964 for Mayoral runoff.
 - \$224,907 was general expense for the elections and not classified with either election for a grand total of **\$1,333,244**.
- Currently, in a six year period the MOA holds six elections or one per year due to odd year terms.
- Even year terms allows elections every other year or cuts the number of election in half to one every two years and therefore the cost.
 - Year 1: Assembly seats, and others
 - Year 2: Mayor, Assembly seats and others
- The key is even year terms!

Why make this change? (continued)

To Increase Voter Turnout up to 100%

- The average MOA election voter turnout from 2018 to 2024 is ~30%.
- The average SOA/Federal election voter turnout from 2018 to 2024 is ~48%*
 - In Gubernatorial election years a 42% voter turnout is possible; a 40% increase
 - In presidential election years a 61% voter turnout is possible; a 100% increase.
 - Note:
 - Data is statewide and Anchorage specific for Federal and State elections
 - Presidential elections average 61% voter turnout
 - Gubernatorial elections average 42% voter turnout

Note: Data from MOA website

Who does this affect?

- **Mayor**
 - Increases term to four years
- **Assembly**
 - Increase term to four years, however two year terms would also work
- **LRSA**
 - Increase term to four years, however two year terms would also work
- **Supervisory Boards**
 - Increase term to two or four years.
- **Anchorage School District Board is governed by AS14.12.050(a) and/or AS14.12.100**

How?

Cut Cost of Elections by Half

- Term change requires a ballot proposition
- Change all terms to four year terms; two year terms is acceptable;
- Extend current Mayoral Term
- Extend all future election terms
- No change to term limits
- Authorize school board, however requires change in AS14.12.050(a) three year term and/or AS14.12.100 applicability to home rule charters.
 - Send the state the bill.....

Increase Voter Turnout by 100%

- Aligning election dates does not require a ballot proposition
- Align elections with State and Federal Election

Cons?

Cut Cost of Elections by Half

- Can't think of one other than the impacts on candidate of a two or four year term.

Increase Voter Turnout by 100%

- Local officials are drowned out
- Competition for funds (is that a bad thing?)
- Voter exhaustion due to a long ballot versus frequent elections
- Election worker capacity versus fatigue; singular testimony to the contrary
- Difference in ballot and collection method at a SOA/Federal and MOA level
 - Need to align

Benefits – I never said it would be easy!

Cut Cost of Elections by Half!

- Save MOA Taxpayer between **\$341,820 to \$414,383 per year**; potentially more if coordinated with SOA and Federal ballots and processes.
 - Based on 2024 numbers estimated savings is $(\$716,314 + \$224,907 / 2) / 2 = \$414,383$

Increase Voter Turnout by up to 100%!

- Align elections with State and Federal Election and ride the State and Federal Election Coattails.
 - Gubernatorial elections an increase of ~ 40% (30% to 42%)
 - Presidential elections an Increase of ~100% (30% to 61%)

I never said it would be easy, however a prize potentially worth in excess of \$300,000 per year savings and the potential to increase voter turnout between 40% to 100% is worth a lot of effort!

THANK YOU.

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