

Spring 2020 West Anchorage Candidates Forum

BALLOT PROPOSITIONS Information

The planned format for the West Anchorage Candidates Forum included brief position statements and Q&A opportunity for representatives of “Yes” or “No” positions on Props 11, 12 and 13 were asked to provide a brief position statement and contact information (including a website) to the sponsoring councils: North Star, Sand Lake, Spenard, Taku Campbell and Turnagain Community Councils. Other propositions were asked to simply bring informational materials, and were therefore not asked to provide a presentation. A link to the Municipality’s election information about Props 1-13, followed by responses by **positions of Props 11, 12 and 13** are listed below. Responses were not edited, except that any responses not following the requested format (1 page of plain text + website or other links) were trimmed to fit the format.

Election Information

Website with all information about the election: www.muni.org/elections

- **Tuesday, March 17:** Ballots were mailed to Anchorage voters’ addresses.
- **Wednesday, March 18:** Ballot drop boxes are unlocked. Drop off your ballot in one of the boxes around the city, or add first-class postage (\$0.70!) and mail.
- **Tuesday, April 7:** Election Day! Ballots must be postmarked or in an official drop box by this date. Ballot drop boxes will be locked at 8 p.m. on April 7th.

Reminder: To protect public health, there are no in-person voting options this year. You may see outdated information about in-person voting centers: these will not be operational. Drop off your ballot or send via mail, with required postage.

From the Muni website: “The election is a Vote at Home election. Traditional polling places will not be open and are not an option for voting on Election Day.”

The Municipal Clerk's Office reminds that, "Voting at home is as easy as 1-2-3!"

1. **Vote your ballot - both sides of both cards** - fill in the ovals completely, place both cards (A & B) in the security envelope, then into the ballot return envelope.
2. **Sign the declaration** on the back of the ballot return envelope.
3. **Save postage by returning your ballot** to a Secure Drop Box or an Anchorage Vote Center (AVC), or, mail your ballot with first class postage* through the United States Postal Service. (Total postage in the amount of 70 cents will be required if a voter chooses to return the ballot with two cards by USPS.)

If a voter loses, damages, or does not receive a ballot package in the mail, the voter is asked to call the Voter Hotline at (907) 243-VOTE (8683) to request a replacement ballot package. The Voter Hotline hours of operation are Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

If you have any questions, call the Voter Hotline: (907) 243 – VOTE (8683).

Information about All Propositions

Visit the Municipality’s election website for the text of each proposition and an informational sheet about each. These are the same sheets previously provided at community council meetings and other events by the Municipality.

<http://www.muni.org/Departments/Assembly/Clerk/Elections/Pages/BallotPropositions.aspx>
Or go to www.muni.org/elections and click “Ballot Information” on the left-side menu.

List of Propositions

- PROPOSITION 1: Areawide Life/Safety Access Roads Improvements Bonds
- PROPOSITION 2: Capital Improvements for Anchorage School District Bonds
- PROPOSITION 3: Anchorage Roads and Drainage Service Area Road and Storm Drainage Bonds
- PROPOSITION 4: Anchorage Fire Service Area Fire Protection Bonds
- PROPOSITION 5: Anchorage Parks and Recreation Service Area Capital Improvement Bonds
- PROPOSITION 6: Anchorage Metropolitan Police Service Area Facilities Bonds
- PROPOSITION 7: Areawide Facilities Capital Improvement Project Bonds
- PROPOSITION 8: Areawide Public Safety and Transit Capital Improvement Bonds
- PROPOSITION 9: Areawide Emergency Medical Supplies and Systems Special Levy and Reduction of Voter-Approved Indebtedness
- PROPOSITION 10: Girdwood Valley Service Area Facilities Bonds
- PROPOSITION 11: Allowing On-Site Consumption of Marijuana by Smoking or Inhalation per Applicable Law in Licensed Retail Marijuana Stores with an Endorsement for an Onsite Consumption Area
- PROPOSITION 12: Charter Amendment to Require 12 Assembly Members and 2 Members for Each Assembly District
- PROPOSITION 13: Charter Amendment for Retail Sales Tax on Alcoholic Beverages Of 5% Dedicating the Revenue to Public Safety and Health Purposes

Proposition 11: Onsite Consumption (Smoking) of Marijuana

Position on Prop 11: YES / In Favor of the Proposition

Entity: Alaska Marijuana Industry Association – Kim Kole, representative

Website: None provided

Position Statement

Note: We did not receive a statement from this organization by the Sunday evening deadline. However, given the disruption of the COVID-19 emergency response on the retail and service sector, businesses have been focused on responding to the changing situation and impacts to their operations and workers. In these difficult circumstances, please do not interpret a lack of response to our questionnaire as a lack of interest.

Proposition 11: Onsite Consumption (Smoking) of Marijuana

Position on Prop 11: NO / Against the Proposition

Entity: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network – Emily Nenon, representative

Website: www.smokefreeanchorage.com

Or visit <https://www.fightcancer.org/vote-no-anchorage-prop-11>

Position Statement

Prop 11 brings smoking back inside workplaces. This measure weakens Anchorage's smoke-free workplaces law, creating an exemption for smoking inside marijuana shops.

Smoking inside marijuana shops threatens health in our workplaces and safety on our roads.

Anchorage voters upheld our smoke-free indoor workplace law in 2007 by 72%. The smoke-free law has served us well for over a decade. Now is not the time to put health and safety at risk.

Marijuana smoke contains many of the cancer-causing substances found in tobacco smoke. Ventilation cannot remove health risks from ultra-fine particles found in secondhand smoke and aerosol from vaping devices.

Proposition 12: 12 Assembly Members, 2 Per District

Position on Prop 12: YES / In Favor of the Proposition

Entity: 2 for ALL Anchorage - Robert Cupples, Chair

Website: Reach us at 2forallanchorage@gmail.com or on Facebook, www.facebook.com/2forallanchorage

Position Statement

WHAT WOULD PROPOSITION 12 DO?

The passing of Proposition 12 would result in the creation of 6 equally sized (by population) assembly districts, each with two assembly representatives increasing the total number of members on the Anchorage Assembly from 11 to 12. This effort would ensure every Anchorage resident is not only proportionally represented, but fairly and equitably represented.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

For 45 years Anchorage has experienced an inequality in representation on the Anchorage Assembly. The rotating single-member district was first assigned to Eagle River in 1975, then was transferred to Downtown in 1985. In 2012 there was a consideration to move the single-member district to either Midtown or East Anchorage. The conversation of moving the single-member district will once again resurface in 2022 unless we take action. Rather than continuing to push this inequality around the municipality, Proposition 12 aims to eliminate the single member district altogether.

While the single-member district is represented equally when comparing resident population, proportional representation is not equal representation. Each individual resident's voice in a single-member district is one-half the voice of residents in all other districts.

WHY NOW?

With the 2020 Census upon us and a redistricting effort already planned for 2022, there has never been a better time to act and eliminate the single-member district ensuring fair and equal representation for each Anchorage resident for years to come.

Proposition 12: Amend Charter, 12 Assembly Members, 2 Per District

Position on Prop 12: NO / Against the Proposition

Entity: One for All Anchorage – David Nees, Chair

Website: Reach us at 907-522-1118, davidneesak@gmail.com or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/oneforallanchorage/>

Position Statement

One for All holds the position that changing the number of Assembly seats is not going to fix the problem.

We believe it will cost more and not improve quality of representation.

We supported the Chris Birch Ordinance to go to single member districts, his was an effort to end the concentration of power in only some house districts.

45 years of history shows if you want a connected Assembly person you try to get one who has been there for long periods of time.

The Single member district, Downtown has proven this by having the highest rate of Term limit Assembly persons of any district, effective leaders,

Downtown has 3 term limited ex members Heather Flynn, Allen Tesche and Patrick Flynn.

All had no trouble recruiting support in other districts for their ideas, because they were good statesmen.

Quality no quantity is best.

WHAT WOULD PROPOSITION 12 DO? (FACT CHECK)

The current Assembly district (realigned in 2012) are already Fair and Proportional . In the last apportionment in 2012 they had to follow the law, to create groups that were geographically compact as well as balanced by economic groups and ethnicity., However In 2012 it was noted these new boundaries are however not meeting the Ak Supreme court less than 10% disparity for equality.

Districts 1 under represented by 2.5% 669 residents

District 2 over represented by 3.6% 1915 residents

District 3 under represented by 3.8% 1993 residents

District 4 almost perfect off by 1.2% 617 residents

District 5 under represented by 5.2 % 2756 residents

District 6 over represented by 5.4% 2887 residents.

Proposition 13: Amend Charter, 5% Sales Tax on Alcoholic Beverages

Position on Prop 13: YES / In Favor of the Proposition

Entity: Yes for a Safe, Healthy Anchorage

Website: www.ABetterAnchorage.com or on Facebook @ABetterAnchorage

Position Statement

VOTE YES ON PROP 13 – IT’S UP TO YOU

During these uncertain times, we need to take care of each other. With State budget cuts and the tough reality of our fiscal situation, Anchorage needs to step up and fund critical health and safety services.

Community members tell us they want solutions. Year after year, Anchorage voters have said they want stable, practical revenue sources in order to address our most urgent community needs.

The impact of alcohol misuse is about \$2.4 billion per year in Alaska; \$960 million of that impact is in Anchorage. Anchorage alcohol consumers pay no local tax to help offset these impacts, while many other Alaska communities already have an alcohol tax.

HERE’S HOW IT WORKS

- Flat retail tax of 5% on alcohol purchases: paid by consumers at point of sale.
- Does not go into effect until February 1, 2021.
- Estimated annual revenue: \$11 to \$15 million per year.
- Net revenues specifically dedicated to the following uses, beyond existing operations:
 1. Police and first responders
 2. Prevent child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence
 3. Increase availability of substance misuse treatment and prevention programs
 4. Increase availability of mental health treatment programs
 5. Resources to address Anchorage’s homelessness crisis.

PROPOSITION 13 IS DIFFERENT—THE ONLY ALCOHOL TAX WITH DEDICATED FUNDING

Voters want to know tax money will go directly to intended uses. This new proposal is clear and simple:

- The revenue from this tax must by law be dedicated to the five uses listed in the ballot measure.
- The Charter amendment ensures that revenue is protected for these dedicated uses.
- The tax rate is flat: any changes to the tax rate must be directly approved by voters.
- The ballot measure requires mandatory public reporting every year on how funds raised by this tax are spent.

Proposition 13: Amend Charter, 5% Sales Tax on Alcoholic Beverages

Position on Prop 13: NO / Against the Proposition

Entity: Alaskans Against Unfair Alcohol Taxes – Darwin Biwer, representative

Website: None provided

Position Statement

INSIDE THE NEW ANCHORAGE ALCOHOL TAX

The Anchorage Assembly has done it again, but this time, with a “Hidden Agenda”. Just eight months after having a similar Alcohol Tax defeated by voters, they put it on the ballot again! The wording of Ballot Proposition 13, is available on the Muni Website.

The Alcohol Tax Proposal is a bad Idea especially when Alaska is in a recession. The increase in drink prices won’t affect the “Heavy Drinker” or the establishments. Retail sellers of alcohol will simply pass the increase on to the public.

Who it will really hurt is the thousands of near “Minimum Wage” servers. The waiters, waitresses, bartenders, bar-backs, and dishwashers who depend on Tips for their livelihood. Even a small price increase in drinks affects them first. This would be a blow to our employees who can least afford it.

The Tax is a 5% retail sales tax. Not a wholesale tax, which is easier and cheaper to administrate. This change is the key to realizing the true reason for the tax issue to be on the ballot again so soon.

A “Hidden Agenda” is in Article II, Bill of Rights, and Section 14.01 of the ordinance. If passed, this change in the Municipal Charter constitutes a “template” for innumerable FUTURE sales taxes. They could be Municipal Sales Taxes on Gasoline, Marijuana, Tobacco, a general sales tax or any other taxes the Administration decided on!

It PERMANENTLY changes the Municipal Charter which currently requires a 60% approval by the voters for a proposed tax. Instead, with any new retail sales tax, only a majority or 50% + 1 approval would be needed. This change would make it much easier for the municipality to pass future taxes. Don’t let it happen!

The funds from Proposition 13, after payment of the costs of administration, collection and audit, to the Municipality, would be dedicated to:

1. Funding for police, related criminal Justice personnel, and first responders;
2. Funding to combat and address child abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence;
3. Funding for substance misuse treatment, prevention programs, detoxification or long-term addiction recovery facilities, mental and behavioral health programs, and resources to prevent and address Anchorage’s homelessness crises.

All these are “feel good” issues that we all feel need to be addressed, but not by the Alcohol Industry alone!