



Make Every Vote Matter: **VOTE YES ON NOVEMBER 8!**

Our mission is to revitalize our local democracy and promote inclusive civic engagement in our Village through ballot initiatives. **VOTE YES on Nov. 8** on three referendum questions to transform Skokie's unusual, outdated electoral system into a more fair and representative democracy:

VOTE YES on Nonpartisan Elections

Problem:



Currently, Village of Skokie elections are *partisan*. Candidates from the only established political party – the Skokie Caucus Party – have advantages others don't, such as having their names automatically positioned at the top of the ballot. From 1956 through mid-2021, despite occasional attempts by independent and new party candidates to break in, members of this single party held every seat on Skokie's Village Board.

Solution:



By adopting *nonpartisan* elections, all candidates for Village Board will be treated as equals, with the same chance to be listed first on the ballot. In a nonpartisan system, candidates need to campaign on their qualifications and positions, not simply on their party affiliation. Skokie will gain a truly equitable system that fosters engagement and competition while losing only the non-descriptive labels used in village elections – no one has run as a Republican or Democrat since 1969.

VOTE YES on Staggered Terms

Problem:



Currently, Village Board elections are *not staggered*, meaning *all* offices are voted on every four years. Combined with *partisan* elections, non-staggered terms give slates of candidates from a single, powerful party a significant advantage. This discourages others from running for office, resulting in fewer options on the ballot. Skokie is the only village of its size in Illinois that does not stagger elections.

Solution:



By adopting *staggered terms* and electing half our Village Board at a time, municipal elections will be held every two years instead of every four. This will provide more opportunities for residents to run for office and create a sensible balance of stability and new ideas. Frequent elections consistently engage and involve voters, increasing representative accountability. This reform will bring the Village Board into alignment with Skokie's other elected boards – park district, library, and school boards – which all stagger their elections.

VOTE YES on Hybrid Representation

Problem:



Currently, all Village trustees are elected *at-large*, meaning they represent the entire community as opposed to specific districts within Skokie. Systems that are entirely at-large are frequently subject to litigation due to their discriminatory impact. Without a requirement for geographical representation provided by districts, Skokie has consistently lacked representation from the west and south areas of the Village. Campaigning in at-large elections across the entire Village, with its 68,000 residents, is also cost-prohibitive for many potential candidates and prevents choice on the ballot.

Solution:



By adopting a system of *hybrid representation*, four trustees will be elected by district, from each quadrant of Skokie. Two trustees, along with the Mayor and the Village Clerk, will still be elected at-large. A hybrid system will ensure better representation and accountability without creating divisiveness. Residents will have a devoted district trustee whom they can contact about concerns while retaining the power to vote for three of six trustees. By giving voters greater choice from a more representative field of candidates, hybrid representation will also encourage increased participation in Skokie's democracy.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the Skokie Alliance for Electoral Reform?

We are a *ballot initiative committee*, registered with the Illinois State Board of Elections. We are not a political party, and we are not backing candidates for office. Instead, we are a nonpartisan, grassroots alliance focused on transforming the Village of Skokie's outdated electoral system through ballot initiatives.

What is a ballot initiative?

A ballot initiative (sometimes called a ballot measure or voter initiative) is a means for registered voters to get a question on the ballot for a popular vote. Skokie Alliance volunteers collected about 4,000 signatures per petition from registered Skokie voters, more than double the number required! As a result, our three electoral reform initiatives will be on the local ballot for the Nov. 8, 2022, general election. If a majority votes "YES" on any or all of these initiatives, Skokie will adopt a new and improved electoral system for the next municipal election in 2025.

Why does Skokie need electoral reform?

The Village of Skokie's electoral system of partisan, non-staggered, at-large elections is highly unusual and hinders candidates and voters alike. No municipality of comparable population in Illinois elects its representatives this way! It's not a coincidence that our elections are rarely contested, voter turnout is well below average, and our local government has had decades of single-party rule. In the past 20 years, the Village has averaged only 1.1 candidates per seat and 9 percent voter turnout. Little to no choice of candidates on the ballot discourages Skokie voters from engaging in our municipal elections.

Why vote YES on these three referendums?

The Skokie Alliance's three ballot initiatives for nonpartisan elections, staggered terms, and hybrid representation are based on commonsense reforms practiced by municipalities across the state. All three initiatives are designed to increase the field of office seekers, allowing Skokie voters to choose from a wider range of candidates who reflect the full diversity of our Village. Our three initiatives are the most moderate and effective ways to update the Village's electoral system. **VOTE YES** on these three initiatives!

How can I help?

This is a grassroots campaign, so we need your help! Check out our website to volunteer, endorse our movement, request yard signs and swag, and/or donate: www.SkokieElectoralReform.org. Engage with us on social media, spread the word, and remember to vote **Yes, Yes, Yes** on these three initiatives on the November ballot!

