



July 7, 2024

Whatcom County Council

Dear Whatcom County Council Members,

The League of Women voters is a non-partisan political organization formed nationally in 1920. Since 1956 we have been an active and positive influence in Whatcom County registering voters, hosting candidate forums, providing civics education curriculums for schools, and advocating for policy which is supported by our well-researched and thoughtful positions. We thank you for your service on the county council.

I am writing to you today regarding the proposition to repeal Ordinance 2022-045. There are two issues with the ballot measure.

We believe that signatures on the propositions were collected with misleading information. People were led to believe that their property taxes would go down 25%. That is not true. My personal property tax would go down about 3%.

Also, the proposition was submitted as an initiative. Initiatives are intended for new legislation. This is actually a repeal of existing rule so it should have been submitted as a referendum. Whatcom County Charter defines initiatives and referendums and requires significantly more signatures for referendum than for initiatives. There is a good reason for the higher threshold of signatures for referendums and that is that it prevents government from flip flopping back and forth. This proposition did not have enough signatures to qualify as a referendum and should not appear on the ballot.

What authority does the county prosecutor and the county council have to challenge the initiative? Please request that the county prosecutor initiate a pre-election legal review of the initiative so a judge can determine if it is valid.

Sincerely,

Eileen McCracken
President
League of Women Voters Bellingham/Whatcom County