

**From:** [Denise Williams](#)  
**To:** [Luzerne County Council Meeting Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]: Luzerne County Public Hearing (Ballot Item to Amend Article VIII Section 8:04) & Voting Session Agenda Item  
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## **Luzerne County Public Hearing (Ballot Item to Amend Article VIII Section 8:04) & Voting Session Agenda Item**

To: The Luzerne County Council Members:

This letter is in regards to the proposed amendment to Article VIII Section 8:04 of the Home Rule Charter.

Since January 2012, our County Board of Elections duties have been fulfilled by what appears to me as “non-partisan” a board as you can get (with two citizen members from each of the main parties who then appoint their own chair - fifth member)

This Election Board was also designed to be “citizen-led”. Kudos to the framers for stipulating that “no member of the Board shall be or have been an elective county official”. This was certainly done for good reason.

During this past year, our nation experienced a global pandemic and one of the most contentious elections in history. In Pennsylvania, we had our first Primary and General Election since our state legislators enacted law to allow “no-excuse” mail-in ballots.

Our Board of Elections & Bureau of Elections had their work cut out for them!

With the pandemic, the contentious election, and the new mail-in ballot initiative they worked hard to make our Primary and General Elections as safe, transparent, and accurate as possible.

After the General Election, there were many unsubstantiated and unproven claims of election fraud that have been refuted by the courts.

I would like to thank the Board and Bureau of Elections for a job well done under very difficult circumstances.

This amendment to the Home Rule Charter is wrong and has all the appearances of:

1. Laying blame on the Board of Election for an election that didn't go the way some people wanted it to go, when in fact, the Board "worked" and the results were square.

2. Partisan motivation. There is definitely a good chance that the three council members voted to the Board could all be from one political party, creating a very non-partisan Board.

I would also like to say that I was very disturbed to hear Councilman Griffiths berating the Board of Election members during their last meeting on January 20th and telling them that they should all resign. This intimidation concerns me in light of Mr. Griffith's proposed charter amendment of adding council members to the Board.

Mr. Griffith wrote in a recent email to me:

*"The Ordinance for the Board of Elections is designed to allow for the legislative branch and elected officials, that have been exposed to the election laws and process, be able to assist the citizens that are on the Board of Elections with their task of executing the PA State Election Laws."*

I would think that the citizens on the Board of Elections would have more knowledge of the election process than most of the council members since this is their sole function and primary purpose.

I am equally disturbed by the resignation of the Luzerne County Elections Director and the Deputy Elections Director.

That said, it is obvious there is a need for change, but it is not the makeup of the Board of Elections.

Councilman Griffiths has also said, "Let the people decide" in regards to putting this referendum on the ballot. "The People" decided when they elected all of you that you would make good and prudent decisions that are free of political motivation on the behalf of all of the citizens of Luzerne County. That is what you were elected to do.

I ask the council members to do the right thing and vote to reject this amendment.

Respectfully,

Denise Williams  
Kingston Township

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