



**FOR RELEASE**

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**Vote NO I83 Dominates Monday's Dupont Circle Debate**

*Elections Board Fails to Justify Decision on Ballot Access*

The Vote 'NO' on I83 arguments appeared to dominate Monday's debate on Initiative 83 hosted by the Dupont Circle Civic Association at the Chastleton Ballroom on 16 St., NW. About 70 people attended, including voters from across the District. If approved by the voters in November, Initiative 83 would bring Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) and semi-closed primaries to the District.

The vote-no position was represented by Deirdre Brown, chair of Vote NO on Initiative 83; the pro-initiative side by Lisa Rice, chair of Make All Votes Count. The most persuasive NO-on-83 points included:

1. The merging in I-83 of RCV and semi-closed primaries, two separate elections concepts, into the same initiative with a single yes-or-no vote.
2. Strong evidence that RCV disproportionately suppresses Black and Brown votes.
3. \$400k in donations from special interest PACs and corporations from outside the District.
4. Allowing independent voters to vote in partisan nomination elections without having to party register.
5. Initiative 83 is a flawed election reform meant to fix the previous "reform" of tax-payer financed elections that fosters many-candidate contests.

"Vote NO on Initiative 83 was formed to educate the public about the details of the initiative," said Brown. "When voters are given the facts instead of propaganda, they understand why this initiative should be rejected."

The Court granted expedited review on August 30, 2024, with a schedule to be announced. On September 9, 2024, in response to the Court order from August 30th, the BOE submitted hundreds of pages for the record but did not include the requested Administrative Order that would explain the legal basis for its decision.

"BOE has a long history of issuing Administrative Orders with 'findings of fact' and 'conclusions of law' to explain their decision-making on ballot access," Brown said. "Failing to issue an administrative order here suggests either the BOE doesn't feel accountable to the voters or that they have something to hide."

Last fall, the D.C. Democratic Party filed a separate lawsuit in opposition to I83 being approved as proper subject matter by BOE. The case is before the D.C. Court of Appeals.

Paid for by Vote No on Initiative 83 | Neena Murphy Martin, Treasurer | Deirdre Brown, Chair | 14 Ridge Square, NW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20016. A copy of our report is filed with the Director of Campaign Finance of the District of Columbia Board of Election.