

# Election System Community Engagement

## Project Engagement

VIEWS	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	COMMENTS	SUBSCRIBERS	IMPRESSIONS
10,733	693	0	142	325	4,726

## Voicemail Comments

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Hello, this is Mark Midland. I'm calling to voice my support for the 10 plus one district Make for Virginia Beach elections. Please do not change.

5/14/2023 

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Hi, my name is Louis Midland. I just wanted to comment that I think it's very important that we keep the election system in Virginia Beach the way that we've changed it to. I like the 10 areas where each district gets to vote for their own council member. The at large system is unfair and inadequate for making sure that everyone in Virginia Beach is represented by the people in their own neighborhood. This way, we'll get more neighborhood participation, and that's really what we oughta have. Virginia Beach, not just a bunch of corporate, hotel, and other good old boys in the network kind of government. Anyway, thanks. Bye.

5/10/2023 

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This is Phillip Myers, a registered voter in Virginia Beach, and I want to express my support for the ten one system here within Virginia Beach. Thank you.

5/2/2023 

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My name is John Carone. I think the local election process should reflect the contents of the US Constitution. Each state has two senators for overall concern about their states and representatives. One minimum. Who represents local interests? Vice all local. If you had no senators, who would tend to have tunnel vision for their individual district or area, which leads to competition for resources as opposed to having the senator's overall reflection of needs of the entire area. Also tends to lead to lifetime of office holders. Get elected re time and time again once they get their roots dug in. Prevention, fresh look, fresh input by new office holders. Those are my comments. Thank you.

4/5/2023 

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Yes, two of us would like to give our opinion. We'd like to vote for, for at large and not just immediate. This is someone, another Beach Resident Green. Thank you very much. Thank you.

4/5/2023 

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Hi, my name is William Al. I live at 98 Holly Crescent, Virginia Beach, Virginia, and I've been a resident here for quite some time. I do not want any of this early voting. I want to go back to the way it was when my parents. There is a way to have people that can't make the poll day. They just need to notarize their signature and get it to the registrar, and it should not be mailed out. They should request it. Hope that's enough information. Thank you.

4/3/2023 

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Yes. Hello. This is Avante Garrido again. I was just wanted to offer up some possible solutions when it comes to the issue of gerrymandering, because I heard that that term come up quite a bit. Might I recommend creating a independent redistricting commission or use a more transparent and objective criteria for redistricting, which you know, you, the criteria used to draw the district line should be transparent and objective, focusing on factors such as the population size, community, boundaries, and compactness. And this can ensure that districts are drawn fairly without bias. Also, you can encourage public participation in the redistricting process, which can ensure that the district lines accurately reflect the needs and desires of the community. Like holding more public hearings, soliciting input from community organizations and other online tools for gathering feedback. You can also implement a proportional representation, which means parties, parties receive seats and proportion to the percentage of the votes they received. And that can ensure that the makeup of the legislature reflects a diversity of views in the community and can help, Jerry can help prevent re gerrymandering by reducing the incentive to draw district lines in a way that favors one party over the other. Or you can create multi-member districts rather than dividing the into like single member districts, like creating multi-member districts that can help ensure that different communities are represented to prevent gerrymandering and reducing the ability to draw lines in the way that favors one party over the other. All right, that's, that's all.

4/3/2023 

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Hey, I just wanted to clarify with ranked choice voting. Someone mentioned that it would be used when someone stepped down from office. I'm not sure if that's true or not, but generally it's used to initially decide who gets office. So if you have several people running for office, under ranked choice voting, the candidate with the fewest first choice votes is eliminated, and the second choice votes of their supporters are redistributed to the remaining candidates. It's not necessarily used just because someone stepped down from office where you choose who was the runner up. It's used for the initial election. That's all I have. Thank you, Christopher Alphie.

4/3/2023 

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This is Dorothy Patterson and I live down at the ocean front. I would like to see Virginia Beach stay with the ten one district system. This system allows candidates to fully walk and a district to talk to voters and make the money contributions to candidates not as important. This way you would truly have representation from your district. I also know that the lines that are currently drawn for the city have been influenced by the city. For example, there were lines drawn around Lewis Jones house before he died so he could stay in his dis stay in a district and not run against another current counsel person. I'm also totally against appointments to vacancies that may occur. It does not give a person, or it does give a person the income fee advantage and does not give the people real representation. I also feel there should be a referendum on the ballot for voters to decide on which system to have 11 council members should not be making the decision for the voting system for the city. Also, the November 22nd, a 2022 election is technically void and did not duly elect people. In three districts, you've got Wilson, Bellucci and Wooton that were appointed to seats or anointed to seats. In addition, the charter had not been changed to repro to allow the ten one district district system that was used with Virginia being a Dillon rule state. All changes have to be written in the charter to be able to do it. Thank you for listening.

4/3/2023 

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Hi, can you hear me? Okay? Hi. Hi, thanks. It's Kathleen Peterson again. I just had a follow on comment. A couple more folks have made comments about the rank voting, and I realized there were a couple of benefits to US taxpayer voters that I ran out of time and then mentioned. One is we don't have to deal with political appointments to fill vacancies when those whom we elect leave office prematurely, and we can pull in the ranked candidate that came in second place as needed that was selected actually by the voters that they would serve and thereby eliminate any undue political influence on the choice. Also, it eliminates the time delay and additional costs to taxpayers that are attributable to special elections that currently need to be held when someone leaves their post. If a political and point appointee isn't made in cases where elected officials leave prematurely before the end of their term, so anything to keep down taxpayer costs and serve the voters seems like a great idea to me. That's all I forgot to say the first time I spoke. Thank you for listening. Bye now.

4/3/2023 

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Yes. Hello. My name is Avanti Garrido. I'm a resident of Virginia Beach pretty much all my life. I want to piggyback off of what a few more people have said before, and I am in full support. And I will also recommend ranked choice voting for further explanation of ranked choice. Voting allows voters to rank candidates in orders of preference rather than simply selecting one candidate, which means that if your preferred candidate doesn't win, your vote still has a chance to count toward a second or third candidate, which means there's no such thing as a throwaway vote. And implementing ranked choice voting would benefit the city in several ways. Firstly, it will help combat the problem of vote splitting in the traditional first pass, the post voting multiple candidates from the same party or ideological group can split the vote, allowing for a less popular candidate to win with only a a plurality of votes. Secondly, ranked choice voting would encourage a more civil and issue focused campaign environment. Candidates would actually have to appeal to a broader range of voters rather than just their base, which would incentivize them to focus on issues that are important to a wide, a wider swath of the population. Finally, implementing rank Choice voting would send a strong message that our city values, fairness, inclusivity, and the democratic participation. And it would be a powerful symbol of our commitment to ensuring that every voice is heard and that every vote counts regardless of party affiliation or ideology. So implementing rate choice voting is a proven and effective way to strengthen our democracy and ensure that our elections are fair, transparent, and inclusive. Thank you for listening.

4/3/2023 

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Good afternoon everyone. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak. My name is Michael Weis. I'm here standing in support of ten one as it brings diversity to the elections where each district can be represented by their district representative. It allows for better accountability for those elected officials and allows for low startup costs for new candidates. If issues do arise in those districts, it allows for easy access for these concerns, citizens to reach the representative. You know, maybe you even run into them at the grocery store that you all go to. You know, things that I would like to be looked at and addressed besides being in support of 10. One would be the district maps, the lines drawn, separating District nine and District eight I, I think need to be revisited as well. I am requesting a polling location during locations either at Kentsville Elementary, Kentsville Middle School, or the Williams Farm Recreation Center. I'd like to take this time to thank I were unlimited in Norfolk for helping me see again with new glasses and eye exam. And then my final statement. The NAACP will be having a meeting next Tuesday at Williams Farm Recreation Center, and we hope to see you all there. Thank you very much for having this open discussion on the elections and I hope you all have a very great day. Thank you for this opportunity. Grateful for it.

4/3/2023 

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Hi. Hi. My name's Kathleen Peterson. I live in the Kempville area of Virginia Beach. I wanted to thank the city for including virtual events. I'm disabled and don't own a vehicle, so this allows people like me to contribute and be a part of the process, and I hope that in future I'll be able to participate in the survey. I'm not sure how to do that. Maybe that could be revisited after all the comments are collected. So my comments are as followed. I recommend using the ranked voting method in all city elections, both district and at large. So taxpayer costs and time delays associated with duplicative elections aren't needed. If a city elected representative steps down from their office prior to conclusion of their term of office due to unforeseen illness or competing responsibilities, or their physical move out of the geographic area in which they were elected. In cases such as that, our city can simply swear in city voters Second choice for representation as it would be duly collected and recorded during the previous election. I also endorse the ten one wards system for our city, for both our city council members as well as our school board members. I think it makes sense to better ensure all diverse folks in our city have the opportunity to be represented on both our city council and on our city public school board. I did read a comment that was posted in writing for this virtual meeting wherein someone recommended that folks not only vote in their own assigned district where their home is located, but also up to two or three adjacent districts where school attendance might overlap. I think that's a thorny issue, and I'm not sure having folks vote in two or three different districts might not dilute the diversity effect. So I hope that if that's something that's considered by our city leaders, I hope it's something that they give careful thought to. I do think that the ranked voting though makes sense for all city elections, whether they're at large, like for sheriff or treasurer. I heard something. Oh, okay. Okay, that, that concludes my comments. Thank you for the opportunity. Bye.

4/3/2023 

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Hello, this is <unk>. I'm just here. I want to recommend, in addition to the survey, you said you're not answering questions, so I don't know if it's already on there. So I'm just going to state stated, and that would be, I would like everyone to be asked about whether they would want ranked choice voting on the, the next ballot on 2024. It's a, in case anyone here doesn't know, it's a system of voting that allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference. So all of your candidates, you would rank them one to 10 on, on preference. Basically, you would be able to vote for someone that you don't necessarily think is going to win, but you'd be able to vote for them on preference. And then maybe the person you think is gonna win you for vote second without there being any sort of like first past the post like system where you're forced into voting for someone. Say you're forced, forced into voting for some cer, certain city council member that you don't necessarily prefer over someone, but you think if you don't vote for them, then you're voting for the other person. Basically. This would kind of mitigate that. It's not a perfect system. That's why I would like for this to be vote voted on by the people on whether they want rank choice voting, preferably on the survey. You could rank rank choice voting by preference one out of 10 on how much you would prefer to have it. I think that would be pretty funny. Yeah, that that's, that's it's, it's already, that's why I would like for this, it's already available. And the code of Virginia 24.2 dash 6 73 0.1, rank choice voting means a method of casting and tabling votes. And city council members are allowed to conduct a vote with the majority vote that will allow their elections to be conducted in this way. And that is specifically what I'm talking about here. It's also with school board and other, other elections. So I would like that to be voted on by the city council. I don't know if they have voted on it, but I think if a lot of people say on the survey that they want it to be there, that would be, that would be great to get another vote on it if, if there has been one. I don't know. But that's, that's it. I'm done. Thank you.

4/3/2023 

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Hello. Is it my turn? Yes. My name is Shirley Fowler and I would, I just have a brief comment. I really don't believe we should have the at large voting anymore. I think it's outdated and antiquated. What we should be doing. We should have a council person that represent our particular area because that person would know our particular needs. If at large you would have somebody in the ocean front voting for council person for things. I live in the Alexandria area and we live on the outskirts of Virginia Beach, and quite frankly, we are neglected. I've been living here for 20 years and we were supposed to have some rec center for 20 years. We had been speaking about that. We never did receive that, so we are out here. We're being taxed with no representation. So I feel like we would be represented better if we didn't have that at large, if we could vote for a council person for our particular area so that they could be respectful of our particular needs. Thank you.

4/3/2023 

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Was that directed at me? I, I thought it was just part of the whole thing. Okay. My name is Carolyn Kaywood. The final, the ward you want oh eight. The final comment on this process that I wanna make is that I want to see an end to the members of City Council, appointing people to fill vacancies because this creates an obvious incumbent advantage with 10 small districts. A special election to fill a vacancy is quite doable and will be much less expensive. And therefore, I believe all vacancies should be filled by election, not appointment. Thank you. I'm done.

4/3/2023 

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Hi, this is Linda Doll Prince. I was just dialing in and I guess my only question is why. Well, I understand why we're having these meetings, but who would object? It seems perfectly good to have people voting for the people that are gonna represent them specifically as well as the city. That's my comment.

4/3/2023 

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[Ms Simmons] I want 10 plus one voting.

4/2/2023 

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My name is Vincent E. Davis. I want 10 plus one vote team. Thank you. That's it.

4/2/2023 

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My name is Paul Davis and I su totally support the 10 and one voting system in Virginia Beach. Totally support 10 and one. Thank you very much.

4/2/2023 

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Yes. My name is Dawn Irv, and I live here in Virginia Beach. And I just want to say that I want to continue with the ten one voting system. This allows us to have our own district representation so that we have a seat at the table. I in favor of the ten one voting system. Thank you.

4/2/2023 

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Samuel Curtis Simmons. I want the ten one voting system. Thank you.

4/2/2023 

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Yes. My name is Jacqueline W. Simmons. I want the ten one voting system because I like what we have now. It is time for a change.

4/2/2023 

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Good morning. I am, my name is Christina Boshier. I go by Kitty. I'm out of the time zone for your meetings. I'm out of town, but I feel strongly that we should retain the system that was selected that gives each district a chance to elect its own representative. I feel strongly not to go back to the at large system. My phone number is (757) 639-0923, and I just wanted to go on record as saying, let's keep moving forward. We live in a diverse community. Let's have diverse representation. Thank you.

3/31/2023 

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Hi, my name is Melissa Luk. I wanted to speak on some history tonight. 28,000 citizens signed a petition in 1994, enforced city council to put a referendum on the ballot to end the at-large system and the disenfranchisement of minority voters. It passed by a clear majority of 52.7%, but local and state politicians tricked the voters with an ambiguous and deceptively awarded follow up referendum in 1996, which kept an all at large system in place until 2022 because two brave women, women of color won a lawsuit against the city. You're about to see a pattern of behavior from our elected officials. Let's talk about some more recent history. Our mayor, Bobby Dyer, led the charge to spend over 10 million of our taxpayer money to appeal the decision of the courts on our previous voting system that institutionalized racism in this city for 57 years. On December 13th, 2022, he brought forth a resolution for this public engagement on the voting system. He's on record saying that he would wait until the new council was seated before even discussing changes to the voting system put in place by the court. He went back on his words because he's been conspiring against the ten one system, and he knew he had the votes in December before the new council was seated to proceed with the agenda of undermining the voter's voices. At the February 7th, 2023, city Council Meeting Council voted to spend \$349,958 to fund these hearings and survey citizens. While I appreciate public input on important issues spending this kind of money because the status quo is unhappy with the youngest, most diverse council ever in the history of this city is reprehensible. The money spent on this could have gone to a new roof on Betty F. Williams, so it stops raining on children's heads while they're in school. On a rainy day, I do not believe that some members of council are operating in good faith. Many of our elected officials are beholden to developers. The excuse that people are upset that they didn't get to vote this election because their district was not up for reelection is a smoke and mirrors game. The city's failure you to promote robust voter education on the ten one system is not an excuse for them to say that the voters are upset or that the ten one system doesn't work. The reason politicians want some at large seats is so they can galvanize a specific space of voters to elect the same cronies that have been working for the ocean front developers and special interests. I would like to personally thank Councilwoman Sabrina Wooten for her dedication and hard work in the face of a lot of adversity. Sitting on that dias, not only does she support ten one system based on her votes, she has used her voice to bring daylight to the efforts by other members of council to take our city backwards. So if you're a strong proponent of ten one and live in district seven, I know Councilwoman Wooten would love to hear from you. Thank you.

3/30/2023 

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Said College Park had up their business, all of them for it. They didn't have that many, that meetings already over That meeting was like 20 minutes. Yeah, they all already, that's why I was, I was too tired. I didn't wanna drive back just for the heck of it. I was like, okay, I think I'm just gonna go online and check it out. See how good it is. Anyway, it worked so good. I told 'em, the city did one good thing. It proved to us that we could have town hall meeting as well as email access and virtual. We did it. All people, people came into this from every direction and that's a good thing. People were able to access it any kind of way they wanted to. Whatever made them feel comfortable. They could go face to face, they could use email, they could use Zoom and still be able to make written comments or A video comment with their face or without their face. But you had to sign in. You had to say who you were, which is not, that's fine. Who can, that's fine. You shouldn't say nothing and you, so I think it was great. I think it's gonna prove to us that we can do a better job of informing our people about not just voting, but why you vote and that's running and, and the fact that one vote, one representative is everybody's responsibility to vote. People are going to be still invited. It's just so many people that felt uninvited because of the good old boy system. That's not 400 years getting unraveled. Is this 400 years getting unraveled?

3/30/2023 

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The name is Judith Kyle, and I've been trying to access this on my laptop, and I've had a, a lot of problems with it. But here's my comment. I like the ten one system. My husband and I enjoyed having our own representative running for, for council this time, and I think we need to stick with it. I, I don't understand why people think this, this new system is a problem. Judith Kyle live in the great neck area.

3/27/2023 

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Marilyn 10 and one.

3/27/2023 

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My name is Eileen Fry and I like the way the election system was changed so that we voted by ward. I think it, it makes things more equitable and we have a variety of people of diverse variety of people. So please keep the ward system. It's great. Bye-bye.

3/27/2023 

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This is Peter Burke, B I R K. You can reach my email brk cox.net. I have logged in six times being given a number in the queue and never had the opportunity to speak. It appears you have some serious issues with this WebEx system and there may be many, many other people who who've tried to speak that were unable to get on. I think this needs to be checked. Like I said, you can text me if you want. I'm happy to talk about it. I'm quite computer literate and so I'm sure this is a bug in the system. Thanks. Bye-bye.

3/26/2023 

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Hi, I'm disabled and don't have a vehicle, and I just wanted to say thank you so much for including virtual opportunities to contribute to this very important issue, and I hope that we'll be able to vote through the mail for our city council and school board representatives. That's all I had to say. Thank you.

3/26/2023 

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System because we get to nail vote for the person who represents us. And as such that person is accountable to us. It really doesn't make sense to have people from all over the city voting for our representative and then that representative not being accountable to us. And, and therefore for us, and, and a part of what we do day to day and, and each week and a part of what we go through, and again, like some of the other speakers have said, this voting system, the ten one voting system, has yielded the most diverse council. And, and my, I I just questioned why we would go ever go away from a, a voting system where the citizens have spoken about who they would like to represent them in their particular districts, and a voting system that has yielded a diverse council, which means there are diverse voices speaking and diverse perspectives. I am in favor of the ten one system and I pray that our members of council will see that this is the best way for each district to have a voice and to hold our representatives accountable. Thank you.

3/26/2023 

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To the voting and can you hear me? Hello? Okay. Hi. I'm Michael Weiss. I'm calling in in support of the ten one system. It brings diversity into the election and voting system to make sure that everyone can get their representation by their district and also hold that person accountable. It also allows for new candidates to also also not have too much of a hurdle when it comes to starting up in the process of the first bid for elections. So that is why I, I do support it and will continue to support it as well. I would also like to add that there should be an election polling place in the next upcoming election in the Kempville area, either at like Kempville Elementary Middle School, or the Williams Farm Recreation Center. Thank you very much for giving me this time to speak.

3/26/2023 

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Hi. Yes, thank you. Thank you for this opportunity. I would just like to support, express my support for the ten one system as well. I believe some of the things that the city attorney said during these court hearings was actually quite shameful for the city. You know, the question wasn't about whether black, Hispanic and Asians vote the same way politically. It's that, that they have adequate representation and able to express themselves a representative government that we have. So I would just like to say that some of the arguments that our city attorney has presented in court on behalf of the city is quite alarming to myself and I imagine others. And yes, I think we should keep the ten one system. I mean, we allowed David Nygard to have to lead counsel because he was not in the correct, you know, residence. But we're trying to keep an old system. Some are to where people from other districts can vote in, and we don't want these influences of other districts to keep doing what they've been doing over the decades. And I think other speakers have already gone much into that. But we've had problems in our city and county over the years. We have minorities. We are the South, we were the Confederacy. We've had civil rights complaints from the NAACP over the years in our city, in our Commonwealth as well. So we need to be cognizant of our past so we can work on our present to have a better future. Thank you.

3/26/2023 

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Hi. Hi. My name's Kathleen Peterson. I'm a resident in the Princess Ann area, Kempville. I live at Salem and South Independence. I wanted to suggest that for the voting system we consider within the in-district voting that's been proposed that we additionally layer in ranked voting of all candidates. That way, if after the voters speak and rank their choices, an foretold situation evolves where the elected candidate has to withdraw for any reason, personal illness or change of neighborhood. If they decide to move, then we don't have to go through the cost to the taxpayers of running a subsequent election before the normally scheduled election with ranked voting, we would simply install the voter's second choice from the previous election. That's all I had to add. Thank you very much.

3/26/2023 

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I don't understand how to speak what I need to do to speak. I would like to speak. What? Hello? Hello? I don't.

3/26/2023 

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House in the Kessel area for 31 years. I support the ten one system that was established by the federal court after its finding that the previous election system, which was in effect since just after the city was established in the 1960s, violated the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 under the previous illegal at-large system. Between the years 1966 to 2018, that's 52 years, only six people of color, five blacks in one Filipino were elected to the Virginia Beach City Council. Of the five black council members, that's one per decade, none were reelected. One of those who was not reelected was my city council member, Dr. Amelia Ross Hammond from Kempville, the voter. When she came up for reelection, she served very well. The voters of Kempville voted to reelect her. Unfortunately, the balance of the voters from other areas of Virginia Beach citywide were allowed to weigh in and did not vote for her. So those outside outsiders in effect, vetoed council's choice of its representative. That's the problem with the previous illegal at large system. It leaves certain areas, either unrepresented or underrepresented because they don't have their own voice under the old illegal system. We recently had two city council members, the late John Lewis Jones and John Moss in the Bayside area who lived just a few houses from each other. And that's why we have the crazy line that's drawn in the Bayside area to accommodate both of them and give them a chance At reelection. Under the old illegal system, we had four, four school board members also in Bayside, who lived within a mile of each other, four in one district. That now represents only 10% of the population. That means that three other districts in our current system under the ten one system outside of Bayside had no school school board representation. So those three districts should be familiar to you. They're the so-called minority opportunity districts, districts four, seven, and 10. They had no representation on our school board. Since the implementation of the ten one system in just the last year, we've had five Black City Council members. Five, the same number that we got in 52 years previously. One was an appointee Delino miles. We retained incumbent Sabrina Wooten. We have newly elected members, Jennifer Rouse, Christopher Taylor, and once again reelected from a local 10% system of district of 10% of the voters. The wonderful Dr. Amelia Ross Hammond has returned to council. So now my, so now my former very distinguished council member has been restored to her council seat by local residents voting in their individual choi district for their choice, their choice under the ten one system, and people from other areas of Virginia, VE Beach cannot veto their choice in just one year of the implementation of The the ten one system. It has proven to be a fair and effective way of choosing our city council members. It's given us not only more diverse representation in race, in background, but in age, experience, and geography. It allows everybody to be heard.

3/26/2023 

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I'm here today to voice my support for district voting in our community rather than the past voting system that we've had. Let me start by explaining that district voting means it's a system where jurisdiction is divided into smaller geographic regions and each region elected's own representative. In contrast, you know, the at large system that is being explored and has been used in the past allows voters to choose from a pool of candidates to fill all the open seats regardless of where the candidate lives or works. There are several compelling reasons why district voting is better choice. First and foremost ensures that every community within our jurisdiction has a voice in the political process by dividing the jurisdiction and do smaller regions. The system makes it easier for people from diverse backgrounds and with varying needs to elect candidates who truly represent their interests. Moreover, district voting promotes diversity in our elected officials Under another system. It's easier to dominate for, it's easier for a dominant group to control the outcome of the elections. In contrast, district voting creates opportunities for candidates from underrepresented communities to be elected. This is particularly important in communities that have been historically marginalized or ignored. District voting also makes it easier for candidates campaign and connect with voters. I fo focusing on a smaller geographic area. Candidates can spend more time and resources engaging with their constituents, and this makes it more informed electorate and a more responsive government. Finally, district voting can improve accountability with other systems. It's difficult to hold elected officials accountable for specific issues or policies, and with district voting, voters can more easily identify the representative and hold them accountable for their actions. District voting is a fairer and more democratic system than the others can explored. It promotes diversity, accountability, accountability, and ensures all voices are heard. In addition, I think we should explore using ranked choice voting in order to further strengthen the the officials that are running and weed out a lot of the extremes. Okay, thank you.

3/26/2023 

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10 to one system works and it shouldn't be changed back to what was illegal or determined by a court to be illegal, which disenfranchises so many citizens of Virginia Beach.

3/25/2023 

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## Comments: Community Input Meeting on Election System | Bayside Recreation Center

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Great meeting! The community came out and showed a strong majority support for the 10-1 system.

3/26/2023

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Show up early, it was hot and packed today.

3/25/2023

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Standing ovation sir!

3/25/2023

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I wish to keep the 10-1 system. It is fair, constitutional, and does not suppress voters.

3/25/2023

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I thought the 10-1 system made sense. I never did understand how I could vote for candidates who represented other districts. That seemed very unfair just by common sense, and a way to influence elections in the districts . Do not go back to the old “at large” system. If you have something better, show us, but it better meet that common sense indicator. Do you have proposals of other systems? Please publish somewhere accessible. I’m fairly well “online-literate” and signing on to this platform was somewhat annoying. I got mixed messages about signing-in. I had to verify my email twice and had to reload the page twice. I received a message that I already had an account, when I really didn’t. Do you really want people to be able to access this information?

3/25/2023

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Why do Rosemary Wilson bobby dyer Baber Henley MICHEAL BULUCHI AND ROCKY HOLCOM JOSH SULMAN CONTINUE TO WASTE MILLIONS OF TAX PAYERS DOLLARS HEAR IN VA BEACH TO TURN BACK THE CLOCK TO VOTER SUPPRESSION AFTER THE COURTS AND STATE HAVE SAID THE OLD SYSTEM WAS DISCRIMINATORY? PLEASE KEEP THE 10-1 SYSTEM IN PLACE

3/25/2023

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The 10 -1 system is the best and most accountable system to come to the beach it should not be changed.

3/24/2023

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Comment/Question:

The 10-1 system works. I know who my representative is and can contact her at any time. Anything other than the 10-1 screams gerrymandering. I would like to know why a city that proudly celebrates 60 years wants to go back 60 years?

3/23/2023

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I wish to keep the voting system used in the November 2022 election cycle.

3/20/2023

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Comments: Community Input Meeting on Election System | Virtual (option 1)

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Dear Sirs,

This whole election system change was brought about by a bogus lawsuit by Latasha Holloway & Georgia Allen, which was eventually thrown out of by the Virginia State Supreme Court. It rigs the elections, so that some people's votes are more heavily weighted than others, by the gerrymandering to create 3 "minority" districts. Each citizen of Virginia Beach deserves equal representation. That is not what this is about. The Marxists and communists among us want their voices to carry more weight than everyone else's, by creating 3 automatically leftist districts. This must not stand!

3/29/2023

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Trying to speak, but cannot be recognized. Attempted numerous times and was told I was in the queue, but never was prompted. Surely we can do better. I was using a smart phone.

I support the new 10-1 Ward system. This should be bipartisan. Representative government requires engagement between a directly elected official and their community.

3/26/2023

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This is Peter Burke, B I R K. You can reach my email brk cox.net. I have logged in six times being given a number in the queue and never had the opportunity to speak. It appears you have some serious issues with this WebEx system and there may be many, many other people who who've tried to speak that were unable to get on. I think this needs to be checked. Like I said, you can text me if you want. I'm happy to talk about it. I'm quite computer literate and so I'm sure this is a bug in the system. Thanks. Bye-bye.

3/26/2023 

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Hi, I'm disabled and don't have a vehicle, and I just wanted to say thank you so much for including virtual opportunities to contribute to this very important issue, and I hope that we'll be able to vote through the mail for our city council and school board representatives. That's all I had to say. Thank you.

3/26/2023 

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I also support the 10-1 system, as I believe it is a process that is most directly representative of the citizens within that district.

3/26/2023

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I support the 10 - 1 system in VA Beach. I would also request a polling station in the upcoming elections at either Kempsville Elementary or Williams Farms Recreation Center

3/26/2023

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System because we get to nail vote for the person who represents us. And as such that person is accountable to us. It really doesn't make sense to have people from all over the city voting for our representative and then that representative not being accountable to us. And, and therefore for us, and, and a part of what we do day to day and, and each week and a part of what we go through, and again, like some of the other speakers have said, this voting system, the ten one voting system, has yielded the most diverse council. And, and my, I I just questioned why we would go ever go away from a, a voting system where the citizens have spoken about who they would like to represent them in their particular districts, and a voting system that has yielded a diverse council, which means there are diverse voices speaking and diverse perspectives. I am in favor of the ten one system and I pray that our members of council will see that this is the best way for each district to have a voice and to hold our representatives accountable. Thank you.

3/26/2023 

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To the voting and can you hear me? Hello? Okay. Hi. I'm Michael Weiss. I'm calling in in support of the ten one system. It brings diversity into the election and voting system to make sure that everyone can get their representation by their district and also hold that person accountable. It also allows for new candidates to also also not have too much of a hurdle when it comes to starting up in the process of the first bid for elections. So that is why I, I do support it and will continue to support it as well. I would also like to add that there should be an election polling place in the next upcoming election in the Kempville area, either at like Kempville Elementary Middle School, or the Williams Farm Recreation Center. Thank you very much for giving me this time to speak.

3/26/2023 

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Hi. Yes, thank you. Thank you for this opportunity. I would just like to support, express my support for the ten one system as well. I believe some of the things that the city attorney said during these court hearings was actually quite shameful for the city. You know, the question wasn't about whether black, Hispanic and Asians vote the same way politically. It's that, that they have adequate representation and able to express themselves a representative government that we have. So I would just like to say that some of the arguments that our city attorney has presented in court on behalf of the city is quite alarming to myself and I imagine others. And yes, I think we should keep the ten one system. I mean, we allowed David Nygard to have to lead counsel because he was not in the correct, you know, residence. But we're trying to keep an old system. Some are to where people from other districts can vote in, and we don't want these influences of other districts to keep doing what they've been doing over the decades. And I think other speakers have already gone much into that. But we've had problems in our city and county over the years. We have minorities. We are the South, we were the Confederacy. We've had civil rights complaints from the NAACP over the years in our city, in our Commonwealth as well. So we need to be cognizant of our past so we can work on our present to have a better future. Thank you.

3/26/2023 

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Hi. Hi. My name's Kathleen Peterson. I'm a resident in the Princess Ann area, Kempville. I live at Salem and South Independence. I wanted to suggest that for the voting system we consider within the in-district voting that's been proposed that we additionally layer in ranked voting of all candidates. That way, if after the voters speak and rank their choices, an foretold situation evolves where the elected candidate has to withdraw for any reason, personal illness or change of neighborhood. If they decide to move, then we don't have to go through the cost to the taxpayers of running a subsequent election before the normally scheduled election with ranked voting, we would simply install the voter's second choice from the previous election. That's all I had to add. Thank you very much.

3/26/2023 

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I don't understand how to speak what I need to do to speak. I would like to speak. What? Hello? Hello? I don't.

3/26/2023 

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House in the Kessel area for 31 years. I support the ten one system that was established by the federal court after its finding that the previous election system, which was in effect since just after the city was established in the 1960s, violated the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 under the previous illegal at-large system. Between the years 1966 to 2018, that's 52 years, only six people of color, five blacks in one Filipino were elected to the Virginia Beach City Council. Of the five black council members, that's one per decade, none were reelected. One of those who was not reelected was my city council member, Dr. Amelia Ross Hammond from Kempville, the voter. When she came up for reelection, she served very well. The voters of Kempville voted to reelect her. Unfortunately, the balance of the voters from other areas of Virginia Beach citywide were allowed to weigh in and did not vote for her. So those outside outsiders in effect, vetoed council's choice of its representative. That's the problem with the previous illegal at large system. It leaves certain areas, either unrepresented or underrepresented because they don't have their own voice under the old illegal system. We recently had two city council members, the late John Lewis Jones and John Moss in the Bayside area who lived just a few houses from each other. And that's why we have the crazy line that's drawn in the Bayside area to accommodate both of them and give them a chance at reelection. Under the old illegal system, we had four, four school board members also in Bayside, who lived within a mile of each other, four in one district. That now represents only 10% of the population. That means that three other districts in our current system under the ten one system outside of Bayside had no school school board representation. So those three districts should be familiar to you. They're the so-called minority opportunity districts, districts four, seven, and 10. They had no representation on our school board. Since the implementation of the ten one system in just the last year, we've had five Black City Council members. Five, the same number that we got in 52 years previously. One was an appointee Delino miles. We retained incumbent Sabrina Wooten. We have newly elected members, Jennifer Rouse, Christopher Taylor, and once again reelected from a local 10% system of district of 10% of the voters. The wonderful Dr. Amelia Ross Hammond has returned to council. So now my, so now my former very distinguished council member has been restored to her council seat by local residents voting in their individual choi district for their choice, their choice under the ten one system, and people from other areas of Virginia, VE Beach cannot veto their choice in just one year of the implementation of The the ten one system. It has proven to be a fair and effective way of choosing our city council members. It's given us not only more diverse representation in race, in background, but in age, experience, and geography. It allows everybody to be heard.

3/26/2023 

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I'm here today to voice my support for district voting in our community rather than the past voting system that we've had. Let me start by explaining that district voting means it's a system where jurisdiction is divided into smaller geographic regions and each region elected's own representative. In contrast, you know, the at large system that is being explored and has been used in the past allows voters to choose from a pool of candidates to fill all the open seats regardless of where the candidate lives or works. There are several compelling reasons why district voting is better choice. First and foremost ensures that every community within our jurisdiction has a voice in the political process by dividing the jurisdiction and do smaller regions. The system makes it easier for people from diverse backgrounds and with varying needs to elect candidates who truly represent their interests. Moreover, district voting promotes diversity in our elected officials Under another system. It's easier to dominate for, it's easier for a dominant group to control the outcome of the elections. In contrast, district voting creates opportunities for candidates from underrepresented communities to be elected. This is particularly important in communities that have been historically marginalized or ignored. District voting also makes it easier for candidates campaign and connect with voters. I fo focusing on a smaller geographic area. Candidates can spend more time and resources engaging with their constituents, and this makes it more informed electorate and a more responsive government. Finally, district voting can improve accountability with other systems. It's difficult to hold elected officials accountable for specific issues or policies, and with district voting, voters can more easily identify the representative and hold them accountable for their actions. District voting is a fairer and more democratic system than the others can explored. It promotes diversity, accountability, accountability, and ensures all voices are heard. In addition, I think we should explore using ranked choice voting in order to further strengthen the the officials that are running and weed out a lot of the extremes. Okay, thank you.

3/26/2023 

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I believe that it is appropriate and beneficial that each resident be allowed to vote for their councilman and be able to hold him or her accountable to a specific district

3/26/2023

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I support the new 10 -1 system in the city of Va beach don't let them take it away

3/26/2023

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I'm reading and hearing of cities and states that are possibly giving non US Citizens voting privileges. My question is what is the City and our officials doing in preventing this right to vote being given to anybody / everybody who are not US Citizens? Thank You!!!

3/26/2023

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I think it's only right that citizens only vote for the representative for their district. The one change to the currently adopted system would be the school board. I do believe that candidates for school board be elected city wide. We are one school system.

3/26/2023

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I support representative government. Areas of Virginia Beach have been left out of decision making in the past.

3/23/2023

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The name is Judith Kyle, and I've been trying to access this on my laptop, and I've had a, a lot of problems with it. But here's my comment. I like the ten one system. My husband and I enjoyed having our own representative running for, for council this time, and I think we need to stick with it. I, I don't understand why people think this, this new system is a problem. Judith Kyle live in the great neck area.

3/27/2023 

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For clarity. Keep the current 10 -1 voting system.

3/27/2023

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Marilyn 10 and one.

3/27/2023 

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Terry: wmtcalhoun@aol.com; Keep the 10-1 Districts; Let the people decide.

3/27/2023

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I support the 10-1 system; please do not change the current election process.

3/27/2023

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Representatives should be accountable to their districts. They can't be accountable to everyone in the city. Please keep the 10-1 system.

3/27/2023

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Keep the election process as it is now. Continue to use the 10/1 process. Better representation for my district.

3/27/2023

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I am in favor of the 10-1 voting process.

3/27/2023

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We can't expect at-large elected City Council members to represent all districts of the city in an equitable fashion. Having a representative solely answerable to his/her district is the way to go. I support the 10-1 system. .

3/27/2023

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Please keep the election process as it is now. Continue to use the 10/1 process. It allows for more diversity. That's what our city needs.

3/27/2023

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Comments: Community Input Meeting on Election System | Ocean Lakes High School

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If we're going to use a 10-1 system, in order to make it fair, Districts should be limited to one School Board member per District. Otherwise the School Board vote should not be in this 10-1 system.

3/29/2023

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As a multiple property owner, I feel I should be able to vote for School Board and Council person in the District's that I own property in since it does affect my land value. I wasn't even able to vote for any School Board member in 2022 and that is just NOT fair. I was born & raised here and raised 4 kids in the schools. My vote should be able to count too and it didn't. I agree we should have to show a government issued ID in order to vote. In this day and time we should be able to eliminate fraudulent voting.

3/29/2023

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We need election integrity. Each voter should provide proof of residence and a government issued ID. Each voter should be reviewed and approved for voting. Only US citizens should be allowed to vote. Also, early voting should be removed, it opens up too much room for error. If a person is unable to go vote in person on the single day to vote, then an absent vote should be requested and approved, it should not be allowed for everyone and the kitchen sink. Being able to vote is a privilege here in the US, and should remain that way.

3/28/2023

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### Comments: Community Input Meeting on Election System | Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library

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Dear Sirs,

This whole election system change was brought about by a bogus lawsuit by Latasha Holloway & Georgia Allen, which was eventually thrown out of by the Virginia State Supreme Court. It rigs the elections, so that some people's votes are more heavily weighted than others. Each citizen of Virginia Beach deserves equal representation. That is not what some want. The Marxists and communists among us want their voices to carry more weight than everyone else. This must not stand!

3/29/2023

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### Comments: Community Input Meeting on Election System | Kellam High School

### Comments: Community Input Meeting on Election System | College Park Elementary School

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Hi, my name is Melissa Luk. I wanted to speak on some history tonight. 28,000 citizens signed a petition in 1994, enforced city council to put a referendum on the ballot to end the at-large system and the disenfranchisement of minority voters. It passed by a clear majority of 52.7%, but local and state politicians tricked the voters with an ambiguous and deceptively awarded follow up referendum in 1996, which kept an all at large system in place until 2022 because two brave women, women of color won a lawsuit against the city. You're about to see a pattern of behavior from our elected officials. Let's talk about some more recent history. Our mayor, Bobby Dyer, led the charge to spend over 10 million of our taxpayer money to appeal the decision of the courts on our previous voting system that institutionalized racism in this city for 57 years. On December 13th, 2022, he brought forth a resolution for this public engagement on the voting system. He's on record saying that he would wait until the new council was seated before even discussing changes to the voting system put in place by the court. He went back on his words because he's been conspiring against the ten one system, and he knew he had the votes in December before the new council was seated to proceed with the agenda of undermining the voter's voices. At the February 7th, 2023, city Council Meeting Council voted to spend \$349,958 to fund these hearings and survey citizens. While I appreciate public input on important issues spending this kind of money because the status quo is unhappy with the youngest, most diverse council ever in the history of this city is reprehensible. The money spent on this could have gone to a new roof on Betty F. Williams, so it stops raining on children's heads while they're in school. On a rainy day, I do not believe that some members of council are operating in good faith. Many of our elected officials are beholden to developers. The excuse that people are upset that they didn't get to vote this election because their district was not up for reelection is a smoke and mirrors game. The city's failure you to promote robust voter education on the ten one system is not an excuse for them to say that the voters are upset or that the ten one system doesn't work. The reason politicians want some at large seats is so they can galvanize a specific space of voters to elect the same cronies that have been working for the ocean front developers and special interests. I would like to personally thank Councilwoman Sabrina Wooten for her dedication and hard work in the face of a lot of adversity. Sitting on that dias, not only does she support ten one system based on her votes, she has used her voice to bring daylight to the efforts by other members of council to take our city backwards. So if you're a strong proponent of ten one and live in district seven, I know Councilwoman Wooten would love to hear from you. Thank you.

3/30/2023 

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Said College Park had up their business, all of them for it. They didn't have that many, that meetings already over That meeting was like 20 minutes. Yeah, they all already, that's why I was, I was too tired. I didn't wanna drive back just for the heck of it. I was like, okay, I think I'm just gonna go online and check it out. See how good it is. Anyway, it worked so good. I told 'em, the city did one good thing. It proved to us that we could have town hall meeting as well as email access and virtual. We did it. All people, people came into this from every direction and that's a good thing. People were able to access it any kind of way they wanted to. Whatever made them feel comfortable. They could go face to face, they could use email, they could use Zoom and still be able to make written comments or A video comment with their face or without their face. But you had to sign in. You had to say who you were, which is not, that's fine. Who can, that's fine. You shouldn't say nothing and you, so I think it was great. I think it's gonna prove to us that we can do a better job of informing our people about not just voting, but why you vote and that's running and, and the fact that one vote, one representative is everybody's responsibility to vote. People are going to be still invited. It's just so many people that felt uninvited because of the good old boy system. That's not 400 years getting unraveled. Is this 400 years getting unraveled?

3/30/2023 

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I do not support the current voting system. I want to be aware of everyone on city counsel making decisions that effects my part of city

3/30/2023

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I support the current 10-1 voting system

3/30/2023

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Comments: Community Input Meeting on Election System | Williams Farm Recreation Center

Comments: Community Input Meeting on Election System | Advanced Technology Center

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1. I have listened to a majority of the SpeakUpVB events and it appears that a group of individuals in support of the 10/1 system are attending multiple and perhaps a majority of the events as a means to magnify their opinion and thus falsely reflect the opinion of a majority of the VB residents. This operational strategy of a few individuals has the potential to bias the survey process and misrepresent the opinions of the majority. This strategy has characteristics of the at-large voting model that they passionately criticize. I would expect and encourage the facilitators of this process and council members to properly weigh and consider this input to ensure that the input of a few is appropriately and proportionally reflected in the final analysis of the process.

2. To ensure the usefulness and appropriateness of any voting system requires that all interests and concerns of the public are captured. One area that is lacking in the current 10/1 system is the failure to have a strict alignment of the district boundaries with that of VB school attendance boundaries. A review of these two boundary types shows multiple examples where a school attendance zone, for a school located in one district, extends into an adjacent district. This issue can also manifest itself with respect to representation and access to other VB resources such as parks and recreation facilities. A solution to this issue is to allow cross-district voting for adjacent districts. A review of the current district boundaries show that limited cross district voting, based on the stated criteria outlined above, would allow each district to vote for the representative in either 2 or 3 adjacent districts.

3. It is concerning that the Asian and Hispanic communities are not fully recognized and reflected in the current 10/1 district model. A review of the population data shows that the three majority minority districts only achieve a majority (i.e. exceed the multi race and multi ethnic "white" population) if the Asian and Hispanic populations are included. A close examination of the city population data shows that the black residents comprise 20.8% of residents and the Asian + Hispanic population comprises 17.7%. The data clearly suggest that an Asian + Hispanic district is warranted. The data also show that an Asian + Hispanic majority minority district could have been defined with a population of Asian + Hispanic that exceeds that of the black population. The published data indicates that minor adjustments to districts 1, 3, 7 and 10 would allow for the development of an Asian + Hispanic majority minority district. It is a concern that this does not appear to have been an objective in the current 10/1 district structure.

4. A final element of any district structure and voting process that must be defined are the procedures and frequency of gerrymandering to maintain 3 majority minority districts. Related to this matter is the need for a clear description of the process used by the city to identify the race and ethnicity of all residents. I encourage the city to only use a scientifically accepted process and not use a process that allows for "self identification" as a means to identify race and ethnicity.

4/1/2023

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Yes. My name is Dawn Irv, and I live here in Virginia Beach. And I just want to say that I want to continue with the ten one voting system. This allows us to have our own district representation so that we have a seat at the table. I in favor of the ten one voting system. Thank you.

4/2/2023 

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1. I have listened to a majority of the SpeakUpVB events and it appears that a group of individuals in support of the 10/1 system are attending multiple and perhaps a majority of the events as a means to magnify their opinion and thus falsely reflect the opinion of a majority of the VB residents. This operational strategy of a few individuals has the potential to bias the survey process and misrepresent the opinions of the majority. This strategy has characteristics of the at-large voting model that they passionately criticize. I would expect and encourage the facilitators of this process and council members to properly weigh and consider this input to ensure that the input of a few is appropriately and proportionally reflected in the final analysis of the process.

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4/2/2023

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Hi, my name is William Al. I live at 98 Holly Crescent, Virginia Beach, Virginia, and I've been a resident here for quite some time. I do not want any of this early voting. I want to go back to the way it was when my parents. There is a way to have people that can't make the poll day. They just need to notarize their signature and get it to the registrar, and it should not be mailed out. They should request it. Hope that's enough information. Thank you.

4/3/2023 

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I agree and think this is a good idea.

4/3/2023

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I support the 10/1 system for its diversity and allowing each district to be represented by a candidate who knows the area and the people in their district. I am against ranked choice voting giving a person with the least qualifications/diversity/most extreme ideology the chance of being elected. would like to see open seats voted on and no appointments to open seats.

4/3/2023

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ranked choice voting does not allow you to vote more than once

4/3/2023

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My issue with ranked choice voting is that it basically allows someone to vote more than once which goes against the fundamental principle of one vote per person.

4/3/2023

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