

From: [Mark Rabo](#)
To: [Luzerne County Council Meeting Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Public Comment on non-agenda items for 8/23 Council voting session
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Home Rule Study Commission recommendation #7 to be read verbatim in it's entirety.
Thanks.

7. The Recommended Charter Ends the Insidious Practices of Nepotism, Cronyism, and Favoritism and Requires Appointments and Hirings Based on Public Notice, Merit, Fitness, and Qualifications.

For too long, Luzerne County government has served as a vehicle to provide patronage jobs to relatives, friends, and political supporters. For too long, appointments to Luzerne County authorities, boards, and commissions have been available only to a group of insiders and political friends. These practices have excluded many qualified and meritorious candidates from service to our county. At a time when Luzerne County government should be a shining example of a meritocracy, it is instead often perceived as simply a bureaucracy of the well-connected. The recommended charter makes wholesale and needed reforms to the way individuals are hired for county employment and appointed to county authorities, boards, and commissions. It starts at the top, with a manager who must be degreed, experienced, and have professional abilities, qualifications, preparation, and training to perform the function of county manager. Similarly high standards are required for the selection of each of the division/office heads. Under the recommended charter, county career service jobs must be publicly advertised, candidates must be evaluated on the basis of merit and fitness as demonstrated by a valid and reliable examination, other objective evidence of competence, or other relevant factors, applicants are to be blindly ranked where possible, and any hiring must be made from the top three qualified applicants. For seasonal jobs where objective measures cannot be used, a lottery system will determine the successful applicants. Openings on authorities, boards, and commissions must also be advertised so any interested citizen can apply to council for appointment. The recommended charter also prohibits nepotism in hiring and in the supervisory structure of the county workforce.

The sweeping changes in hiring and appointment required by the recommended charter will, in the judgment of the GSC, foster a government where merit and competence are rewarded, poor personnel practices are eliminated, and county government is opened to the best, brightest, and most fit candidates.

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