

B is BAD for Newport Beach by Tom Edwards, former mayor

In case people are not paying attention there is a ballot measure on the June ballot that could have major negative implications to the City of Newport Beach. But much of the mischief it creates is hidden in the fine print. The ballot measure is entitled Measure B, which attempts to rest power from the citizens of Newport Beach, the council members and create unfettered power in the hands of one person.

For decades, Newport has successfully operated under the city council form of government. The City has seven (7) council districts with each council member having equal authority in representing their constituencies and the City of Newport Beach.

That form of government has created the incredible City of Newport Beach where we all live. But the first thing that Measure B proposes is to eliminate one council district and establish instead just six council districts and thereby weakening the voice of the residents of Newport Beach.

Eliminates a Council District

But of graver consequence proposed, Measure B would give the mayor “exclusive authority” to decide what issues are even placed on the City Council agenda. In addition, under Measure B, one of the remaining six (6) council districts would have both a mayor and a council member in one district again creating unequal representation for other council districts and their constituents.

The full power of the mayor is frightening.

The Measure also weakens term limits. Currently a council member can only serve two consecutive terms of four (4) years; however, Measure B allows that a council member after serving two terms, could then serve two four-year terms for a total of sixteen years. The city does not need career politicians.

What each one has to ask themselves is why would someone want to amend the charter of the city to allow for the elimination of a council district or why anyone would run for city council if Measure B were successful? The proposed measure grants the mayor exclusive authority to determine what is placed on the City Council Agenda; gives one district two representatives (a councilmember and a mayor) at the expense of the other remaining council districts and their constituents and all while weakening the authority of the council and weakening term limits.

No Requirement that the Mayor Served on City Council Subject to Forces Outside the City

Is the answer to this that the Measure is not supported by the residents of Newport Beach but rather forces from outside the city? As recent campaign filings in support of the Measure showed in Mr. Homer Bludau’s recent letter and analysis, 43% of donations in support of Measure B came from people residing outside our city and in some cases from outside the State.

Forces outside the City controlling Newport may be a very real fear, as Measure B, does not require that a person running for Mayor have previously served as a council member.

Don't be misled by the title of Measure B. It has nothing to do with electing a mayor and everything about grabbing and concentrating power, eliminating accountability, and eliminating one of the current seven (7) council districts. Don't allow our city to be a victim of a power grab by one person or group of people with little interest in our great city. Join me in voting NO on B. B as in bad for the City of Newport Beach.

Thomas C. Edwards, former Mayor Newport Beach
